"The Story of an Hour" Louise Mallard Characteristics: young, attractive, sick (heart condition), weak willed
Developing character "The Story of an Hour" Brently Mallard

- 1. Characteristics: Possibly prominent in society, domineering
- 2. Static character

"The Story of an Hour" Plot

Mr. Richards, a friend of Brently Mallard, accompanies Josephine, Mallard's sister-in-law, to the Mallard home to tell Louise Mallard that her husband has been killed in a train wreck..

Louise, who has a heart condition, breaks down at first and goes to her room to grieve. Suddenly, Louise realizes that she is free to do as she pleases for the first time in her married life. At first, she feels guilty, but later she is happy. She knows she will cry at the funeral, for she had loved him sometimes. However, the important thing is she is free to do as she wishes now. Now, she wants to live a long life.

When Josephine knocks on her bedroom door, Louise opens it and accompanies her downstairs, where she sees her husband. There has been a mix-up. He is alive.

Shocked by Brently's reappearance, Louise dies of a heart attack. Physicians later state that Louise's death is the result of "joy that kills."

"The Story of an Hour" Point of view The point of view is omniscient objective.

"The Story of an Hour" Conflict The conflict is internal. Louise struggles with how society expects her to feel and how she really feels. "The Story of an Hour" Foreshadowing The opening sentence of "The Story of an Hour" hints that Louise's heart condition may affect the outcome of the story. In fact, it is essential that readers know about the heart condition; otherwise, the ending would have been implausible and contrived.

"The Story of an Hour"

Theme

- 1. Identity and selfhood Louise struggles to discover who she really is and to control her own destiny. We readers can identify with her struggle because most of us – especially during our teen years and young adulthood – seek to find out who we really are and to control our own destiny.
- 2. Repression Throughout her marriage, Louise has repressed her desire to control her destiny. We readers, too, may repress our desire to control our destinies out of fear that we won't be accepted or loved.
- 3. Oppression The story suggests that Brently dominated his wife. Throughout time, society and tradition control most people's actions.

"The Story of an Hour" Symbols

Louise's internal conflict is mirrored by what she sees outside her bedroom window.

- 1. Springtime
- The rebirth of nature
- The new, exciting life that Louise begins to believe is awaiting her
- 2. Falling rain Grief, distress
- 3. Patches of blue sky The emergence of Louise's new life, i.e. she will be free to control her own destiny