

Free critical thinking about unrevealing the mystery of richness

[Experience](#), [Happiness](#)



Richness is a word defining the state of being rich. However, there have always been lots of speculations and thinking on what being rich really means or what it should stand for. Richness entails the meaning of material wealth but at the same time it is a concept which entails the meaning of personal wealth and happiness. People have always separated these two concepts believing that material wealth does not necessarily go hand in hand with emotional, psychological happiness. Nevertheless, there has always been the knowledge of how miserable can poverty turn people to be. The everlasting question has always been hanging over people's heads though. Is it ethical to go after the richness at any costs so that the misery of poverty can be avoided? This is the question with which Guy De Maupassant addresses his readers in his short story 'The Jewelry'. This essay aims at presenting you with an analysis of Guy de Maupassant's short story and the answer which this story gives to the question regarding the extent to which richness ought to be sought.

"The Jewelry" by Guy de Maupassant presents the reader with a short story that would make the reader think it's simply about a piece of jewelry, In fact, the writer considers this question: 'Do the lies provided to us by those we find ourselves surrounded by, affect us negatively, or do they contribute to our pleasure until revealed?' A man, Mr. Lantin, is in love with a woman who means everything to him. To him his wife is the synonym to virtue and till the moment of her death he feels he has lived the happiest life ever with the best woman ever. Until this point, she has been the source from which his happiness derives. Maupassant uses symbolism, to show how people can come face to face with their being deceived, but they do not seem to decide

to take their lives into their hands and come face to face with their mistakes or false beliefs. The only faults Mr. Lantin, Madame Lantin's husband ever found in his wife were " her love of the theater, and her passion for false jewelry." (Maupassant 69). The words gain their true meaning when the plot is revealed. Her " love" of theater, symbolizes the place where she meets her lover and benefactor. Her " passion" for false jewelry symbolizes the passionate relationship which Mrs Lantin develops with her benefactors and which takes a physical presence through the jewelry she receives as gifts. The death of his wife sheds light to what he thought his life was about. A man led by the lifestyle imposed by his wife is suddenly broke. He does not know why but his wife seemed to take care of their everyday expenses and manage the household in such a way that no financial difficulties came up. Suddenly, he realizes that he does not have the same ability. Gradually, Mr. Lantin is driven to finding out along with the readers that the ' richness' he had experienced up to the moment of his wife's death was a false richness. He felt rich both on a real basis since no lack of money tortured his life and on a metaphorical basis since his wife was always happy and calm, the lighthouse in the dark difficulties of everyday life. Readers find out along with Mr. Lantin that the richness he felt was deriving from the extra money his wife had, thanks to her theater outings. The theatre outings were her outings with men who showed their happiness for her company through their presents in jewelry. Mr. Lantin realizes that the jewelry is not false but it is worth of millions. So what does he do? Does he fall in the misery that the feeling of living into a well-built lie creates? This is what probably the readers would expect. But Guy de Maupassant turns the world round. He stands in

front of his readers with the surprising yet more than possible human reaction. Mr. Lantin accepts his need to live in luxury so he has no time to cry over the spilt milk. He takes advantage of his wife's jewelry and sells it all. Is he happy afterwards? Unfortunately, not because his second wife, the one he gets married to afterwards, is an honest wife who seems to share nothing in common with Mrs Lantin and unfortunately truth is not what people always need.

Symbolism is used by Guy De Maupassant in order to share his ideas on the nature and goal of lying, happiness and richness. He does not ask his readers to live their lives in lies in the name of richness but he does certainly raise the ethical question which still remains unanswered. If a lie turns out to ensure your beloved person's happiness and richness, is it really bad? Who is to decide on the appropriacy and need of lies? There is certainly not only white and black in life's choices. There is also grey and this is what Guy de Maupassant seems to wish to emphasize on. Having reached the end of this essay I would like to end it using the words by Jules Renard as cited in Maupassantiana, the French Scholar Website on Maupassant '« J'aime Maupassant parce qu'il me semble écrire pour moi, non pour lui.» Jules Renard (Journal, 13 février 1893). (the translation in English stands for ' I love Maupassant because he seems to write for me and for him). Reading this short story by Guy de Maupassant ' The Jewelry' one can feel that it is written for the readers and not for the writer, indeed.

Works Cited

De Maupassant, Guy. " The Jewelry." The Norton Introduction to Literature. 9th ed. Booth,

<https://assignbuster.com/free-critical-thinking-about-unrevealing-the-mystery-of-richness/>

Alison et al, eds. New York: WW Norton, 2005. 634-39. Print.

Maupassantiana, a French Scholar Website on Maupassant and his Works
derived from

<http://www.maupassantiana.fr/>