

25. The Necklace

by Guy de Maupassant

【二十五】項鍊 – 莫泊桑著

The girl was one of those pretty and charming young creatures who sometimes are born, as if by a slip of fate, into a family of clerks. She had no dowry, no expectations, no way of being known, understood, loved, married by any rich and distinguished man; so she let herself be married to a little clerk of the Ministry of Public Instruction.

這個女孩是那種有時候因為失誤的命運所造成出生在辦事員家庭的漂亮迷人女孩子。她沒有嫁妝，沒有指望，沒有辦法為富有而顯貴的男人認識，以至於人家能來瞭解她，恩愛她，來跟她結婚；於是她就嫁給了一位大眾教育局的小職員。

She dressed plainly because she could not dress well, but she was unhappy as if she had really fallen from a higher station; since with women there is neither caste nor rank, for beauty, grace and charm take the place of family and birth. Natural ingenuity, instinct for what is elegant, a supple mind are their sole hierarchy, and often make of women of the people the equals of the very greatest ladies.

因為她穿不起好衣服，所以裝束平平淡淡的，但是呢，她不快樂，好像她真的由較高的價位降低下來了一樣；她認為女人沒有種姓或者社會階級，典雅與魅力取代了家族和出生的差別。與生俱來的賢慧，對優雅氣質的直覺，溫柔的心思是她們唯一的遺傳，這些條件經常把平民出生的女人裝備得足足與高尚家族出生的女士們並駕齊驅。

Mathilde suffered ceaselessly, feeling herself born to enjoy all delicacies and all luxuries. She was distressed at the poverty of her dwelling, at the bareness of the walls, at the shabby chairs, the ugliness of the curtains. All those things, of which another woman of her rank would never even have been conscious, tortured her and made her angry. The sight of the little Breton peasant who did her humble housework aroused in her despairing regrets and bewildering dreams. She thought of silent antechambers hung with Oriental tapestry, illumined by tall bronze candelabra, and of two great footmen in knee breeches who sleep in the big armchairs, made drowsy by the oppressive heat of the stove. She thought of long reception halls hung with ancient silk, of the dainty cabinets containing priceless curiosities and of the little coquettish perfumed reception rooms made for chatting at five o'clock with intimate friends, with men famous and sought after, whom all women envy and whose attention they all desire.

迷迭爾為了這個一直在受苦，因為她自認為她生來應該享受所有精緻的東西，所有奢侈的東西。看到她自己住的窮酸地方，她就難過，房間裏牆上空空如也，椅子是這麼破爛，窗簾又那麼難看。所有這一切，對於其他和她一樣的社會地位的女人們來說根本不會當成一回事，然而對她來講，卻極痛苦難挨，令她生氣。他們雇了一個布里敦尼的農家小婦人來替他們做不起眼的家事，每當她看到她在家裏打掃或者做東做西的時候，總是令她失望而悔恨，而且會令她胡思亂想。她腦海裏想到寧靜的前廳掛著東方進口的刺繡品，天花板掛著亮晶晶的銅製燈燭臺，兩位高大的僕人穿著及膝短褲，他們睡在大大的扶手椅子上，為了爐子發出逼人的熱氣昏昏欲睡。她夢想長長的一間接著一間客廳，廳門和廊上都點綴著珍貴的古絲織品，也想到精巧的櫥櫃展示出無價之

寶，還有那些小巧的接待室，香氣洋溢，專門用來下午五點的時候，和最親密的朋友以及出名而為大眾矚目的男士們談天說地的。

When she sat down to dinner, before the round table covered with a tablecloth in use three days, opposite her husband, who uncovered the soup tureen and declared with a delighted air, "Ah, the good soup! I don't know anything better than that," she thought of dainty dinners, of shining silverware, of tapestry that peopled the walls with ancient personages and with strange birds flying in the midst of a fairy forest; and she thought of delicious dishes served on marvellous plates and of the whispered gallantries to which you listen with a sphinxlike smile while you are eating the pink meat of a trout or the wings of a quail.

