

Way to happiness



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Way to Happiness Although money plays an important part in an individual's life, it does not lead to happiness. Covetousness will finally result in unhappiness, whereas happiness stems from the kindness and warmth of people. This theme has been brought out by various great writers in their own styles. While Guy de Maupassant stresses the futility of going after money and false prestige, in his inimitable style with the surprise ending, D. H. Lawrence goes about it in his direct way. The great Russian writers, Anton Chekhov and Leo Tolstoy have also dealt with the subject. While Chekhov's story about the beggar is a unique combination of comedy and pathos, Tolstoy stresses simple living and high thinking in many of his works. .

In "The horse dealer's daughter", Lawrence describes the last day of a previously prosperous stable which had fallen on bad times, and the horses are being led away. The brothers who had inherited the stable and the debts from their father, are discussing how they would fend for themselves. Their maiden sister, Mabel does not answer the brothers' questions on what she proposes to do. Later, when she tries to commit suicide, she is saved by the young doctor Fergusson, who falls in love with her. Lawrence describes how the doctor almost drowns while trying to save her, and how his act of humanity brings him love. The author describes her father, who, when their fortunes declined, "had married a second time to retrieve his fortunes."(Lawrence 418) Although it shows the lengths to which some individuals would go to increase their wealth, his late marriage did not bring the old man happiness, but "debt and threatening." (Lawrence 418) Set in rural England of the early twentieth century, "The horse dealer's daughter" has the raw, earthy quality of the working class about it. Considering the period it was written, the story is bold and outspoken.

Anton Chekhov's "The Beggar", is set in Russia of the early twentieth century. In contrast to Lawrence's outspoken and bold narration, Chekhov's story deals with the subtle and incommunicable feelings. The advocate Skvortsoff, belonging to the moneyed upper class, tries to help a beggar by making him chop wood to earn his living. When he meets the beggar after two years he finds that the latter has become a respectable notary. The beggar tells him that it was the advocate's cook who had wrought the change in him! He says, "I can't tell you how much misery she suffered. she used to chop the wood for meowing to her noble deeds and words, a change took place in my heart." (Chekhov 208)

While Chekhov's story has seemingly irrelevant details which are in reality laden with hidden meaning, Guy de Maupassant in his famous story, "The Necklace" shows the futility of money and rank. The story is set in France of the late nineteenth century, and Maupassant brings in the element of surprise at the end. The central character Mathilde, the wife of an economical clerk, borrows a diamond necklace from her friend to wear to an official party and loses it. The couple work for ten years to pay for a replacement only to find in the end that the necklace was paste. Mathilde, who longed for the luxuries of life, "was distressed at the poverty of her dwelling, at the bareness of the walls, at the shabby chairs". (Maupassant 38) When she sees her friend's collection of jewelry, "her heart throbbed with an immoderate desire." (Maupassant 41). To repay the debt, she and her husband work day and night, and endure so many hardships that she becomes prematurely aged. Maupassant ends the story with Madame Forestier saying, "It was worth at most only five hundred francs!" (Maupassant 47)

Human frailty often throws the individual into an abyss of unhappiness which cannot be lessened by money or prestige. It is the humaneness of the individuals which uplifts them and others.

Works cited

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