

The Diamond Necklace

- **Guy de Maupassant**

Guy de Maupassant is the greatest French short-story writer. He wrote about realistic character with all human follies. He presents his characters, poor or rich, as the victims of ironic needs and faiths.

INTRODUCTION: The Diamond Necklace is a short-story by Guy de Maupassant. It was published in 1884. The story became one of his most popular works. It tells the story of a 19th century middle-class French couple. In a fraction of seconds, their life is changed entirely. Maupassant tells the story with a twist at the end.

Madame Loisel's lifestyle: The protagonist of the story is Madame Mathilde Loisel. She was a beautiful and ambitious young woman. She belonged to middle-class family. Her husband Monsieur Loisel was a gentleman. He worked as a clerk in the Ministry of Public Instruction. She was never satisfied with her middle-class lifestyle. She craved for upper-class lifestyle. As a beautiful woman she felt that she deserved much more.

Invitation to the Ball: Mr. Loisel was a gentleman. He tried to provide a happy life to his wife. She tried hard to obtain the invitation for ministerial Ball. The invitation could not have a desirable reaction in Mathilde. She showed no interest and was worried about her poor wardrobe. Her husband sacrificed his savings 400 francs to get her a pretty evening gown. He had saved the money to buy a gun for the shooting expedition during the summer along with his friends.

The borrowed Necklace: Mathilde was not satisfied as she did not have a piece of jewellery. She would be made fun of her poor status. So, her husband suggested a plan. As per the plan she borrowed a diamond necklace from her rich friend Jeanne Forestier. Mathilde was happy to borrow diamond necklace in the black satin box.

The Ball: Mathilde was the centre of attraction of the ball. Almost all the men (even the Minister) wanted a dance with her. She enjoyed the attention and happily danced all through the night. Her husband waited for her patiently till 4'o clock in the morning. When they came out, her husband was concerned about the cold weather. He wrapped her with a wrap. But this gesture was not welcomed by Mathilde. She was conscious of the low-quality wrap. They took a shabby cab to their house in Rue de Martyrs.

The lost Necklace: At home, Mathilde found out that the diamond necklace was missing. Her husband searched all the way till ball hall. He spent the whole day, but in

vain. Finally, they bought a week-time to return the necklace to her friend. The pretext was that the clasp of the necklace was to be fixed.

The new Diamond Necklace (The replica): The couple finally found a shop at Palais-Royal. They bought the replica of the lost diamond necklace for thirty-six thousand francs. They had to borrow money from several sources. Mr. Loisel made use of his inheritance of eighteen thousand francs. The necklace was returned and Madame Forestier accepted it with a frown as it was a delayed return.

Change in lifestyle: There was a complete change in the lifestyle of the Loisels. Mathilde's husband had to work as a tradesman's accountant during evenings. He copied manuscripts at nights. Mathilde had to work without the help of maid and cook. This lifestyle lasted for ten years.

The final twist: Mathilde now looked old. She often pondered over the ball night and the sudden turn of events. One Sunday, she took a walk in the Champs Elysees park. Madame Forestier was there with her child. She could not identify Mathilde. When Mathilde narrated about the loss, Madame Forestier commented that the necklace was not a diamond one. It was only a pastel necklace and was only worthy of five hundred francs.

Conclusion: The Diamond Necklace depicts the story of a greedy, vain woman's life gets changed for the worse. The main causes for the change are greed and vanity.