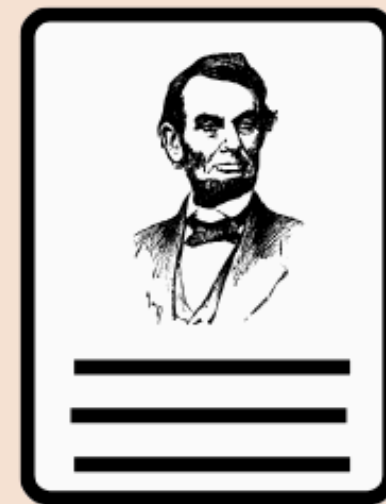


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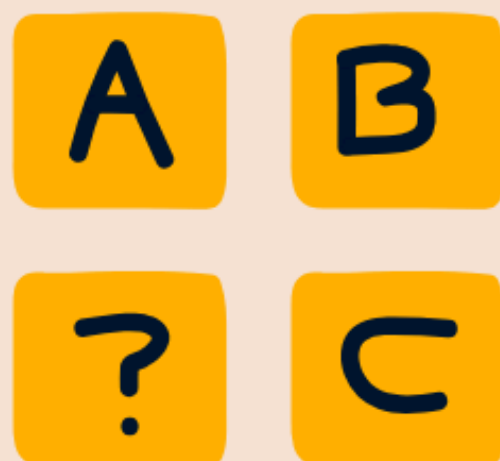
English Notes



**Full
Explanations**



**Character
Sketch**



**Word
Meanings**



**Tone, Central
idea, devices....**

Footprints without Feet

7. The Necklace

Chapter Explanation

In *The Necklace*, Guy de Maupassant presents the life of Matilda Loisel, a pretty young woman born into a **family of clerks** but filled with dreams of luxury and **social prestige**. She feels she has been born, as if by an “**error of destiny**,” into a life beneath her desires. This idea creates irony, because her unhappiness comes not only from poverty but from her **dissatisfaction and constant comparison**. Though she lives a simple middle-class life with her husband, a clerk in the Board of Education, Matilda remains deeply unhappy. The shabby rooms and plain meals highlight the contrast between her reality and her imagined **life of elegance**. While her husband is content and easily pleased, she longs for wealth, admiration, and beauty.

One day, her husband brings an invitation to a grand ball hosted by the **Minister of Public Instruction**. Instead of feeling happy, Matilda becomes upset because she has nothing suitable to wear. Her husband sacrifices his savings of four hundred francs so she can buy a dress. Even then, she feels **incomplete without jewellery**. She borrows a beautiful diamond necklace from her rich friend Mme Forestier. At the ball, Matilda becomes the **centre of attention** and enjoys the admiration she had always desired. For one night, she lives her dream life.

However, after returning home, she discovers that the **necklace is lost**. Panic follows, and despite searching everywhere, it cannot be found. To avoid shame, the couple decides to **replace** it. They buy a similar necklace for thirty-six thousand francs, borrowing heavily. This decision leads to **ten years of hardship**. They dismiss their maid, move to a poor attic, and live a life of struggle. Matilda undergoes a complete transformation, becoming a hardworking and rough woman, while her husband works tirelessly to repay the debt.

After ten years, the debt is finally cleared. One day, Matilda meets Mme Forestier and reveals the **truth about the lost necklace**. At this moment comes the shocking twist: the original necklace was **fake** and worth only a **small amount**. This ending creates powerful irony, showing that a small mistake and false pride led to years of unnecessary suffering. The necklace becomes a **symbol of illusion**, false prestige, and the danger of valuing appearance over reality.

Detailed Character Sketches

Matilda Loisel

Matilda Loisel is beautiful but **extremely dissatisfied**. She dreams of luxury and social admiration, which makes her unhappy with her simple life. Her vanity and desire for appearance dominate her thinking. However, after losing the necklace, she shows **strength and endurance** by accepting years of hardship. She transforms into a hardworking woman, but her life becomes tragic due to her pride and poor decisions.

