Vikram’s English Academy (ICSE)

Assignment : After Twenty Years ( Answer Key )

I. Answer the following:

1. **How was the policeman’s movement? Was he moving in that manner to show off? Give reasons for your answer.**

Ans. The policeman moved very impressively. No, he was not moving in that manner in order to show off as there were very few people on the street due to the chilly winds.

1. **Why were the streets ‘depeopled’?**

Ans. The time was hardly 10 pm but there were chilly winds blowing. The winds also gave an indication of rain. Thus people had retired early to their homes so the streets were depeopled.

1. **Why did the policeman look like a perfect picture of a guardian of peace?**

Ans. The policeman went around trying the doors to check if all was fine. He twirled his club in an artistic manner. His form was sturdy and had a slight swagger. While checking the doors he also often cast a watchful eye down the street. All this made him look like a perfect picture of a guardian of peace.

1. **Where and why did the policeman slow down his walk?**

Ans. When the policeman was in the midway of a block, he slowed his walk near the doorway of a darkened hardware store because he saw a man leaning against the door, with an unlighted cigar in his mouth.

1. **What did the man tell the policeman? Why did he tell him so?**

Ans. When the policeman saw the man at the doorway of the hardware store, he slowed down his walk to check out on him as he was patrolling the area. In order that the policeman does not mistake him for a criminal , the man told him that he was waiting for a friend who was supposed to meet him there. He further explained that the meeting had been fixed twenty years ago.

1. **What did the policeman notice when the man lit a cigar?**

Ans. When the man lit a cigar, the policeman noticed that his pale , square –jawed face with keen eyes and a little white scar near his right eyebrow. He also wore an oddly set large diamond as a scarf pin .

1. **How did Bob describe Jimmy to the policeman?**

Ans . Bob told the policeman about his friend Jimmy and the meeting that they had fixed twenty years ago. While doing so, he spoke very highly of Jimmy. He said that Jimmy was his best friend and the finest person in the world.He further mentioned that his friend was the truest and the staunchest person in the world. Bob also went on to say that Jimmy was a good human being but was very complacent and had settled into routine work.

1. **What does Bob say about life in New York as compared to Chicago?**

Ans Bob clearly draws a comparison between life in New York and in Chicago. He has a high regard for Chicago. Chicago was a challenging place and Bob had to compete with some of the sharpest people in order to become successful. New York was a slower place and put people in a groove. It was Chicago that had put a razor edge on him.

1. **How does Bob realize at the end of the story that the man he is talking to, is not Jimmy Wells?**

Ans. Bob realises that the man he is talking to, is not Jimmy Wells when he is able to see the structure of his nose in the brilliant electric lights of the drug store. He is sure enough that twenty years is not such a long time to change a man’s nose from a Roman to a pug.

1. **Why is the moment when Bob lights a match important?**

Ans. The moment when Bob lights a match is important as Jimmy Wells who

comes there as the patrolling officer sees his face clearly. It is at that instant

that he realizes that his old friend is a wanted criminal in Chicago.

1. **When do you think Jimmy realizes that he has to make a difficult choice and arrest Bob?**

Ans. The moment Bob strikes the match to light his cigar, Jimmy realises that

his friend is also a wanted criminal in Chicago. He now has to make a difficult

choice and arrest Bob .

1. **Why does Bob’s hand begin to shake as he reads the note from Patrolman Wells?**

Ans. Bob’s hands shake as he reads the letter because he is shocked to

know that he had been under arrest and at the same time he is overwhelmed

to know that his friend had indeed kept the promise.

1. **Do you think that Jimmy Wells did the right thing by having his old friend arrested?**

Ans. Yes, Jimmy Wells surely did the right thing by having his old friend arrested. He is a very honest and committed police officer who places duty above everything else even friendship. When he realises that Bob is also a wanted criminal in Chicago , he decides to do his duty and arrest him. But being a true friend he cannot bring himself to do so and sends another police officer to arrest Bob.

1. **Where were they going to have dinner? Why was the plan called off?**

Ans. Bob and Jimmy had fixed up an appointment twenty years earlier to meet at ‘Big Joe’ Brady’s restaurant. Both the friends were there at the fixed time and place. But Jimmy , an honest police officer realizes that Bob is a wanted criminal in Chicago . He immediately decides to get him arrested albeit by another police officer as he cannot bring himself to do so . Thus the plan was called up.

**II. Write the meanings of the following :**

1. beat - area or route covered by a policeman while working
2. spectators – onlookers
3. twirling – twisting or spinning
4. club- stick
5. pacific – calm and peaceful
6. stalwart – strong and sturdy
7. vicinity – a nearby area , neighborhood
8. scar- mark
9. chum – friend
10. figured – guessed
11. proposition - challenge
12. plodder – slow mover
13. to put a razor edge – to put someone in an uncertain or dangerous situation
14. absurdity – silliness or ridiculousness