當她面對他先生坐下來吃晚飯，望著桌巾用了三天的圓形餐桌，她先生把湯盤的蓋子打開的時候高興地宣告，“啊，好湯！我不知道還有比這個更好的，”這時候，她幾乎存在另外一個世界，腦海裏出現的則是講究的晚餐，閃閃發光的銀製餐具，餐廳的牆上掛著刺繡了圖畫的掛毯，其中繡了古代的人像以及在仙境叢林裏面飛翔的珍禽，還有那些極其精巧的盤子盛著精品佳餚，接著，當你咀嚼鱒魚淡紅色的細肉以及鵝鶉細嫩的翅膀的時候，拿人家喃喃細語的風流韻事來佐餐，少不得自己也發出會心而神秘的嗤鼻竊笑。

She had no gowns, no jewels, nothing. And she loved nothing but that. She felt made for that. She would have liked so much to please, to be envied, to be charming, to be sought after.

她沒有長上衣，珠寶，什麼都沒有。偏偏那些就是她所喜愛的。她自認為以她天生的條件來說就該搭配這些珍貴而上層的東西。她幾乎按耐不住要來取悅人，令人嫉妒，魅力十足，而且被人追求。

She had a friend, a former schoolmate at the convent, who was rich, and whom she did not like to go to see any more because she felt so sad when she came home.

她有位朋友，那是以前在女修道院一起上學的同學。這個朋友富有，但是她卻不喜歡再去看她，原因是每當她拜訪過她回到家之後會變得很傷心。

But one evening her husband reached home with a triumphant air and holding a large envelope in his hand.

但是呢，有一天她先生手裏拿著一支大大的信封回家。

"There," said he, "there is something for you."

“你看，”他說，“你看，有東西給你。”

She tore the paper quickly and drew out a printed card which bore these words:

她很快地把信封撕開，拿出一張印刷了的卡片，上面寫道：

The Minister of Public Instruction and Madame Georges Ramponneau request the honor of M. and Madame Loisel's company at the palace of the Ministry on Monday evening, January 18th.

大眾教育局長藍喬先生暨夫人尊請陸伊薩先生夫人來參加聚會；地點：教育局大樓；時間：一月十八日夜晚。

Instead of being delighted, as her husband had hoped, she threw the invitation on the table crossly, muttering:

她先生以為她會高興，相反地，她把請帖彆扭地丟在桌上，喃喃地說：

"What do you wish me to do with that?"

“你要我拿它怎麼樣？”

"Why, my dear, I thought you would be glad. You never go out, and this is such a fine opportunity. I had great trouble to get it. Every one wants to go; it is very select, and they are not giving many invitations to clerks. The whole official world will be there."

“怎麼了，我親愛的，我以為你會高興呢。妳從來不出門，你看，這是一個多好的機會。我還花了很多工夫才拿到這個請帖的呢。大家都要去；所以他們很挑剔，根本不發請帖給辦事人員。所有那些長官們可都要去。”

She looked at him with an irritated glance and said impatiently:

她拿生氣的眼光看他，一邊沉不住氣地說道：

"And what do you wish me to put on my back?"

“你要我穿什麼樣的衣服去亮相？”

He had not thought of that. He stammered:

這個他可沒有想到。於是乎支支吾吾地說道：

"Why, the gown you go to the theatre in. It looks very well to me."

“怎麼，你穿去看電影的那件外衣。我看起來很不錯嘛。”

He stopped, distracted, seeing that his wife was weeping. Two great tears ran slowly from the corners of her eyes toward the corners of her mouth.

他停下來不說話了，因為他看到他太太在哭，分了他的心。兩顆大大的淚珠緩緩地由她的眼角流下來到她嘴角。

"What's the matter? What's the matter?" he answered.

