

The Necklace- by Guy Demaupassant  
**SUMMATIVE**

**THE TITLE**

1. Prediction: When we read the title, we predicted that the necklace would be the problem - the conflict - in the story. We thought that the necklace would either be a present from a friend or husband and we all pictured the necklace to be very valuable and expensive.

This is how each of us predicted the necklace in the story would look like:



I pictured that it would look like a sapphire necklace.



I predicted that the necklace would look like one of those big and heavy expensive emerald ones with 3 big emerald stones held together by silver.



The title gave me an idea of a normal pearl necklace that is placed in a black case. Also, I thought that the necklace would be expensive and valuable, and easy to get dirty.

**Summary:** Mathilde is a woman who lives in poverty. One day, her husband got an invitation for a party at the Ministry, however they were only able to afford a dress, so she borrows a diamond necklace from her rich friend. After the party, Mathilde notices that she had lost the necklace. Mathilde and her husband borrowed money from people in order to replicate the original one. Over the next ten years she and her husband work hard and succeeds in paying back all the debt. Then, she hears from her friend that the necklace she had lost was only an imitation.

As we read through the text we realized that the theme of this short story is 'money' because throughout the story's plot the writer includes many events that are related to money issues.

In the very beginning the reader can tell that there is a sense of admiration for the main character - Mathilde - from the writer because in the text the writer states: "*She was one of those pretty, charming young women who have had the ill-fortune to be born into a wage-earning family*". This implies that she has a good character - kind and elegant - which gives us a good first impression of what she is like. The writer used the word "*ill-fortune*" which we believe is a very good word choice because it makes us as readers presume that Mathilde's character was too good to have deserved to belong in such a poor family - which also brings us back to the theme of the story because poverty is related to money.

However in the second paragraph we realized that our impression of Mathilde was wrong because the writer states that "*She was in perpetual dissatisfaction, because she felt that luxuries and soft living were her natural birthright*". Natural birthright - another good word choice as it implies that she is actually a very arrogant person because it seems that she thinks it's natural she should deserve luxury and good living. She also shows a sense of greed because she is dissatisfied with what she has and wants more.

The writer then starts describing why she feels that way; which is when the setting starts to play an important part in the story. This is apparent in the statement: "*The furnished flat in which she had to live, its squalid wallpapers, its shabby chairs, its hideous curtains and upholstery were a constant torment to her.*" From this statement we can see that it is true she and her husband are not very rich; which again is related to the theme - money. Furthermore, not only does the statement show her living conditions but the writer has also made it clear to readers that she is very frustrated to get out of her position. The writer had successfully made the readers think that there must be a catch in the statement somewhere because normally people who are that greedy and frustrated in stories always seem to learn a lesson - sometimes even a really harsh one. This statement therefore also builds up the tension in the story.

There's a lot to say about the characters in the story. Just the fact that Mathilde wanted to get a whole new outfit for the dance shows that she tries to fit in with the rest. Also, seeing that Mr. Loisel, after a little hesitation, agreed to give her money for a new dress, it shows how much he cares for her and is willing to give up the gun he was saving up for to make her happy. '*His face went slightly pale, for he had been keeping in reserve precisely that sum with the object of buying a gun...* Nevertheless, he said "*Right, you shall have your four hundred francs...*"'

### Rising Action

The rising action takes place in the point of the story in which Mathilde finds a "*superb*" diamond necklace from her friend's closet, which she felt "*her heart began to beat faster... she was filled with mad longing.*", and asks her friend if she can borrow it, which her friend happily says yes. The writer gives a detailed visual effect by explaining Mathilde's actions, and because of that, I can almost see Mathilde, happy, joyful, and eager to borrow the necklace. The writer adds a sense that Mathilde was very happy by

adding “*She flung her arms around her friend’s neck... kissed her... fled with her treasure*”. This is the rising action because it is the start of all problems she and her husband will have to go through for the next 10 years, and also because it leads to the conflict.

