

Literary analysis of "the necklace"

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"The Necklace", by Guy de Maupassant, is an excellent short story about discontentment.

The story is about a woman, named Mathilde, who wanted things she couldn't have because she did not have the money to buy them. She was invited to a ball, so she had to buy a "proper" dress. Then she also said she needed a necklace so she went to her friend to borrow one. She borrowed an expensive diamond necklace and went to the ball, but she lost it. She then had to buy a new identical one making them in debt and poor.

Years later she finds out that the necklace she borrowed was a fake and that they bought a real one. If she never had been discontent with what she had she would have never borrowed the necklace and lost it. Conflict and Situational Irony helped to convey Maupassant's theme of "Being discontent can bring you problems." Conflict made the theme able to be represented throughout the short story. In the short story it states, "She suffered intensely, feeling herself born for every delicacy and every luxury" (pg.

1). This is an example of internal conflict because it involves with feelings. Mathilde wanted things that she couldn't have. It says she suffered, so when she wanted luxurious things it caused her pain. Her discontentment caused her to take actions later in the story that caused her to make problems. This supported the theme of discontentment.

Another example of conflict is Mathilde did not have a dress to wear to the ball (pg. 2). She did not have a "proper" dress, so she "had" to spend money on a new dress. This is both external and internal conflict because clothes are an appearance, and she also felt inside that she needed a better

dress. When they spent the money for the dress it was hard because they have financial trouble.

She was discontent of the dress she had, so she bought a new and more expensive one. The internal and external conflicts of the short story supported the theme by making problems from discontentment. Situational Irony made the story have a plot twist which affected the theme. In the short story Mathilde said, " I-I-I have not Mme. Forester's diamond necklace" (pg.

4). This is an example of situational irony because it means she lost the necklace. The situation this put them in was ironic because she was just having fun at the ball and now she lost a very expensive necklace. Her being discontent caused her to borrow the necklace which she lost. Another example was that the necklace was a fake and worth barely anything (pg.

5). They had gone into debt for nothing. The necklace was a fake, so now Mme. Forester has a real, expensive necklace that Mathilde had to buy. It was a false necklace that she lost. The irony is that they bought a necklace that was a real one when they only lost a fake one.

Being discontent with their situation caused them to replace the fake necklace with a real one for a lot more money. The situational irony showed the problems that came from discontentment. Guy de Maupassant put together a well written short story. He used two effective literary terms. He used conflict to support the plot and situational irony to make plot twists that gave the story dynamics. He needed to use these because he had to give a backbone to the story which is the theme.

There were also more literary terms used in this story, but these two were the most prevalent. Guy de Maupassant used situational irony and conflict to represent theme of discontentment.