

Short Story:

The Story of an Hour (Kate Chopin)

Poem:

The Martyr (Herman Melville)

The Story of an Hour is a story about Louise Mallard, who learned at the beginning of the story that her husband died in a railroad disaster. This story does a very good job of describing the times in which it was written. In the story Mrs. Mallard can be seen saying "*free, free, free!*" During these times, women were treated subordinately to men. They were generally treated as property of the husband. Her saying this is showing that she is imagining the fact that she is now an independent woman, no longer property. The story then goes on to say "*And yet she had loved him—sometimes. Often she had not.*" She then whispers "*Free! Body and soul free!*"

The Martyr does an excellent job of describing the time period in which it was written. The poem was written around the times of the Civil War, and that is very clear within the poem. Throughout the poem, it appears as if he is talking about the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, who in the poem is described as being Christ-like. Lincoln is described as the "Forgiver" and the Avenger will replace him. This poem represents a very big event of American history, the assassination of a president. At this time, this was a big deal as Lincoln was the first president to be assassinated. It describes how America felt during this time, "*There is sobbing of the strong, and a pall upon the land; But the People in their weeping Bare the iron hand.*" It shows America was upset, but that in the end we were still strong and could rise up from this.