The Story of an Hour vs. The Machine that Won the War

These two short stories, “The Machine that Won the War” and “The Story of an Hour” seem quite different but show some similarities, they show examples of irony and foreshadowing from the beginning to the end.

These stories show multiple examples of irony. An example of irony from “The Story of an Hour” demonstrates situational irony. Situational irony occurs when the opposite of what you think is supposed to happen. “When the doctors came they said she had died of heart disease—of the joy that kills.” when your reading you think that she will have a long life after her husband dies but when you find out that he is still alive she suddenly dies of heart disease. In the story “The Machine that Won the War” we find another example of situational irony. Thorough out the story you think this machine won this war with its master plans and complicated algorithms but at the end when Lamar Swift, Executive Director of the Solar federation says “Heads or tails boys” you find out that the fate of the war was decided by a simple toss of a coin.

These stories also show examples of foreshadowing. In “The Story of an Hour” we find an example when in the beginning of the story it says that “Mrs. Mallard was afflicted with heart trouble”, in the end when she dies it says “when the doctors came they said she had died of heart disease”. In “The Machine that Won the War” we find another example when Director Lamar Swift felt guilty for no apparent reason. In the end you find out that he felt guilty because he did not use the computer at all to win the war, he simply used the dumb luck of a coin toss.

As you can see these stories are very different but they also have some similarities. Both stories have an ironic ending that surprises the reader. In the end of “The Story of an Hour” she ends up dying of joy when her husband shows up alive. In “The Machine that Won the War” it turns out that the war was not the machine that won the war it was the simple toss of a coin.

In the end you can see that both stories have aspects of irony and foreshadowing and although very different do have some similarities

Works Cited
Chopin, Kate. “The Story of an Hour” 1894

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