

After Twenty Years

Prepared by

Dr. D. Jockim

St. Xavier's College (Autonomous)

Palayamkottai

After Twenty Years

"After Twenty Years" is a short story by O. Henry. It takes place on a street in New York. One day, in the night, a policeman walks along the block. He comes across a man in the door way of a hardware store. The man informs the police that he is waiting for a friend. Twenty years earlier, he and his friend Jimmy had dinner at "Big Joe" Brady's. At that time, the man was eighteen years old and his friend Jimmy was twenty. After the dinner, they agreed to meet at ten o'clock, exactly twenty years later. The next day, he went to Chicago. The officer says goodbye and leaves. After sometime, a tall man comes and says that his name is Jimmy Wells. ~~The new man suggests that they can go to a place nearby.~~

- When Bob looks at the man, he tells him that he is not Jimmy Wells. He is sure that Jimmy's nose was not like this. The other man says that he is a police officer. He informs Bob that he has been under arrest for ten minutes. He gives Bob a note and says that it is from "Patrolman Wells." In the note, the real Jimmy Wells explains that he was in fact the officer who was with Bob at the site of "Big Joe" Brady's restaurant. When Bob struck a match to light his cigar, he recognized Bob's face as the one wanted in Chicago. Jimmy was not able to arrest his old friend. So he had left before he could be recognized and found a plainclothes officer to arrest him. Thus the story illustrates real friendship existed between Bob and Jimmy.

1. What is a better title than "After
Twenty Years?"

- A. It's about Time
- B. After Two Centuries
- C. Time is Ticking
- D. Friends that Meet

2. What is the problem in the story?

- A. The police officer is walking down the street
- B. Guy is smoking a cigar
- C. Friends haven't seen each other in year's
- D. The restaurant is torn down

3. Where was the setting of the story?

A. A hotel

B. Torn down restaurant

C. On the door step of a hardware store

D. In an alley

4. Where did the friend move?

- A. Out west
- B. Chicago
- C. New York
- D. South

5. How long has it been since the friends have seen each other?

A. 1 year

B. 10 years

C. 200 years

D. 20 years

6. What was the name of the restaurant?

- A. Joedonalds
- B. Beef O' Brady's
- C. Big Joe' Brady's
- D. Joe's Crab Shack

7. How long has it been since the restaurant was torn down?

A. 4 years

B. 20 years

C. 10 years

D. 5 years

8. Where is the setting?

A. Boston

B. New York

C. Chicago

D. Orlando

Which sentence best developed the suspense in the story?

- A. the rain falls
- B. the first policeman interviews him
- C. Jimmy doesn't show up for twenty minutes
- D. The restaurant has been torn down

How did the police officer recognize Jimmy?

- A. From a picture
- B. Jimmy introduced himself
- C. He didn't, the police officer just kept walking
- D. He lit his cigar and the police officer was able to see his face

What happens at the climax of the story?

- A. The plainclothes policeman tells Bob that he is under arrest
- B. Bob pulls out a handsome watch
- C. Bob notices Jimmy is taller
- D. Bob relayed that the man is not really Jimmy

Why does the real Jimmy Wells ask Bob if he plans to leave at 10 sharp?

- A. he is hinting to Bob he should run away
- B. he wants to know if Bob still really cares for him as a friend
- C. he is figuring out if he has time to get another police officer
- D. he wants to see the diamond watch again

Why is the man with the cigar standing
in the doorway?

- A. he is waiting to see if his old friend will turn up
- B. he is trying to determine if he has lived a worthwhile life
- C. He is trying to decide whether to turn himself in to the police
- D. He is trying to remember the correct meeting place

At the beginning of the story, how does O. Henry characterize the policemen?

- bullying and powerful
- confident and capable
- dull and unintelligent
- bored and lonely

Trying to doors as he went, twirling his club with many intricate and artful movements. What does the word intricate mean?

- A. complicated
- B. done or fixed by habit
- C. Miserable
- D. at the same time

Which of the following statements best describes “Silky” Bob’s reasons for returning to New York City? *

- A. He has come to see his dying mother.
- B. He is trying to avoid being arrested
- C. He is meeting a girlfriend
- D. He is hoping to meet an old friend

Bob feels that his old friend Jimmy
Wells is a _____

- A. real genius
- B. true friend
- C. go getter, always making clever deals
- D. razor-sharp wit

What does Bob notice about his old friend that is different? *

- A. He has grown taller
- B. He is bald
- C. He has a beard
- D. He now wears glasses

Why won't Jimmy arrest Bob? *

- A. Jimmy knows that Bob isn't really guilty of anything.
- B. Jimmy isn't a real police officer.
- C. Jimmy is going off duty.
- D. Jimmy can't bring himself to turn in a friend.

One liners

1. The original name of O. Henry is _____

Ans: William Sidney Porter

2. _____ thought that New York was the only place on earth.

Ans: Jimmy

3. Bob travelled _____ miles to meet his friend.

Ans: 1000

4. Between the friends _____ is a plodder.

Ans: Jimmy

5. Bob said that he will be waiting for _____ minutes.

Ans: 20 minutes

6. _____ claims that he has a position in one of the city departments.

Ans: Jimmy

7. At a _____ store Bob recognized that the tall man was not his friend.

Ans: drug

8. “It some times changes a good man into a bad man”. Who is referred in this line?

Ans: Bob