

# The diamond necklace

Literature, Russian Literature



In *The Diamond Necklace* by Guy de Maupassant, Matilda one of the main characters is very frustrated with how her life is. She was born a very elegant woman but in here day and age women are not recognized on a social scale. Unfortunately she was born into a family of clerks, no way to become recognized for her true beauty. When old enough she married a petty clerk from the Board of Education. Throughout the story Matilda's outlook on life and her way of life in general changes.

First, Matilda was "One of those pretty, charming, young ladies" (PG. 1) who was very disappointed because there was no way she could climb higher in the ladder of society. She was capable of much more including all the riches, jewelry, castles, and delicacies of an upper class wife. Unfortunately being born into her lower class family Matilda was stuck in her apartment with "the shabby walls, worn chairs, and faded fabrics" (PG.

11). As she had married a petty clerk her life wasn't looking to get much better, she would visit one of her former schoolmates who had all the luxuries she desired.

Upon returning she would "weep for whole days afterward, from misery, regret, disappointment, and despair" (PG. 12). Matilda was not very happy with the life she was living. One evening her husband came home with an envelope, Matilda opened it to find it was an invitation to an affair at the Ministers residence. At first Matilda was enraged, as she didn't have the proper gowns to wear making there no reason for her to be excited. As her husband had not thought of this he asked, "how much would a suitable

dress cost? ” (PG. 12). Matilda came to the conclusion that to get something nice enough it would cost four hundred francs.

At first her husband was shocked as this was a lot of money and he had just saved up this amount to go hunting with his friends the following summer. After slight hesitation he insisted she take the money to get a gown. As she was delighted the ball was quickly approaching, as the next issue came up she realized that she had no elegant jewelry to go with her new dress. Distraught and annoyed her husband could sense some was up, they argued a little bit and by the end her husband had the great idea that she “ go and find her friend Mme.

Forestier and ask her to lend some of her jewels” (PG. 12). Matilda very excited by her husband’s idea rushed to her friends house the next day, she found a necklace that was so beautiful that it made her “ hands tremble” (PG. 13). Matilda then proceeded to go to the ball having the time of her life, “ She danced enthusiastically, passionately, intoxicated with pleasure” (PG. 14) afterwards she was rushed home due to the embarrassment of being seen with her everyday wrap around her gown rather than lavishing in furs.

Upon getting undressed and taking one last look in the mirror of herself she realized the necklace was gone. Matilda being to shocked remained at home while her husband went and looked for the necklace, he returned in the early morning hours without the necklace. When Matilda realized she was not going to find the necklace she went around to multiple jewelers trying to find a replica necklace, finally she found one that would cost her thirty-six thousand francs. They did everything they could to get the money and as soon as they could they replaced Mme. Forestier’s necklace.

Upon returning Ms. Forestier was very displeased saying, " You should have returned it to me sooner. I might have needed it. " (PG. 15). Matilda now lead a new life, working any job she could to pay off the massive debt she now had, they sold everything she owned and lived with the bare minimum. Now that they were broke she even " clothed like a working-class woman" (PG. 15), changing her whole outlook on life. This life lasted Matilda and her husband a whole ten years, at the end of this decade they were both very weathered as Matilda looked much more weathered then before. Mme. Loisel looked old now. She had become a hard, strong woman, the crude woman of the poor household. "(PG. 15) One day she was walking in the Champs-Elysees as she came across Mme. Forestier, very excited to see her she approached her.

At first Ms. Forestier didn't recognize her but as Matilda informed her who she was she figured it out. They began to talk and Matilda decided to explain to her the story about the necklace and all the hardship she had been through. Ms. Forestier in shock then told Matilda that he certain necklace was only worth five hundred francs. Throughout the changes of events in Matilda's life, Matilda also changes. From the snobby wife who thought she deserved better, to the riches she thought she deserved right back to the other side of the spectrum. Matilda grew to have a different outlook on life and respect what she had a little more then she did before. The events in her life taught her lesson's, which in turn made her, a different person then she was. Matilda changed throughout the story making her a dynamic character.