“怎麼回事？怎麼回事？”他這麼回答她。

By a violent effort she conquered her grief and replied in a calm voice, while she wiped her wet cheeks:

她使盡顫抖的力量克服自己的傷心然後沉靜地說，一邊把臉上的眼淚擦掉：

"Nothing. Only I have no gown, and, therefore, I can't go to this ball. Give your card to some colleague whose wife is better equipped than I am."

“沒什麼。只是呢，我沒有外衣，所以呢，我不能去這個舞會。把請帖給你的同事裏面太太的梳妝比較充裕的人。

He was in despair. He resumed:

他太失望了。繼續這麼說：

"Come, let us see, Mathilde. How much would it cost, a suitable gown, which you could use on other occasions--something very simple?"

“我們來看看，迷迭爾。這個要多少錢，一件適合的外套，你可以在其他場合穿的一最單純的？”

She reflected several seconds, making her calculations and wondering also what sum she could ask without drawing on herself an immediate refusal and a frightened exclamation from the economical clerk.

她尋思了半晌，算了一算，也估量了一下她要求的數目不能太多，否則的話，她馬上會被拒絕，不但如此，她小氣噉噉的辦事員先生還要大大吃驚地大叫一聲呢。

Finally she replied hesitating:

片刻過後，她終於不怎麼確定地回答：

"I don't know exactly, but I think I could manage it with four hundred francs."

“我不怎麼確定，但是呢，我想有四百法郎的話我能辦成這件事。”

He grew a little pale, because he was laying aside just that amount to buy a gun and treat himself to a little shooting next summer on the plain of Nanterre, with several friends who went to shoot larks there of a Sunday.

他的臉色變得有些蒼白，這原因是他正在存這麼多的錢要買一支獵槍，讓他明年夏天能夠和幾位朋友星期天到南特平原去打雲雀。

But he said:

然而他卻這麼說：

"Very well. I will give you four hundred francs. And try to have a pretty gown."

“很好。我要給你四百法郎。試著去買一件漂亮的外衣。”

The day of the ball drew near and Madame Loisel seemed sad, uneasy, anxious. Her frock was ready, however. Her husband said to her one evening:

舞會的日期接近了，陸伊薩太太看來傷心，不安，而焦躁。她的禮服倒是準備停當了。有天晚上他先生跟她說：

"What is the matter? Come, you have seemed very queer these last three days."

“到底怎麼回事？告訴我，你最近幾天看起來怪怪的。”

And she answered:

她這麼回答他：

"It annoys me not to have a single piece of jewelry, not a single ornament, nothing to put on. I shall look poverty-stricken. I would almost rather not go at all."

“沒有一件珠寶這件事讓我煩惱，沒有首飾，沒東西來戴。我會看起來可憐兮兮的。我簡直還不如不要去。”

"You might wear natural flowers," said her husband. "They're very stylish at this time of year. For ten francs you can get two or three magnificent roses."

“你可以戴鮮花啊，”她先生說。“這個季節很流行。十法郎能買兩，三朵漂亮的玫瑰。”

She was not convinced.

她並沒有被他說服。

"No; there's nothing more humiliating than to look poor among other women who are rich."

“不；在富有的女人面前看起來窮酸是最侮辱人的。”

"How stupid you are!" her husband cried. "Go look up your friend, Madame Forestier, and ask her to lend you some jewels. You're intimate enough with her to do that."

“真笨啊！”她先生大聲說。“去找妳的朋友，佛瑞斯夫人，問她借給妳一些首飾。你們夠親密的，能夠這麼做。”

She uttered a cry of joy:

她發出了一聲歡樂的叫聲：

"True! I never thought of it."

“真的！我一直沒有想到。”

The next day she went to her friend and told her of her distress.

隔天，她去找她的朋友，跟她訴說她的苦惱。

Madame Forestier went to a wardrobe with a mirror, took out a large jewel box, brought it back, opened it and said to Madame Loisel:

佛瑞斯夫人走到一間門上裝了鏡子的衣櫥，從裏面拿出一個大珠寶盒，把它拿回來打開，跟陸伊薩太太說：

"Choose, my dear."

