

# The necklace and the great gatsby essay



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Many people are told to follow their dreams, but this advice should be taken cautiously.

We all have within ourselves goals and dreams, yet, as optimists, we sometimes tend to vision only the bright side of the future. The cons are not taken much into consideration or even noticed until it is too late. Both the short story *The Necklace* and the novel *The Great Gatsby* contain characters that have followed the wrong dream. Madame Loisel from *The Necklace* helps reiterate the theme from *The Great Gatsby* that those who pursue impossible dreams will only suffer and taint their reputation.

First of all, Madame Loisel and Jay Gatsby are both in denial of reality and think whatever they please in attempting to achieve their dream. For example, distressed of the poverty of her dwelling, Madame Loisel feels “herself born to enjoy all delicacies and all luxuries” and “thought of long reception halls hung with ancient silk, of the dainty cabinets containing priceless curiosities and of the little coquettish perfumed reception rooms made for chatting at five o’clock with intimate friends, with men famous and sought after, whom all women envy and whose attention they all desire” (Guy de Maupassant 1). Madame Loisel’s dream is to become rich: she cannot cope with the fact that she was born a clerk and must live the ways of a clerk; she is in denial of her social status, encouraging herself that her true position lies with the wealthy. She thinks luxurious thoughts when she is physically unable to achieve these dreams. Madame Loisel also speaks for life when she states that she should have been born a rich woman: not all women are or can be rich, and there is no particular reason why she should be one of them.

In addition, Gatsby still determines to watch over Daisy after Nick sees that “ Daisy and Tom were sitting opposite each other at the kitchen table... (Tom) was talking intently across the table with her and in his earnestness his hand had fallen upon and covered her own. Once in a while she looked up at him and nodded in agreement” (Fitzgerald 152). Gatsby, whose dream is to gain Daisy back, refuses to accept his loss in the battle against Tom for Daisy’s love.

He is so engrossed with his past love with Daisy that he is oblivious to the meaning behind what Nick has just witnessed. Nick has witnessed Tom and Daisy’s reconciliation of their differences; they will stay together as they have, and Gatsby will not become an obstacle in continuing this. Madame Loisel and Jay Gatsby falsify their lives in chasing their dream. In addition, Madame Loisel and Jay Gatsby live a life of hardship because of their inability to cast off their false dream. For instance, after losing her friend’s necklace, Madame Loisel works strenuously to pay back the cost of the replacement and at the end of the ten years, she “ looked old now. She had become the woman of impoverished households- strong and hard and rough” (Guy de Maupassant 4).

Madame Loisel was unable to cast off her dream of becoming wealthy, and on top of the four hundred franc dress that cost her husband all his savings, she had to ask her rich friend for a necklace. She didn’t need a necklace in order to go to the dance, but she had visions of a “ true rich woman. It was her greed to make her false dream come true that gave her the harsh ten years of toil that was many times the misery of her life as a regular clerk. Furthermore, when Nick first sees Gatsby, Gatsby “ stretched out his arms

toward the dark water in a curious way," towards " a single green light, minute and far away, that might have been the end of a dock" (Fitzgerald 26). Gatsby purposely bought his mansion straight across Daisy's home in order to look upon her; thus, the green light comes from Daisy's dock.

Gatsby yearns to be with Daisy as he reaches his arms towards the green light. This green light symbolizes how much Gatsby suffers from his unachievable dream: he yearns to embrace the light in his arms, but he is unable to grasp it because the green light is out of his reach, just like his dream. Ever since his past love with Daisy, Gatsby has been living a harsh life like Madame Loisel, toiling for money in order to win back Daisy. Jay Gatsby and Madame Loisel's dreams are obstacles in living a life of mental stability and happiness.

Additionally, both Madame Loisel and Gatsby turn to dishonest actions in endeavoring to attain their dream. For example, after losing the necklace, Madame Loisel declares, " We must consider how to replace that ornament" (Guy de Maupassant 4). Instead of contemplating on telling her friend the truth, Madame Loisel seeks a dishonest subterfuge. Had Madame Loisel told the truth, she would not have suffered the past ten years, straining to save out an immense amount of money for a piece of jewelry which her friend later calls " paste" (Guy de Maupassant 5). It was Madame Loisel's dream to become wealthy that brought her to this tragedy: had she not desired a stunning necklace fit for who she was " supposed to be born as," she would not have lied about the loss of the necklace and therefore save herself from ten prolonged years of anguish. Furthermore, Tom Buchanan reveals one of Gatsby's tactics on how he became wealthy: " He and this Wolfshiem bought <https://assignbuster.com/the-necklace-and-the-great-gatsby-essay/>

up a lot of side-street drug stores here and in Chicago and sold grain alcohol over the counter” (Fitzgerald 141).

The answer to the persistent question on how Gatsby earned all his money is this: he has gained it illegally. While feeling the desire to gain Daisy back, Gatsby knew at the same time that working for money righteously would not give him enough of it to please Daisy. Thus, he has turned to degradable ways in obtaining his massive wealth. His dream blinded Gatsby to all moral sensitivity and is the cause of the shame he feels when Tom reveals his hidden secret in front of Daisy. Gatsby and Madame Loisel mar their reputation as a result of seeking accomplishment of their unattainable dream. Madame Loisel is a similar character to Jay Gatsby, because they both are oblivious to the irrationality of their dream and thus fall into chaos, rather than joy.

We should take the stories of Madame Loisel and Gatsby’s downfalls as valuable lessons and avoid living a misleading life. It is not possible to create things that cannot be, and denial of this fact is only detrimental to us. Even though it may not be easy and require time, letting go of a false dream will greatly improve one’s life.