



The Necklace

Guy de Maupassant, Gary Kelley (Translator)

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After devoting their energies and income for ten years to replacing a borrowed diamond necklace which they have lost, a woman and her husband learn the irony of their efforts.

The Necklace Details

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Author : Guy de Maupassant , Gary Kelley (Translator)

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From Reader Review The Necklace for online ebook

Jessaka says

A Stupid Superficial Woman Goes to the Ball

I read this book by accident as it was part of a mystery series, that is, a book with a lot of books in it, and after listening to it on Audible I couldn't figure out why it was a mystery.

But I will say this: I normally don't read mysteries, nor do I read short stories. Just never liked "who done its" if they have a list of characters and read like Agatha Christie or Ngaio Marsh, whose books I have only read one of each. The Marsh book was first read by my friend Julie when we were in Mexico. She found it in our hotel room. She gave it to me to read. Said it was good. I looked at the list of characters, told her who the murdered was, and she gave me a strange look. I read the book and was right.

Well, this story was captivating. Who knows I may try other short stories, at least by him, but maybe not because I have 2,000 plus books on my kindle, not to say how many I own as paperback and hardback, and I am sure that I will not be alive to finish them all, mainly because I keep getting new books. What can I say? I can say this: Old people don't need this many books.

This story was about a woman who wanted to be wealthy; she wanted rich friends. She also had a dislike for her surroundings, that is, if things didn't look perfect. I understood the perfect. I hate clutter, and I consider myself a decorator in the way of Country Living Magazine, but my style is not English Country, nothing fancy. I have a husband that finds clutter okay. I gave up. He has his own cluttered corner, a room with a desk and my lovely back porch with wicker furniture also has room for his tools. Easier to get to than to walk out to his shop.

But now this is where this woman and I part ways. Her husband got tickets to go to a ball, one with the wealthy people. Maybe only the rich go to balls. He was a clerk. I think she married beneath what she desired, but she probably had no choice. Anyway, she so wanted to go to the ball, but she needed a dress, an expensive one. Geesh! He gave her the money for it, the money he was saving for a gun to go hunting with a friend. Nice guy who deserved a better wife, because she gladly took the money.

I hate parties. I would even hate to give one. I dated a few doctors and lawyers while in college, and I finally realized that these men would expect me to have parties. Plus, the ones I dated were boring. I had one doctor buy me a dress to go to one of his parties. We were going to marry, so it was okay. Stupid me. I hated the party. We broke up soon after, but for other reasons. That was good. But I will say one thing. I did like the food. My friends and I crashed a party in Berkeley, just said that we were friends of Mary. Everyone knows a Mary. We ate the food and left. They may have danced and socialized. I can't tell you why I hate parties because I am social. Maybe it is that I hate going out at night, always have. Maybe it is because they dance all night or the talk is boring. That's it. The conversations are boring. I hate small talk. Give me a party with writers and intellectuals, and it would be fun even if I couldn't really participate that well. I can listen and eat.

So this stupid woman goes to the party, but not before she borrows a diamond necklace. Who in their right mind would borrow an expensive necklace? My jewelry is all hippie jewelry or some hippied type that I bought at a store. Why would anyone wear anything different? And I would never let anyone borrow any of

it. You cannot replace Telegraph Avenue jewelry from Berkeley. (For those that don't know. Street artists sold their jewelry on Telegraph Avenue.)

And who wants an expensive dress? I never got over my hippie days. Never got over my growing years of wearing jeans and cowboy boots. My dresses are tie dyed and loose, and I seldom wear them. But now if you are going to say that I just fear rich people, well, not true. I have some wealthy friends, but some are earthy. One of my friends was married to a rich doctor, divorced, and her daughter married a Rockefeller, but she wears khakis. Some of my somewhat wealthy friends dress up, but they don't take me places.

I can't say more about this book because if I did it would give it away. And I can't analyze it anymore than I have because to do so I would have to read up on other critiques, which I am not into doing. I once took a course in college where they analyzed a book. It took the joy out of reading. I'll make what I want out of a book.

Rym says

Actual rating: 3.5

The Necklace —or **The Diamond Necklace** is short story written by the French writer Guy de Maupassant. It was first published in the French newspaper *Le Gaulois* in 1884. It was one Maupassant's most successful works.

The Necklace tells the story of *Madame* Mathilde Loisel — a beautiful woman— who has always expressed her dissatisfaction with her social stratum. This latter has always perceived the fact that she was born into a lower-middle-class family as being an "accident of fate."

Despite her grandiose dreams, the protagonist ends up marrying a low-paid clerk —who strives to please her—but fails to meet her extravagant needs. After *Monsieur* Loisel manages to get an invitation to the Ministry of Education party, Mathilde refuses to go under the pretext that she has nothing to wear.

Monsieur Loisel decides to give up on his savings in order to soothe his wife —and enable to purchase a dress. After doing so, Mathilde remains despondent claiming that she has no jewels to wear with her new dress.

After several unsuccessful attempts to convince her to wear flowers, her husband suggests borrowing something from her friend— *Madame* Jeanne Forestier. Mathilde goes to *Madame* Forestier and borrow a

huge diamond necklace.

