

# THE NECKLACE BY GUY DE MAUPASSANT

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**Dr. Rajnish Mishra**

**Assistant Professor, Department of English**

**SGPG College, Sarurpur-Khurd, Meerut**

**BA English Part I, Semester  
1 (English Prose and Writing  
Skills)**

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# INTRODUCTION

The short story "The Necklace" by Guy De Maupassant takes place in France several hundred years ago. Mathilde Loisel lives in a flat with her husband, who works as a clerk for the Minister of Education.

Their lives are not luxurious, but they are not poor, merely simple. Mathilde, however, longs to be rich. She envies her friend Jeanne who has a large house and lots of jewelry.

# THE INVITATION

- One day her husband brings home an invitation to a ball. He thinks his wife will be excited to attend such a fancy party, but instead she is upset.
- She complains that she has nothing suitable to wear to such an extravagant occasion. Her kind husband agrees to give her the four hundred francs that he had been saving to buy a new rifle to get herself a gown.

# THE NECKLACE

The week of the party, Mathilde seems anxious again. When her husband asks her why, she frets that she has no jewelry to wear with her dress.

He suggests that perhaps she could borrow something from her friend Jeanne Forestier.

Mathilde goes to Jeanne's house and picks out a sparkling diamond necklace to borrow.

# LOST NECKLACE

She and her husband attend the gala and have a fabulous time. She loves amazing and dances all night. Finally, they head home in the wee hours of the morning.

When they arrive home, Mathilde realizes that the necklace is missing. They wonder if it fell off in the carriage that they took home, but neither of them noticed the number

**Her husband goes out to search the streets but returns empty handed. To stall for time, Mathilde writes to her friend that she broke the clasp and is having it repaired. In the meantime, they find another necklace that matches the missing one, but it costs thirty-six thousand francs.**

**Her husband fortunately inherited eighteen thousand francs from his father, but they will need to borrow the rest of the money. Finally, they have enough to purchase the replacement necklace and Mathilde gives it to Jeanne who doesn't even look at it.**

The next ten years Mathilde's life changes dramatically. They move to a smaller apartment where she has to cook and clean for herself. She also does work on the side while her husband works multiple jobs to pay back all the money they borrowed. After the ten years, the money is all paid back, but Mathilde has aged a great deal.

One day she sees Jeanne Forestier on the street. She decides to tell her the truth about the necklace. Jeanne is stunned by Mathilde's rough appearance. Mathilde explains that it is indirectly because of Jeanne since she lost the necklace she borrowed from her and had to pay for a replacement. Shocked, Jeanne confesses that the necklace Mathilde borrowed was a fake, made of paste, worth no more than five hundred francs.

## **MORAL LESSON**

**Clearly, the lesson of the story is that honesty is the best policy.**

**If Mathilde had been honest with her friend from the start, she would have learned that the necklace wasn't made of real diamonds and would not have wasted ten years paying for a replacement.**