“請選，我親愛的。”

She saw first some bracelets, then a pearl necklace, then a Venetian gold cross set with precious stones, of admirable workmanship. She tried on the ornaments before the mirror, hesitated and could not make up her mind to part with them, to give them back. She kept asking:

她首先看到一些手鐲，然後是一條珍珠項鍊，然後是一支威尼斯金十字上面鑲了寶石，十分細巧的手工。她對著鏡子試戴這些裝飾，遲疑不定地，不知道要怎麼處理它們，還是退還它們才好。她繼續問：

"Haven't you any more?"

“妳還有其他的嗎？”

"Why, yes. Look further; I don't know what you like."

“哇，當然。再往下看；我不知道妳喜歡什麼。”

Suddenly she discovered, in a black satin box, a superb diamond necklace, and her heart throbbed with an immoderate desire. Her hands trembled as she took it. She fastened it round her throat, outside her high-necked waist, and was lost in ecstasy at her reflection in the mirror.

突然她在一支黑紗盒子裏面發現了一條超好的鑽石項鍊，她的心突突地跳，几乎是野心勃勃地。她拿起這條項鍊的時候雙手顫抖。她把它圍扣在喉嚨周圍高領腰衣高高的領子之外，隨即陶醉在鏡子裏面所反映出自己的形影。

Then she asked, hesitating, filled with anxious doubt:

然後她不很自信地問，充滿了焦疑之慮：

"Will you lend me this, only this?"

“你能借這個給我嗎，只這一件？”

"Why, yes, certainly."

“喔，是的，當然。”

She threw her arms round her friend's neck, kissed her passionately, then fled with her treasure.

她一把抱住她朋友的脖子，熱情地親吻她，然後帶著她的寶貝逃之夭夭。

The night of the ball arrived. Madame Loisel was a great success. She was prettier than any other woman present, elegant, graceful, smiling and wild with joy. All the men looked at her, asked her name, sought to be introduced. All the attaches of the Cabinet wished to waltz with her. She was remarked by the minister himself.

舞會的那個夜晚終於來臨。陸伊薩夫人果然出盡了風頭。她比任何其他在場的女人都漂亮，更優雅，更盡興地微笑，幾乎不能自止。所有在場男士都注意看她，問她的芳名，期望跟她認識。所有局裏的隨員都想跟她跳華爾茲。甚至於局長都親身恭維她。

She danced with rapture, with passion, intoxicated by pleasure, forgetting all in the triumph of her beauty, in the glory of her success, in a sort of cloud of happiness comprised of all this homage, admiration, these awakened desires and of that sense of triumph which is so sweet to woman's heart.

她瘋狂地跳，熱情地跳，陶醉在歡樂之中，在她的美麗征服之中，忘了一切，這成功是多麼地榮耀，讓人家這麼尊崇和羨慕簡直讓她活在一朵快樂之雲裏面，潛伏了好久的渴望終於有這麼得見天日的一幕，女人的那種以柔剋剛的甜蜜滋味，也只有她自己心裏明白，無法言喻。

She left the ball about four o'clock in the morning. Her husband had been sleeping since midnight in a little deserted anteroom with three other gentlemen whose wives were enjoying the ball.

大約是凌晨四點的時候，她離開那舞會。他先生打從子夜起開始就已經和三位太太在高興地跳舞的男士們一起躲在一間沒有其他人而空落落的小小前廳裏面挺尸了。

He threw over her shoulders the wraps he had brought, the modest wraps of common life, the poverty of which contrasted with the elegance of the ball dress. She felt this and wished to escape so as not to be remarked by the other women, who were enveloping themselves in costly furs.

