



THE
NECKLACE

By Guy de Maupassant

Retold by Sara Simpson

The Necklace (1884)
By Guy de Maupassant
Retold by Sara Simpson

Matilde Loisel was one of those people born into the wrong family. She was a pretty girl who seemed like she should have been born into a rich family, but she wasn't. Her father was an office clerk. Her family had enough money to buy what they needed, but they weren't rich. When she was old enough to get married, she didn't have the money or connections to meet a rich man, so she married a clerk who worked in the Ministry of Public Instruction.

She wore plain clothes; she couldn't afford expensive ones. Even though she had never had an expensive dress, she was as sad as if she used to have beautiful clothing like a queen and had it taken away. Men are born with social standing because of their families; women aren't. A woman's beauty and personality are what give her power. Mathilde Loisel was as beautiful and charming as any rich woman; it wasn't fair she never got the chance to enjoy the finer things in life just because she was born poor.

She was unhappy with everything about her simple, middle-class life. Things that most people wouldn't even notice made her miserable. The chairs were worn. The curtains were ugly. The girl they hired to help cook and clean only did the basic chores. She spent all day dreaming about expensive furniture, fancy parties, and rich friends.

Each night, they ate the same boring dinner on the same simple dishes. Every night, her husband looked at the food and said "Beef stew! What a wonderful dinner!" before eating it happily. Mathilde Loisel wished that she was eating fine food on china plates and thought about how unlucky she was.

She didn't have any fancy dresses or jewelry, and these were the only things she cared about. She felt like she should have these things but would never get them. The thought made her miserable.

Madame Loisel had an old friend from school who was rich. She didn't like to visit her friend because it made her so jealous.

Do you think de Maupassant's statements about how men and women get power in the world are still true today? Why or why not?

What advice would you give to Madame Loisel if you met her? Why would this be good advice for this character?

“Yes. I’m glad you never noticed. They were almost the same,” Madame Loisel said, smiling proudly.

Madame Forestier stopped and looked hard at Madame Loisel.

Madame Forestier took Madame Loisel’s hands in her own.

“My dear Matilde!” Madame Forestier said. “Why, my necklace was only paste! A fake! The diamonds were made of glass. It was worth, at most, \$500.”

Describe the “twist” at the end of the story.

What do you think the moral of this story is?
