3600 Seconds Essay, Research Paper

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Throughout the countless hours spent giving and receiving both good and bad news, there almost always seems to be that one odd story, the one that just does not make sense. This is definitely one of those stories. “The Story of an Hour” by Kate Chopin is a story with a common conflict but a not so common conclusion. It is unclear at first who the antagonist is but in the end that becomes very evident.

The conflict in this story starts out being a woman’s struggle with her husband’s apparent death. When she is first confronted by her sister with the news of his death, she reacts as most people would have reacted; “she wept at once, with sudden, wild abandonment, in her sister’s arms.” She continues this for a couple of minutes before retreating to her bedroom to sit in seclusion. To this point, it is still believed that the main conflict lies between her and her husband’s death.

While in her room, the reader begins to get some clues as to how she really feels. When she fist enters her bedroom, she is still distraught and crying. She sits down in chair and stares out the window as if to wish her life was also ended. Then she begins to see that it is spring time and things are blooming the sky is blue and the sun is out and nothing in world outside her bedroom is gloomy or sad. Her true feelings start to come out. The reader sees that she has been keeping her true feeling in because she knows that it is wrong to think the way that she does.

She is finally “free, free, free!” from her husband’s grasp. Nevermore will she feel trapped by him and his controlling nature. “She would live for herself.” At this point, the reader begins to realize that the conflict in this story was not between her and her husband’s death but between her and her husband’s life. She for once in long time can do as she pleases without his judgment. Though all of her joys, she decides to get out of her bedroom and start enjoying life. On her way down the stairs from her room, she sees the front door of the house open and her husband walk in. The rush and confusion of her emotion kills her dead. It is then that the reader is sure that the conflict in the story was with her husband’s life not his apparent death.

The antagonist in this story is in a way the husband because the primary conflict in the story revolves around him. If he had not been a confining husband, things would not have happened the way that they did. Though he is not involved directly with the wife’s death, their past experiences have obviously had a great effect on the wife’s mental state, up to the point of her husbands supposed death. There is no doubt that he is the antagonist because he is the main force that is opposing his wife throughout “The Story of an Hour.”

Basically, this women has had both the best day of here life and the worst day of her life on the same day. The worst day obviously got the best of her though sense she did end up dying. The antagonist being her husband and his controlling nature leads directly to the emotional and physical death of his wife. The conflict, in this story, though not clear at first proved to be more than just ordinary.