他把他帶來的圍巾圍在她肩膀上，一條不起眼的圍巾，它的窮酸比起大方優雅的舞衣，倒是明白相對的對照。她意識到這個，於是想逃之夭夭，免得被其他那些女人評頭論足，那些女人正在把昂貴的皮毛大衣包裹住自己的身體。

Loisel held her back, saying: "Wait a bit. You will catch cold outside. I will call a cab."

陸伊薩抓住她，跟她說：“等一等。到外面妳會着涼。我要叫一輛馬車。”

But she did not listen to him and rapidly descended the stairs. When they reached the street they could not find a carriage and began to look for one, shouting after the cabmen passing at a distance.

然而她沒聽他的，反而快快下了階梯。他們走到街上，找不到一輛馬車，於是開始尋找，一面看到有那些遠遠經過的，就大聲呼叫，要他們來。

They went toward the Seine in despair, shivering with cold. At last they found on the quay one of those ancient night cabs which, as though they were ashamed to show their shabbiness during the day, are never seen round Paris until after dark.

他們絕望地走向賽因河，冷得全身發抖。終於他們在碼頭上找到一輛那種老古董的馬車，那種好大恥於大白天拿出破爛不堪的樣子亮相，只有在天黑以後才在巴黎街頭出現的那種馬車。

It took them to their dwelling in the Rue des Martyrs, and sadly they mounted the stairs to their flat. All was ended for her. As to him, he reflected that he must be at the ministry at ten o'clock that morning.

這輛古董馬車把他們載回殉道者街，之後他們傷心地爬上樓梯回到自己的公寓。對她來說，一切都完了。至於他呢，他想起早上十點鐘必須到局裏上班。

She removed her wraps before the glass so as to see herself once more in all her glory. But suddenly she uttered a cry. She no longer had the necklace around her neck!

她對著鏡子把圍巾拿掉，要最後一度審視自己的光耀。卻突然間驚叫一聲。脖子上的項鏈不見了！

"What is the matter with you?" demanded her husband, already half undressed.

“你是怎麼搞的？”他先生問她，自己已經把參加宴會的衣服脫了一半。

She turned distractedly toward him.

她像個喪了膽的人一樣轉向他。

"I have--I have--I've lost Madame Forestier's necklace," she cried.

“我把 – 我把 – 我把佛瑞斯夫人的項鏈弄丟了，”她哭叫。

He stood up, bewildered.

他站起來，迷迷糊糊地。

"What!--how? Impossible!"

“你說什麼！ -- 怎麼？不可能的事！”

They looked among the folds of her skirt, of her cloak, in her pockets, everywhere, but did not find it.

他們在她的衣裳上上下下，裏裏外外，每個口袋，每條折縫都找遍了，但是就是找不到。

"You're sure you had it on when you left the ball?" he asked.

“你確定你離開舞會的時候戴著它？”他問。

"Yes, I felt it in the vestibule of the minister's house."

“我確定，在局長家玄關的地方我還感覺它在。”

"But if you had lost it in the street we should have heard it fall. It must be in the cab."

“但是，假如是在街上掉掉的，我們應該聽到聲音。一定是在馬車上丟的。”

"Yes, probably. Did you take his number?"

“是的，可能。你有他的號碼嗎？”

"No. And you--didn't you notice it?"

“沒有。你呢 – 你有注意那號碼嗎？”

"No."

“沒有。”

They looked, thunderstruck, at each other. At last Loisel put on his clothes.

他們好像被雷擊了一般，彼此凝視著。最後，陸伊薩穿上衣服。

"I shall go back on foot," said he, "over the whole route, to see whether I can find it."

“我要沿路走回去，”他說，“走過整條街，看看能不能找到它。”

He went out. She sat waiting on a chair in her ball dress, without strength to go to bed, overwhelmed, without any fire, without a thought.

他走出去。她還穿著舞會的衣裳坐著等，無力去睡覺，極度地傷心，也沒點爐火，腦袋完全一片空白。

Her husband returned about seven o'clock. He had found nothing.

