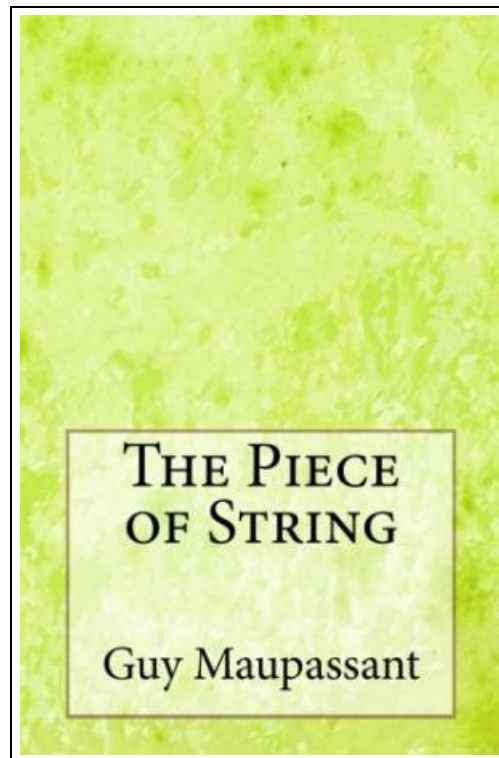


The Piece of String



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Reviews

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THE PIECE OF STRING

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The Piece of String is a short story by Guy de Maupassant. Henri Rene Albert Guy de Maupassant (5 August 1850 - 6 July 1893) was a popular 19th-century French writer, considered one of the fathers of the modern short story and one of the form's finest exponents. A protege of Flaubert, Maupassant's stories are characterized by their economy of style and efficient, effortless denouements. Many of the stories are set during the Franco-Prussian War of the 1870s and several describe the futility of war and the innocent civilians who, caught in the conflict, emerge changed. He authored some 300 short stories, six novels, three travel books, and one volume of verse. His first published story *Boule de Suif* (*Ball of Fat*, 1880) is often considered his masterpiece. He delighted in clever plotting, and served as a model for Somerset Maugham and O. Henry in this respect. His stories about expensive jewellery (*The Necklace*, *La parure*) are imitated with a twist by Maugham (*Mr Know-All*, *A String of Beads*) and Henry James (*Paste*). Taking his cue from Balzac, Maupassant wrote comfortably in both the high-Realist and fantastic modes; stories and novels such as *L Heritage* and *Bel-Ami* aim to recreate Third Republic France in a realistic way, whereas many of the short stories (notably *Le Horla* and *Qui sait?*) describe apparently supernatural phenomena. The supernatural in Maupassant, however, is often implicitly a symptom of the protagonists' troubled minds; Maupassant was fascinated by the burgeoning discipline of psychiatry, and attended the public lectures of Jean-Martin Charcot between 1885 and 1886. This interest is reflected in his fiction. Maupassant...

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