

L. N. Mithila University, Darbhanga

B. A. (Part II) - English Composition
(50 MARKS)

Date: 15.04.2020

Dr. Hemant Kumar Thakur
Guest Teacher, Dept. of English
V. S. J. College, Rajnagar
(9470883086)

Topic: The Necklace (Short story)
(critical appreciation)

The Necklace is the best short story written by G. de Maupassant who was a realist and looked life tearlessly. He found treachery, greed, jealousy, betrayal and other evil passions predominating in human life which made him accused of cynicism.

The Present story is undoubtedly the superb not only of one particular literature but of the literature of the world. It has a flawless plot, most convincing characterisation, unflinching and universal appeal and a firm grip of the seamy and dark aspects of human life, yet away from darkness of despair and pessimism. The story is about a young lady, Madam Loisel (Mathilde) who is exceptionally beautiful. She has uncommon grace but she is born in a poor family. Her desires are much higher than her status. She wishes to marry an affluent person but fails to achieve her desire due to poverty. She has to be the wife of a clerk in the office of the Minister of Public Instruction, and her dreams to lead the life of ease and comfort, pomp and show remains unfulfilled, and it brings her in depression.

Once, ~~she~~ Madam Loisel's husband brings her an invitation card from his boss for participating in a ball. He thinks that this card will make her happy but she became more sad and depressed because she has no dress, no jewel to wear. Her husband manages to purchase a new dress but unable to buy a jewel. He suggests her to wear natural flowers but she does not agree. In the ball everyone appreciated her, but after it was over, she found her necklace missing which she had borrowed from her friend.

Her husband left no stone unturned to search it but in vain. They decide to replace the lost necklace which costs them thirty six thousand francs. Her husband already had eighteen thousand, and the same amount he borrowed to buy a diamond necklace. In order to repay the borrowed amount they have to undergo through great financial hardship. She has to work hard and save the last penny. During this, she lost her delicacy and beauty. She looked like an old ugly lady. Accidentally, one day she comes across Mrs. Forestier who does not recognise her. Now, Madame Loisel narrated her everything.

The story ends abruptly when Mrs. Forestier reveals that the necklace Madame Loisel had borrowed was only an imitation of diamond. Its cost was hardly five hundred francs. Thus the story ends with universal evoking appeal. The close examination of the plot of the story makes it clear that from the beginning till the end, it is packed with action. It justifies the definition of short story given by Walpole - "A story should be a story of record of things happening, well leading through suspense to a climax and a satisfying denouement."

The secret of the success of this story is the note of contrast that is pervasive here.

Over and above, the story is significant for it shows the whole of the artist in exampassant. The story is noted for the guilt, truth and treachery which are so common in human life. It reflects the author's psychological understanding of the human passions.