她先生大約七點的時候回到家。什麼都沒看到。

He went to police headquarters, to the newspaper offices to offer a reward; he went to the cab companies--everywhere, in fact, whither he was urged by the least spark of hope.

他到警察總局，到報社，去刊登懸賞的廣告；他又去所有馬車公司－每一個地方都去了，事實上，凡是有最小的一絲絲，一丁點希望的地方，他都去了。

She waited all day, in the same condition of mad fear before this terrible calamity.

她等了整天，一直處在那種要逼她發狂的恐怖災難臨頭的心境裏頭。

Loisel returned at night with a hollow, pale face. He had discovered nothing.

晚上陸伊薩回來，整個臉都落空了，甚是蒼白。他完全沒有發現任何一丁點線索。

"You must write to your friend," said he, "that you have broken the clasp of her necklace and that you are having it mended. That will give us time to turn round."

“妳必須寫信跟妳的朋友說，”他說，“妳把項鍊鎖頭弄壞了，拿去修理。這樣子可以給我們一點緩衝的時間。”

She wrote at his dictation.

於是她照著他口述的寫了一封信。

At the end of a week they had lost all hope. Loisel, who had aged five years, declared:

一星期結束了，希望全失。陸伊薩，老了五歲，這麼宣佈：

"We must consider how to replace that ornament."

“我們必須考慮如何還個什麼給人家來代替這個首飾。”

The next day they took the box that had contained it and went to the jeweler whose name was found within. He consulted his books.

隔天，他們拿著那支空盒子，到那支盒子裏面寫的珠寶商那裏。這位珠寶商查了一下他的記錄簿。

"It was not I, madame, who sold that necklace; I must simply have furnished the case."

“那個項鍊不是我賣的，女士；我必定只是提供了這支盒子。”

Then they went from jeweler to jeweler, searching for a necklace like the other, trying to recall it, both sick with chagrin and grief.

他們一個接著一個的去找珠寶商，看看店裏頭有沒有樣子像那一條的，一面努力從腦海裏試圖記憶那一條項鍊的樣子，真的是令他們又氣惱，又傷心，都要急死了。

They found, in a shop at the Palais Royal, a string of diamonds that seemed to them exactly like the one they had lost. It was worth forty thousand francs. They could have it for thirty-six.

他們在皇家宮廷區的一家店找到了一條鑽石項鍊，看起來就像他們所丟掉的那條一模一樣。身價是四萬法郎。還價之後，他們可以拿三萬六買下它。

So they begged the jeweler not to sell it for three days yet. And they made a bargain that he should buy it back for thirty-four thousand francs, in case they should find the lost necklace before the end of February.

所以呢，他們拜托珠寶商這三天暫且不要賣這條項鍊。同時，他們也跟這個珠寶商約定，萬一他們在二月底前找到了那條遺失的項鍊，他該以三萬四的價錢把這一條買回去。

Loisel possessed eighteen thousand francs which his father had left him. He would borrow the rest.

陸伊薩的父親留給他一萬八千法郎。其餘的，他必須去借。

He did borrow, asking a thousand francs of one, five hundred of another, five louis here, three louis there. He gave notes, took up ruinous obligations, dealt with usurers and all the race of lenders. He compromised all the rest of his life, risked signing a note without even knowing whether he could meet it; and, frightened by the trouble yet to come, by the black misery that was about to fall upon him, by the prospect of all the physical privations and moral tortures that he was to suffer, he went to get the new necklace, laying upon the jeweler's counter thirty-six thousand francs.