M. Loisel

M. Loisel is simple, loving, and selfless. He is content with his life and supports his wife without complaint. He sacrifices his savings for her happiness and works tirelessly for years to repay the debt. His character represents **honesty, patience, and quiet sacrifice**.

Mme Forestier

Mme Forestier is Matilda's wealthy friend. She appears generous by lending the necklace but maintains a certain social distance. In the end, she reveals the truth about the necklace, creating the story's final irony. Her role highlights the theme of appearance versus reality.

Central Message

The story shows that vanity, pride, and obsession with social status can destroy a person's life. It teaches that honesty is better than concealment and that appearance can be deceptive. True happiness lies in contentment, not in showing off wealth.

Narrator's Tone

The narrator's tone is sympathetic yet ironic. While he understands Matilda's desires, he also exposes her flaws and the consequences of her choices. The irony becomes strongest at the end, making the message powerful.

Word Meanings

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Incessantly – continuously. | 11. Fruiterer – seller of fruits. |
| 2. Tureen – a deep dish for serving soup. | 12. Sou – a small French coin. |
| 3. Vexation – annoyance or frustration. | 13. Awry – not in proper position. |
| 4. Modest – simple; not expensive. | 14. Frigid – cold in manner. |
| 5. Ecstatic – extremely happy. | 15. Clasp – fastening of a necklace. |
| 6. Bewilderment – confusion. | 16. Shabby – worn out; poor-looking. |
| 7. Ruinous – causing great damage. | 17. Admiration – praise. |
| 8. Usurers – money-lenders charging high interest. | 18. Poverty-stricken – very poor. |
| 9. Attic – room below the roof. | 19. Haggling – bargaining over price. |
| 10. Odious – very unpleasant. | 20. Chaplet – necklace or ornament. |
| | 21. Delicacies – costly foods |

Reference Information

1. Setting of the story: The story is set in France, with places like the Minister's ball, the Palais-Royal, and the Champs-Élysées reflecting an urban setting.
2. Matilda's background: She belongs to a lower middle-class family and is married to a clerk.
3. Cause of unhappiness: Her dissatisfaction and desire for luxury, not actual poverty, make her miserable.
4. Husband's nature: M. Loisel is loving, simple, and self-sacrificing.
5. Cost of dress: Four hundred francs, saved by her husband for a gun.
6. Jewellery choices: Bracelets, pearl necklace, Venetian cross, and finally the diamond necklace.
7. Success at the ball: She becomes the most admired woman present.
8. Loss of necklace: Discovered only after returning home.
9. Search efforts: Visits to police, cab offices, and newspaper advertisement.
10. Replacement cost: Thirty-six thousand francs.
11. Duration of suffering: Ten years of poverty and hard labour.
12. Matilda's transformation: From a charming woman to a rough and hardworking one.
13. Final revelation: The necklace was fake and inexpensive.
14. Major conflicts: Human vs Self (vanity), Human vs Society (class), Human vs Circumstance (loss).

Literary devices:

Irony – fake necklace causes real suffering.

Symbolism – necklace represents false pride.

Imagery – contrast between poverty and luxury.

Contrast – dream vs reality.

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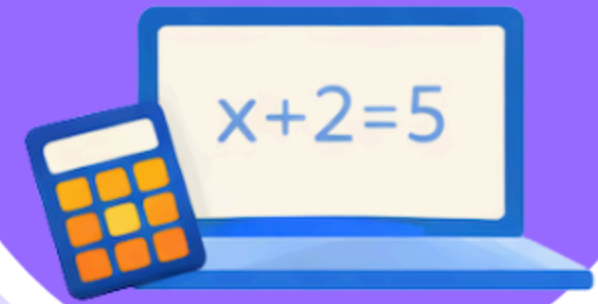
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