

**Intermediate 2**  
**Unit 3 Reading**  
**Presented by Mohammad Rajabpur**

The policeman walked up the avenue on his **beat**. He looked as **impressive** as he always did. It was only about ten o'clock at night, but the cold **gusts** of wind had made nearly everyone stay indoors.

### **After Twenty Years**

a short story by **O. Henry**, an American writer

The policeman walked up the avenue on his beat. He looked as impressive as he always did. It was only about ten o'clock at night, but the cold gusts of wind had made nearly everyone stay indoors.

**on his beat** = in the area under his control

**impressive** = (of things or people) making you admire them, because they are very large, good, skillful, etc.

**gust** = sudden and strong amount of wind

He checked the locks of the doors as he passed by, swinging his club with practiced movements. He turned now and then to glance down the main road. The area was one where shops closed early except for a few places like all-night carryouts.

**as** = when, while

**now and then** = sometimes

**glance** = look

**except for** = other than

**carryout** (American) = carryout restaurant → takeaway (British)



**club**

When he was about halfway down one particular block of buildings, he suddenly slowed his walk. Leaning in a darkened doorway was a man with an unlighted cigar in his mouth. "It's alright, officer," said the man reassuringly, "I'm waiting for a friend. We arranged to meet here twenty years ago." He lit his cigar, and in the light of the match, the officer saw a pale-faced, bright-eyed man with a white scar near his right eyebrow. His scarfpin had a large diamond.

**lean** = to (cause to) slope in one direction, or to move the top part of the body in a particular direction:

*She leaned forward and whispered something in my ear.*

*I sat down next to Bernard, who leaned over to me and said "You're late."*

*Lean your head back a little.*

*That fence is leaning to the right.*

**cigar** = a tube made from dried and rolled tobacco leaves that people smoke

**reassuringly** = persuasively

light (v.) = روشن کردن

light → lit, lit <= Irregular Forms

light → lighted, lighted <= Regular Forms

unlighted = not lighted, not lit

light ≠ put out

light (n.) = نور = glow

pale = رنگ پریده

scarf = شال گردن

"Twenty years ago tonight," said the man, "I had a meal with Jimmy Wells in the restaurant that used to be opposite here. He was my best friend; we grew up together like brothers here in New York. The next morning I was going West to make my fortune, but Jimmy was going to stay in New York. We agreed that after twenty years we would both have made our fortunes and decided to meet back here then."

"Did you make your fortune?" asked the policeman.

"Of course! I had to work hard for it, though. I have lost track of Jimmy, but I hope he's done half as well."

**used to be here** = in the past, it was here, but it is no longer here

**opposite** = across from

**fortune** = a lot of money

**make one's fortune** = become rich

**Point:**

"Though" at the end of the sentence = "But" at the beginning of the sentence

*I had to work hard for it, though. = But I had to work hard for it.*

**lose track of sb** = to be no longer in touch with sb

**in touch** = in contact

The policeman started to leave.

"I must go now. Hope your friend turns up. Are you going to wait long for him?"

"Oh, I'll wait for at least half an hour. If Jimmy's alive, he'll be here by then. It'll be a shame if he doesn't come. Good night, officer."

"Good night, sir," said the officer continuing on his beat.

**Hope** = I hope

**turn up** = show up, appear

**alive** ≠ dead

**by then** = before that time

**shame** = pity

It was now raining lightly, and the wind had gotten stronger. Just a few people hurried down the street with their collars turned up tightly and their hands in their pockets. After twenty minutes, a tall man in a long overcoat crossed the street toward the waiting man.

"Is that you, Bob?" he asked.

"Is that you, Jimmy Wells?" asked the man in the doorway.

**hurry** = move in a hurry, rush

**collar** = یقه

"Bob! It's so good to see you after all this time. I wish the restaurant were still here. We could go and have another meal together. How did the West treat you?"

"Very well. Now I have everything I ever wanted. You've changed a lot, Jimmy. You seem to be taller."

"Oh, I grew a bit more after you left."

"Are you doing well in New York, Jimmy?"

"Not bad. I work for one of the city departments. Let's go to a place I know and talk about old times."

The two men began to walk along the street. The man from the West began to describe how he had made his fortune. The other man listened. At the corner, there was a brightly lit drugstore, and as they passed it by, they simultaneously turned and gazed at each other.

**simultaneously** = at the same time

**gaze** = stare

The man from the West stopped suddenly.

"You're not Jimmy Wells," he shouted. "Many things can change in twenty years, but not the shape of your nose".

"Twenty years sometimes turns a good man into a bad one," said the tall man. "You've been under arrest for ten minutes, Bob. By the way, here's a note I was asked to give you. It's a pity, but that's the way it is. It's from patrolman Wells."

The man from the West began to read the note. His hand was steady first, but it was trembling with shock by the time he'd finished. The note was rather short:

**patrol** = پاسبانی، گشت = watching an area

**patrolman** = پاسبان = a police officer who watches an area

**steady** = fixed, not moving

**tremble** = shake

**he'd finished** = he had finished

**rather** = quite, fairly = نسبتاً

*Bob, I was there at the time we'd arranged. When you lit your cigar, I saw the face of a man with a bad reputation who is wanted for burglary in Chicago. Somehow I couldn't take you to prison myself, so I got a plainclothesman to do this job.*

*Jimmy*

**we'd arranged** = we had arranged

**wanted** = تحت تعقيب = looked for by the police

**plainclothesman** = a police officer not wearing a uniform

**Full Text:**

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"Twenty years ago tonight," said the man, "I had a meal with Jimmy Wells in the restaurant that used to be opposite here. He was my best friend; we grew up together like brothers here in New York. The next morning I was going West to make my fortune, but Jimmy was going to stay in New York. We agreed that after twenty years we would both have made our fortunes and decided to meet back here then."

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**Sample Summary:**

The story “After Twenty Years” is about two friends, Bob and Jimmy, who plan to meet after 20 years. Bob waits for Jimmy at the agreed spot. A policeman talks to Bob, who says he’s waiting for his friend Jimmy and that he’s made his fortune in the West. The policeman leaves, and later, a man approaches Bob, claiming to be Jimmy. They talk, but Bob realizes this man isn’t Jimmy because his nose is different. The man reveals he’s a plainclothes policeman, and Bob is under arrest. He gives Bob a note from the real Jimmy, who saw Bob earlier and recognized him as a wanted criminal. Jimmy couldn’t arrest his old friend himself, so he arranged for another officer to do it.

**Source:**

[Intermediate 2 \(anglophone.ir\)](http://anglophone.ir)