他真的去借，這個一千，那個五百，這個一百，那個六十。他給出借條，這些借條明明是要把他毀掉的債務，又跟放高利貸的人交易，再加上雜七雜八那種借錢給人家的人。他根本不顧此生將來要怎麼辦，反正借條一到手他就簽名，完全沒有概念能不能還清這些債務；然後，心裏發毛，明明知道麻煩就要跟著臨身，明明知道黑暗和痛苦即將來臨，也知道他隨後將經歷的身體上的苦刑和道德上的折磨，就這麼，他去買那條新項鍊，把三萬六法郎往珠寶商的櫃檯一擺。

When Madame Loisel took back the necklace Madame Forestier said to her with a chilly manner:

當陸伊薩女士把項鍊拿去還的時候，佛瑞斯女士冷冷地說：

"You should have returned it sooner; I might have needed it."

“你應該早些還給我；我可能用得著它。”

She did not open the case, as her friend had so much feared. If she had detected the substitution, what would she have thought, what would she have said? Would she not have taken Madame Loisel for a thief?

她並沒有打開盒子，這是她朋友一直耽心害怕的。萬一她發現那是個代替品，會怎麼想，怎麼說？她不是要認為陸伊薩女士是個小偷了嗎？

Thereafter Madame Loisel knew the horrible existence of the needy. She bore her part, however, with sudden heroism. That dreadful debt must be paid. She would pay it. They dismissed their servant; they changed their lodgings; they rented a garret under the roof.

從這時候開始陸伊薩女士瞭解了窮苦人家恐怖的生活。然而，她突然變成一位英勇的女士，負起自己的責任。嚇死人的債務必須還給人家。她決心就要這麼做。他們把僕人解除掉；換了一處住的地方；他們搬到一間屋頂下方的頂閣。

She came to know what heavy housework meant and the odious cares of the kitchen. She washed the dishes, using her dainty fingers and rosy nails on greasy pots and pans. She washed the soiled linen, the shirts and the dishcloths, which she dried upon a line; she carried the slops down to the street every morning and carried up the water, stopping for breath at every landing. And dressed like a woman of the people, she went to the fruiterer, the grocer, the butcher, a basket on her arm, bargaining, meeting with impertinence, defending her miserable money, sou by sou.

她開始理解所謂的沉重的家務事是什麼意思，也明白了廚房裏拉拉雜雜的事情是多麼的討厭。她洗鍋盤，就是拿她那雙手纖巧的手指頭和玫瑰一般美麗的指甲這麼洗刷油膩的深淺鍋子。她洗骯髒的床單，衣服和廚房用的擦布，然後把它們掛在一條曬衣繩上面晾乾；她每天早上把骯髒的污水提到街上，然後把要用的水提上來，每走一段樓梯，都得休息一陣子。就和一般家庭主婦一樣，她提一支籃子，到水果攤，雜貨店，屠戶，等等地方，跟他們討價還價，忍受別人的魯莽言行，就是爲了省錢，那麼一毛一毛錢的跟他們計較。

Every month they had to meet some notes, renew others, obtain more time.

每個月，他們都得結一些欠單，新訂一些欠單，以便爭取更多的時間。

Her husband worked evenings, making up a tradesman's accounts, and late at night he often copied manuscript for five sous a page.

他先生晚上加班，替生意人結賬，然後，深夜，他常常替人做抄寫工作，那是每抄寫一頁五毛錢的工作。

This life lasted ten years.

這樣子，他們的生活維繫了十年之久。

At the end of ten years they had paid everything, everything, with the rates of usury and the accumulations of the compound interest.

十年終了，他們還清了所有的債務，完完全全結清，那是包括高利貸的利率和纍纍積積的利上加利的所有債務。

Madame Loisel looked old now. She had become the woman of impoverished households--strong and hard and rough. With frowsy hair, skirts askew and red hands, she talked loud while washing the floor with great swishes of water. But sometimes, when her husband was at the office, she sat down near the

window and she thought of that gay evening of long ago, of that ball where she had been so beautiful and so admired.

