

The Necklace

Summary: This story is about a woman who does not know how to live within her means. Mrs. Loisel belongs to a middle class family but wants to live a lavish lifestyle. Her husband is a clerk who cannot afford to fulfill all her demands. For attending a party, Mrs. Loisel decides to borrow a necklace from her friend who is rich. Mrs. Loisel loses the necklace while returning from the party. Mrs. Loisel and her husband spend all their fortunes and borrowings to buy a similar necklace which cost them a fortune. After that, they have to do everything which could be done so that they could repay the loan. It takes about 10 years of hard-work and lots of sacrifices before she is able to repay all her loans. The time and all the hard-work take their toll on her and she ages quickly. After that tortuous period had passed she happens to meet her rich friend and tells the whole story. Her friend tells that it was not a diamond necklace but a cheap imitation jewellery.

Main Characters of the Story

1. Matilda: Matilda is a pretty, young lady. She wanted to lead a rich and luxurious life. But she was born into a humble family and had to marry an ordinary man. She felt sad about her petty economic and social status. When Matilda got an invitation to a ball, she wanted to pretend as a rich woman. She gave in to vanity. She disregarded the advice of her good husband. She is a woman who sought the praise and admiration of others. She feels very happy when men appreciated her beauty and grace at the dance ball. Matilda is a woman lacking wisdom and prudence. Just to show off a day at the ball, she loses her borrowed necklace. This leads to enormous suffering for her and her husband for a number of years. She does not understand the importance of living within one's means.

2. Mr. Loisel: Mr. Loisel is a simple man working as a clerk. He loves his wife and does everything to make her happy. He gets an invitation to a ball with his wife. When his wife wants a costly necklace, he suggests she should borrow a necklace from her rich friend, Madame Forestier. When Matilda loses her necklace, he uses his hard-earned savings to buy a new necklace. He starts working very hard to repay the debt they had incurred. Mr Loisel is ready to make an enormous sacrifice to maintain his family. He is a man who believes in living a life within one's means. Unfortunately, because he is lenient towards his wife, he has to undergo much suffering.

3. Madame Forestier: Matilda's wealthy friend. Madame Forestier treats kindly, Matilda but Matilda is bitterly jealous of Madame Forestier's wealth, and the kindness pains her. Madame Forestier lends Matilda the necklace for the party and does not

inspect it when Matilda returns it. She is horrified to realize that Matilda has wasted her life trying to pay for a replacement necklace, when the original necklace had actually been worth nothing.

The central idea of the story

The central idea is that a sense of false pride, greed and envy can lead to a person's destruction.

The main character Matilda Loisel is the perfect example of the central idea stated. She has a fair life, a roof over her head, loving husband, and food.

But because of her false pride she wants more than what she has.

Theme of the Story

The Necklace' is a mild satire but with a strong message. It is ridiculous for people of ordinary means to copy the rich. One should live within one's means. Otherwise, he or she invites unnecessary problems, anxieties and confusion in his or her life.

The main message of the story is that we should be what we are. False pride is the cause of our sufferings. The loss of a false necklace by Mrs Loisel was not a big loss.

Things could have been settled right if she had confessed the loss of the necklace to the owner, Madame Forestier. This small lapse or mistake of Mrs Loisel makes her whole life miserable and dark. And the irony was that the cause of all these sufferings was a false necklace.

Message: The message in the story is you should be grateful of what you have and it is better to tell the truth and face the consequences than to try to protect one's pride by telling a lie.

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