

English III Prof. Marylind Arroyo

Elvis Soto - First Week

Analysis of 'The Necklace' by Guy de Maupassant

1. Who are the characters? Brief description.

Mathilde Loisel – A beautiful but unhappy woman born into a modest family. She believes she was meant for luxury and suffers because of her modest life, not poor just modest. Her desire to appear wealthy leads to her downfall.

Monsieur Loisel – Her devoted husband, a simple government clerk who sacrifices everything to help Mathilde replace the lost necklace.

Madame Forestier – Mathilde's wealthy but good friend who lends her the necklace. Her role is brief but very crucial to the story's twist ending.

2. Is the title symbolic, literal, or both?

The title is both. Literally, because there was an actual necklace but the plot revolves around a diamond necklace Mathilde borrows and loses, representing a life changing event from modest to poor, from immature to a mature and responsible person.

The title is also symbolically, It represents the illusion of wealth versus reality, pride, and the destructive pursuit of appearances that corrodes society. The necklace was fake just like the social image Mathilde tried to project and the artificial person She wanted so badly to portray.

3. When and where does the story take place?

Place: The city of Paris, France, specifically in areas like Rue des Martyrs and the Ministry of Education.

Time: Likely late 19th century, which may be easily inferred from the carriages, clothing, and social norms described throughout the narrative.

4. How much time passes from beginning to end?

Approximately 10 years passed. The first part covers just a few days. But after losing the necklace, Mathilde and her husband spend ten years repaying the debt, until She meets Madame Forestier again.

5. What is the mood that prevails in the story?

The mood is bittersweet, filled with despair, and ultimately the ironic tragedy. It begins with Mathilde's dissatisfaction, continues with the tragic loss and the painful repayment and ends in bitter realization and torturing surprise.

6. What is the conflict of the story?

internal conflict Mathilde's shame about her social class and obsession with wealth and appearance and then the external conflict of losing the necklace and dealing with its consequences.

7. Describe Mathilde's conflict and feelings.

Mathilde identity constantly battles between who she is and who she believes she deserves to be. She's resentful, vain, and eventually humiliated. After the loss, she suffers a harsh physical and emotional transformation, taking on manual labor and aging prematurely.

8. What clues, if any, anticipate how the story will end?

The subtle hints of irony and obsession with appearances, anticipates a story of learning to a humbling experience. Also, missing information about the necklace such as Mathilde not asking about the necklace's real value neither Madame Forestier not asking or checking the returned necklace. These foreshadow quite a bit a surprise ending.

9. How does the story end?

Unexpectedly after 10 years of struggle, Mathilde learns that the necklace She borrowed was an imitation or fake worth at most 500 francs nothing compared to the 36,000 francs she and her husband sacrificed their lives and cretic to repay.

10. Explain the theme of the story.

Key themes:

The futility of life, Appearances vs. Reality; The fake necklace that causes real suffering.

Pride and Vanity, Mathilde's pride leads her to borrow the necklace and lie about after loosing it.

The Irony of Fate – Wishing to be rich, a small mistake changes the course of her life, from modest to poor.

The Role of Women in modern society, Mathilde's value is measured by beauty and class in her society, showing the limited roles available to women at the time.