陸伊薩女士現在看起來老了。她已經成了一個窮困人家的女人－又壯，又硬，又粗。頭髮髒髒的，裙子歪歪的，雙手紅紅的，有時候一邊大聲講話，一邊擦地板擦得水刷刷作響。但是呢，又有時候，當她先生去上班，她坐在窗子旁邊，一邊回想遙遠往日的那個快樂的晚上，想當時，在那個舞會上，她多美，多令人仰慕。

What would have happened if she had not lost that necklace? Who knows? who knows? How strange and changeable is life! How small a thing is needed to make or ruin us!

假如她沒丟掉那條項鍊的話，又會怎麼個情況呢？誰知道呢？誰知道呢？生命是多麼飄忽不定！要造成我們，或者毀掉我們，真的是失之毫厘，差以千里。

But one Sunday, having gone to take a walk in the Champs Elysees to refresh herself after the labors of the week, she suddenly perceived a woman who was leading a child. It was Madame Forestier, still young, still beautiful, still charming.

然而，有個星期天，在一星期的勞碌之後，她到香榭麗舍大道去散步，恢復一下自己精力，突然間，她注意到一位婦人帶著一個小孩。那是佛瑞斯夫人，仍然年輕，仍然美麗，仍然迷人。

Madame Loisel felt moved. Should she speak to her? Yes, certainly. And now that she had paid, she would tell her all about it. Why not?

陸伊薩夫人感覺有點激動。她該跟她說話嗎？是的，當然。既然現在她還清了債務，要跟她把整個事情講給她聽。有何不可呢？

She went up.

於是她走過來。

"Good-day, Jeanne."

“妳好，珍妮。”

The other, astonished to be familiarly addressed by this plain good-wife, did not recognize her at all and stammered:

那一位呢，有這麼一個平平樸樸的善良家庭主婦這麼親切地招呼，確實嚇了一跳，也不認識她，於是她口口吃吃地說：

"But--madame!--I do not know---- You must have mistaken."

“這個－夫人！ -- 我不認識－你一定是認錯了人。”

"No. I am Mathilde Loisel."

“沒錯。我是陸伊薩迷迭爾。”

Her friend uttered a cry.

她的朋友驚呼了一聲。

"Oh, my poor Mathilde! How you are changed!"

“哦，可憐的迷迭爾！妳真的大大地改變了！”

"Yes, I have had a pretty hard life, since I last saw you, and great poverty--and that because of you!"

“是的，自從上次看到妳之後，我生活得很苦，而且很窮－而且都是爲了你！”

"Of me! How so?"

“爲了我！怎麼可能？”

"Do you remember that diamond necklace you lent me to wear at the ministerial ball?"

“記得那條你借給我穿到局長舞會的鑽石項鍊？”

"Yes. Well?"

“記得。怎麼了？”

"Well, I lost it."

“這個，我把它弄丟了。”

"What do you mean? You brought it back."

“妳在說什麼？妳還給我了。”

"I brought you back another exactly like it. And it has taken us ten years to pay for it. You can understand that it was not easy for us, for us who had nothing. At last it is ended, and I am very glad."

“我還給你另一條完全一樣的。我們花了十年的時間才付完了錢。妳可以瞭解對於我們一無所有的人來說很不容易。現在終於結束了，我也很高興這麼個了結。”

Madame Forestier had stopped.

佛瑞斯夫人已經停下腳步。

"You say that you bought a necklace of diamonds to replace mine?"

“你說你們買了一條鑽石項鍊來代替我的那條拿來還給我？”

"Yes. You never noticed it, then! They were very similar."

“是的。這麼說的話，妳一直沒有注意！它們看起來幾乎一模一樣。”

And she smiled with a joy that was at once proud and ingenuous.

她微笑地說，煥發出的歡喜興致也是驕傲，也是真誠。

Madame Forestier, deeply moved, took her hands.

佛瑞斯夫人深受感動，抓起她的手。

"Oh, my poor Mathilde! Why, my necklace was paste! It was worth at most only five hundred francs!"

“哎喲，可憐的迷迭爾！真是的，我的那條項鍊是條膺品！頂多值五百法郎！”