Right after the party, Mathilde discovers that she has lost her friend's necklace. Full of consternation, the protagonist decides to quickly buy a new one for *Madame Forestier*. When she arrives at the shop, she discovers that a similar necklace would cost her an arm and a leg. Having no other choice, the couple end up purchasing the necklace, thus, losing everything they own.

Ten years later, Mathilde encounters *Madame Forestier* —who barely recognizes her due to her miserable appearance. As they converse, Mathilde tells her friend about her misfortune.
(view spoiler)

The Necklace explores several themes, namely: *Reality vs. Appearance, the ruinous aspect of greed, consumerism & Soul sacrifice, Pride & beauty: a dangerous combination —and dishonesty.*

Mathilde's tragic flaw was probably her hubris, as her irrational desire to have a luxurious life that would equate her ethereal beauty was actually what caused her downfall —and that of her husband. What I enjoyed the most about this short story was its realistic depiction of life —and the accurate portrayal of the greedy nature of Man.

The Necklace seems like a more realistic version of Cinderella. Making an analogy between the two stories shows that the characters have a lot in common. Both Cinderella and Mathilde have a ball to attend. The two characters struggle to get a proper dress in order to go to the party —and conceal their modest lifestyles. In contrast with Cinderella, **the Necklace** provides an authentic —and tragic *dénouement* that mirrors the influential role played by environmental circumstances in the individual's life.

Maupassant provides us with a didactic story that is at the same time heart-wrenching —and ironic. The Necklace urges us to step back —and take time to ponder over this whole story. Maupassant invites the reader to re-evaluate the social norms —and realize what really matters.

To what extent can the individual conform to these norms? Shall we abide by the rule of social validation regardless of the price we will have to pay later on? Can greed prompt the individual to make a Faustian bargain?

I believe that it is important to mull over such things in order to open one's eyes to reality —and alter certain aspects of one's life before it is too late.

I recommend this short story to those who intend to read it from a critical stand point.

“How strange and changeful is life! How small a thing is needed to make — or ruin us.”
— Guy de Maupassant

Hesamul Haque says

The need of desire is not a need but avarice and avarice is an endless desire which does nothing but destruction. It's alright to be a little greedy but more essential is to know where you stand. This short book is really stunning and may change some people's lives as well.

Mohsin Maqbool says

A caricature of Guy de Maupassant.

Guy de Maupassant is one of the best writers of short stories. He is admired by book-lovers all over the world. Once you have read a story of his, you will be hooked for life.

A woman is invited to a ballroom party. In fact, her husband, a clerk, has gone through great trouble to get the invitation card as only the rich and the famous have been invited.

However, the woman is not happy. On being asked as to why she felt unhappy, she replies that she has no dress to wear on the occasion. Her husband tells her that he had saved 4000 francs to buy a hunting rifle. But he sacrifices for her sake and gives her the money, asking her to buy herself the dress that she liked best. He advises her to get a rose necklace which she could buy for a few francs. However, she wants to wear something expensive around her neck with such a beautiful dress. When her husband tells her that she could borrow one from a close friend, she is delighted and does exactly that. Soon she returns with a diamond necklace.

...

A sketch of ballroom dancing along with an extract from "The Necklace".

On the day of the ballroom party, she looks ravishing and becomes the cynosure of all eyes. All the men want to dance with her. She feels ecstatic. Time flies away and it is time to return home. The couple walks some distance to catch a cab.

On reaching home, the wife discovers that the necklace is missing; it has been lost somewhere.

How the missing necklace changes the couple's life is the gist of the story.

The short story teaches us a moral that we should be satisfied with whatever we have and not be greedy to attain something which is out of our reach.

Desires need to be controlled at times. If you don't, it might end up ruining your entire life.

An unwanted desire can fill your life with misery, turning you old at jet-speed.

Pradnya K. says

Read in my high school and re-read again, just to relive it. A short story with a huge lesson. It gives that air of old classic British literature, wish it'd be bit more long.

Lizzy says

I loved this story, simply told with its allegorical irony. That is Guy de Maupassant's style, after all. There are two major themes behind *The Necklace*: one, the difference between appearances and true value, or as Oscar Wilde remarked in *The Portrait of Dorian Gray*: “Nowadays people know the price of everything, and the value of nothing”; second, and perhaps most important, the idea that true happiness cannot be reached through fleeting moments: borrowing Wordsworth's words from *Ode to Immortality*, it was the “hour of splendor in the grass, the glory of the flower” that soon perishes.

Glenn Russell says

I think of all the millions of high school students, like myself, who were assigned to read Guy de Maupassant's *The Diamond Necklace* and then participated in the ensuing class discussion on such themes as envy, greed, materialism, symbolism and irony. When I listened to the teacher talk about the story, there was something gnawing deep down inside me I couldn't articulate – something about the story, some important element, that wasn't being addressed in the teacher's analysis. My teacher, Mrs. Martin, was a good teacher – she dutifully listed on the board Maupassant's progression, step by step, as to why *The Diamond Necklace* is the perfect story. But something, I sensed, was missing.