### Conflict

Mathilde wore the borrowed necklace to the dance and the **conflict** then takes place when they return home and she finds that the necklace is no longer around her neck. After that moment, she and her husband spends 10 years trying to pay it back. As the story says: “*Madame Loisel’s life, from then on, was one of miserable poverty. But she played her part, from the very first, heroically.*” This was more of a problem for them (Mr. and Mrs. Loisel) rather than anyone else because they had to spend a whole 10 years in “*miserable poverty*” all because of having to re-gain all the money they lost. Soon enough, they started looking older than they actually were because they were always worrying about their future and what would happen to them.

### Solution

Mathilde purchases another copy of the diamond necklace and returns it to her friend. It cost her a lot, but she managed to borrow enough money to pay for the necklace. Mathilde and her husband have to do hard labor all day to pay back the debts, and as for Mathilde “*she undertook all the heavy work of the household..carried the refuse..and brought up the water*” and her husband had “*evenings auditing accounts of various shopkeepers... copying at five sous a page*”. At this part, there is a miserable feeling and I felt sorry for Mathilde, because I felt like I was in her shoes. After 10 years of hard labor, they finally pay back the debt and meet Mathilde’s rich friend, just to find out that the diamond necklace they lost was a “*imitation, and worth, at most, five hundred francs..!*” and they have been overworking themselves for 10 whole years.

### Narrative Structure

The story has the kind of structure that gives you the feeling that something will get revealed towards the end. Also, the story is set in a ‘Beginning-Middle-End’ kind of structure where the beginning is when Mathilde borrows the necklace from her friend, the middle (conflict) is when she loses it and goes crazy trying to re-buy it, and the end is when she finds out that the necklace she borrowed was an imitation and that she spent years paying it back. Although the end leaves you hanging a little, because the story ends after Mathilde finds out that the necklace she bought was only a fake imitation. It doesn’t tell you what she does later on, of whether or not she gets the necklace back, etc.

### Ending/Solution

The writer builds up a lot of tension for the end, when he reveals to the reader that the character, Mathilde, had only lost a cheap imitation of the necklace and then spent years paying for it thinking it was a real diamond one.

Through the story we learnt that it is better to be honest than trying to cover up something we did wrong because like the writer says “*What small things make the difference between safety and disaster!*” it makes us think that if Mathilde hadn’t been so selfish and prideful she would have told her friend the truth and thus escaped the poverty that was to come. Or we can think of it in another way, maybe she wouldn’t even have borrowed the necklace in the first place if it weren’t for her greed! She actually had fine living conditions before the loss of the necklace.

### Plot Notes

-**Theme:** Money because, in the beginning, the author describes the main character as a lady who is pretty but indeed lives in a poor condition. Also, honesty, as at the end, Mathilde did not tell her friend that she lost her friend's necklace and worked for the money which she spent on to refill the space of the missing necklace, which led to her years of labor and debt. Eventually, the necklace was found that it was fake and Mathilde's 10 years of labor would not have been if she was honest and told her friend about the necklace.

- **Conflict & Climax:** Having an amazing time at her party, Mathilde is happy to be there with her fancy dress and her jewellery. However, after the party, as Mathilde is going home, she notices that her diamond necklace which she borrowed from her friend, is missing.

- **Solution:** Mathilde finds a same diamond necklace in a shop. She decides to buy it in order to give it back to her friend; it is very expensive, but she tries to get enough money to pay for the necklace. Her family's poverty gets worse as Mathilde and her husband has to do hard labor all day in order to be able to pay back all the debt that they have due to the diamond necklace. After 10 years of labor, they finally pay back the debt and meet Mathilde's rich friend, just to find out that the diamond necklace they lost was a fake.

- **Beginning:** The woman, Mathilde, is very pretty but lives in poverty . One day, she gets an invitation which his husband brought, which asks her family to come to the part at the Ministry. Having the dress to wear to the party but lacking the jewellery, Mathilde decides to visit her rich friend.

- **Conflict(small)** - The invitation. She does not have "anything to wear" and she wants jewelry.

- **Rising action:** Mathilde finds a beautiful diamond necklace from her friend's closet and asks her friend if she can borrow it, which her friend happily says yes.