

# The necklace summary



The plot of most short stories is condensed in length and of a more simplistic nature relative to novels. Guy de Maupassant's, "The Necklace" is no exception. Starting with the exposition, the story has only three main characters, Madame and Monsieur Loisel--both very simple, "economical" characters that are among the lower-rank of society's hierarchical ladder, and Madame Forestier, Mathilde Loisel's affluent friend.

A combination of 19th century language and lifestyle, as well as the life span of the author, dually suggest that the story's setting takes place not only during the 19th century, but as many famous locations of Paris are mentioned in the story, Paris, France. In order to set the plot in motion, the inciting incident introduces the conflict. In "The Necklace," the inciting incident is when the husband brings forth an invitation to a "select" event at the "palace of the Ministry. Although, originally flustered by the idea, Mathilde eventually decides to go, but only under the condition that she looks like a proper lady; elegant and exquisitely dressed. Thus, the continually manifest conflict for the "poverty-stricken" couple, the inability to purchase such expensive items, develops the plot further. "It annoys me not to have a single piece of jewelry, not a single ornament, nothing to put on." Mathilde's lack of finances and her irritation with the situation provides both an external and internal element towards the conflict.

When proceeding events in the rising action, like purchasing the sophisticated gown, and, most significantly, acquiring the diamond necklace transpire, Mathilde's lack of income, the conflict, becomes even more apparent physically and emotionally. "The day of the ball drew near and Madame Loisel seemed sad, uneasy, anxious." Suspense building, Mathilde

and her husband attend the ball. “ Madame Loisel was a great success. She was prettier than any other woman present, elegant, graceful, smiling and wild with joy. Unfortunately, from the end of the masquerade onward, everything of the couple’s luck disintegrates. The climax and crisis simultaneously rear their heads when Madame Loisel, to her surprise, finds that the “ superb diamond necklace” her friend, Madame Forestier lent her, is no longer around her neck. Unable to find the ornament or confess her mistake to Madame Forestier, for the sake of her pride, Mathilde buys a new, similar necklace for thirty-six thousand francs.

Consequently, Madame and Monsieur Loisel are forced to live in debt for an entire decade, where Mathilde comes “ to know what heavy housework meant and the odious cares of the kitchen. ” Searching for the necklace and struggling through debt composes the falling action of the narrative. Finally, when Mathilde’s debts are paid, the denouement is introduced and the plot unknots. “ Madame Forestier, deeply moved, took her hands. ‘ Oh, my poor Mathilde! Why, my necklace was paste! It was worth at most only five hundred francs! ”