Oh, how I wish I could project myself back into that high school class. I'd note how all those many men and women who have ever lived out their lives on the face of the earth, expending so much of their emotional and physical energy, gnashing of teeth, fretting, worrying, calculating, wearing themselves down year after year, all in efforts to accumulate wealth or impress others or force the details and rhythms of life to pattern themselves to accord with their own wishes, share Mathilde's fate when they are told on their deathbed by life itself “All of what you worked so hard for was only paste.”

Link to Guy de Maupassant's *The Diamond Necklace*: <http://www.eastoftheweb.com/short-sto...>

Jon(athan) Nakapalau says

Do we own things or do they own us? My favorite short story...a life changing lesson.

Shriya says

I first read 'The Necklace' in Grade 9 and almost instantly, it became my favourite short-story. However, little did I know, I'd read it again when I was almost on the verge of forgetting it, in my English class in college, three years later. 'The Neckless' is a poignant tale about ingratitude and resentment of a lady with a comfortable home and a loving husband. Her vanity and her attempts to show off eventually make her pay for her disagreeable behaviour when she finds out that the necklace that was the cause of her ruin was fake! The only thing the reader feels sorry for, is the poor husband who has to pay the price of having a grumpy, dissatisfied wife!

Chrissie says

Here follows a free online link to the short story: <http://www.online-literature.com/maup...>

This story goes by two titles--*The Necklace* and *The Diamond Necklace*.

Yes, I like this, but it is pretty easy to guess what will happen.

One aspect of it that is nice is how Madame Loisel changes for the better. Is she happier? I do believe so, and I hope she remains so. That will be the true test of what she has learned.

Camille says

Je n'ai pas lu la nouvelle dans cette édition, mais en Folio Junior, "La parure et autres contes cruels", un mini recueil qui contient "La Parure", "Un lâche", "Coco", "Le vieux" et "Aux champs". J'aurais pu le rajouter dans la liste des éditions du bouquin, mais franchement, Maupassant dans Goodreads, c'est un bazar sans nom. Alors, tant pis.

Pour la petite histoire, j'ai demi volé ce bouquin : en fait, je remplaçais un prof de français dans un collège privé, c'était un travail qui ne me plaisait pas du tout, j'ai pris le livre dans la salle des profs où il traînait avec les autres livres servant à la classe (il est au programme des 4ème), et j'ai plus ou moins intentionnellement oublié de le rendre en partant. Etrangement, je me sentais plus récompensée en piquant un livre à deux euros qu'en recevant mon salaire ; ça m'a un peu soulagée de ma peine.

Et donc le livre vivait sa vie de livre dans la bibliothèque pleine de tous les livres que je n'ai pas le temps de lire, et je l'ai pris un soir, parce que je n'arrivais pas à dormir après avoir lu le chapitre sur l'expérimentation animale dans "La Libération animale" de Peter Singer.

Honnêtement, j'ai été frappée par la ressemblance entre les récits de vivisection et Maupassant. Vous devriez essayer de les lire dans cet ordre, vous verrez, c'est surprenant. C'est minutieux, détaillé et précis ; et quand les personnages ne meurent pas, on aurait préféré pour eux qu'ils meurent, tant leur souffrance et leur angoisse doit être grande. Les agonies sont interminables.

Pour les insomniaques qui ne veulent pas dormir.

Hannah says

I read this forever ago and hated the ending. However, what a moral tale! I still recall it vividly today. It probably deserves five stars for the caliber of storytelling, but since it haunted me and disturbed me, I'm rating it with enjoyment factored in as well.

Steven Godin says

de Maupassant manages to bring a flavor to his stories that are close to unforgettable. He writes about ordinary people, but he paints their lives in colors that are rich with adultery, marriage, prostitution, murder, and war. During his lifetime, he created nearly 300 stories, and in my opinion a far greater writer of the short story than the novel. "The Necklace" one of his most famous works, focuses on Mme. Mathilde Loisel - a woman seemingly "fated" to her status in life. "She was one of those pretty and elegant girls who are sometimes as if by a mistake of destiny, born in a family of clerks." Instead of accepting her position she feels cheated in life. She is selfish and self-involved, tortured and angry that she can't purchase the jewels and clothing that she desires. Maupassant writes, "She suffered ceaselessly, feeling herself born for all the delicacies and all the luxuries." this amounts to a moralistic fable in some ways, She wants to be someone and something that she is not.

Wishing to appear wealthy to the other women at a ball, she borrowed a diamond necklace from a wealthy friend, after having a great time, she descends into poverty. I don't want to give anything else away here, but will add the ending hit me like a ton of bricks, the final line is read and the world of that story comes crashing down around us.

A classic short-story jewel in the crown.

Mustafa says

Razan says

3.5 /5 stars

lets just say that i would've liked it more if i it wasn't for a literary reading class :)

With that being said, it wasn't the best short story that I've read but it still is an enjoyable read, although the characters were stupid and i hated all of them very much, but the concept of the book saved it and i

appreciate that.
