

SCOPE THEATER PRESENTS

O. HENRY'S CLASSIC STORY

A RETRIEVED REFORMATION

CLASSIC
a story with
timeless appeal

A story of crime and true love!

ADAPTED FOR SCOPE BY MACK LEWIS
ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM GARRETT

SHAQ as Detective Ben Price

ZAC EFRON as Jimmy Valentine

JANE LYNCH
as the warden

WILL FERRELL as Adams,
Annabel's dad

EMMA WATSON as Annabel

OTHER CHARACTERS

- NARRATORS 1 & 2 (N1, N2)**
- MIKE DOLAN:** Jimmy's friend
- LIEUTENANT PORTER**
- BOY IN THE STREET**
- HOTEL CLERK**
- MAY:** Matilda's little girl
- AGATHA:** Matilda's other little girl
- BANK TELLER**
- MATILDA:** Annabel's sister

TURN THE PAGE →
to read this surprising story.

JOHN RAOUX/AP IMAGES (SHAQ); DANNY MARTINDALE/WIREIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES (WATSON); IT AGAIN/NEW LINE CINEMA (EFRON); PATRICK ECCLESINE/FOX (LYNCH)

PETER KRAMER/NBC NEWS/WIRE/AP IMAGES (FERRELL);



AS YOU READ, THINK ABOUT:
A Dynamic Character

A dynamic character undergoes an important inner change. As you read, think about whether Jimmy Valentine is a dynamic character.

SCENE 1

A PRISON, 1920

N1: Jimmy Valentine had been sentenced to four years in the state **penitentiary** for cracking safes.

N2: In this era, however, career criminals with a few connections could always count on bribes to get them an early release.

N1: A guard enters the prison shoe shop, where inmates are hunched over machines, stitching shoes.

N2: The guard escorts inmate

No. 9762 to the warden.

WARDEN: I don't know how you managed it, Jimmy Valentine, but you've been pardoned by the governor.

JIMMY: And after less than 10 months too.

WARDEN: It's time you made a man of yourself, Jimmy. You're not a bad fellow at heart. Stop cracking safes and live straight.

JIMMY: Me? Why, I never cracked a safe in my life.

WARDEN: Of course not. So how was it you got sent to prison for that Springfield job then?

JIMMY: Me? Why, I never was in Springfield in my life!

WARDEN: Better think over my advice, Jimmy.

N1: The warden hands Jimmy a train ticket and a five-dollar bill.

N2: Mr. James Valentine walks away a free man.

SCENE 2

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

N1: Jimmy arrives at the house of his old friend, Mike Dolan.

DOLAN: Sorry we couldn't get you out sooner. Folks were squawkin' so loud down in Springfield, the governor needed extra persuading.

N2: Jimmy goes upstairs. He slides back a panel in the wall and drags out a dust-covered suitcase.

N1: He opens the bag and gazes fondly at the finest burglar's tools in the East.

N2: He reappears downstairs, carrying his suitcase and wearing a rose in his vest pocket. He always wears a rose when he's living the criminal life.

DOLAN (*seeing the rose*): Another job planned already? You just got out of prison!

JIMMY: Me? I don't understand your meaning. As far as anyone knows, I am a salesman for the New York Wheat Biscuit Company.

DOLAN (*laughing*): Sure you are, Jimmy. Sure you are.

SCENE 3

DETECTIVE PRICE'S OFFICE

N1: A lieutenant gives a report.

PORTER: Detective Price, I think you should see this. Jimmy Valentine got himself another pardon.

PRICE: I saw it.

PORTER: Well, there's been a **rash** of safecracking jobs since he got out of prison: Eight hundred dollars was stolen from a safe in Richmond, \$1,500 from a vault in Logansport.

PRICE: That's small change for Jimmy.



LEFT: PATRICK ECCLESINE/FOX; RIGHT: IT AGAIN/NEW LINE CINEMA

PORTER: How about a cool five grand lifted from a so-called burglar-proof safe in Jefferson City?

PRICE: We'd better get down there.

N2: When Ben Price arrives in Jefferson City, he immediately recognizes Jimmy's **handiwork**.

PRICE: This has Jimmy's autograph, all right. Look at that combination knob—jerked out as easy as pulling up a radish. He's got the only tools that can do it. And look how clean those **tumblers** were punched out!

PORTER: Safe-owners will rest easy knowing you're on the case.

SCENE 4

ELMORE, ARKANSAS

N1: A sharply dressed Jimmy Valentine arrives in Elmore. He has plans to rob the bank there.

N2: As he heads to his hotel, a beautiful young lady passes by.

N1: Jimmy looks into her eyes. Just like that, he falls hopelessly in love.

N2: The woman blushes when she notices Jimmy. After all, men of Jimmy's style are scarce in Elmore.

N1: Jimmy forgets his criminal past and instantaneously becomes a new man.

N2: He talks to a boy **loafing** nearby, cleverly working him for information.



JIMMY: Isn't that young lady Polly Simpson?

BOY: Naw. That's Annabel Adams. Her pa owns the bank.

JIMMY: Is that so? She married?

BOY: No, but she has lots of **suitors**.

N1: Jimmy goes to his hotel.

JIMMY: I'd like a room, please. The name's Spencer. Ralph D. Spencer.

CLERK: What brings you to Elmore?

JIMMY: I'm lookin' to go into business. How's the shoe business around here?

N2: The clerk is impressed by Jimmy's fancy suit and good manners.

CLERK: There ought to be plenty of opportunity. There isn't an exclusive shoe store in all of Elmore.

JIMMY: Business good in town?

CLERK: Why, sure. I think you'll find it a pleasant place to live, too.

JIMMY: Well, I'll stay a few days and look it over.

CLERK: Let me get your bag.

JIMMY: Thanks, but I'll carry it myself. It's rather heavy.

N1: And so Mr. Ralph Spencer rises from Jimmy Valentine's ashes—ashes left by the flame of a sudden love.

SCENE 5

ELMORE, ARKANSAS

N2: Over the next year, Jimmy opens a shoe store, becomes prosperous, and works hard to become a **pillar** of Elmore society.

N1: He and Annabel get engaged.

N2: One day, Jimmy writes a letter.

JIMMY (writing): Dear Old Pal, I want you to meet me



in Little Rock so that I may give you my bag of tools. I'm making an honest living now. I'm going to marry the finest girl on Earth. The straight life is the only way. She believes in me, Mike. I wouldn't do another crooked thing for the whole world. . . .

N1: A few days later, Detective Ben Price arrives in Elmore. He has been searching for Jimmy all this time.

PRICE: Say, who's that sharply dressed gentleman over there?

BOY: Why, that's Mr. Spencer. He owns the shoe store.

PRICE: You don't say?

BOY: He's engaged to marry Miss Annabel, the banker's daughter.

PRICE: The banker's daughter? Looks like Jimmy's back in business.



SCENE 6

THE FIRST BANK OF ELMORE

N2: Before leaving for Little Rock, where he will pick up his wedding tuxedo and deliver his tools to Mike, Jimmy stops by the bank to see Annabel and her family.

ANNABEL: My! Ralph, how heavy your bag is! It feels full of gold!

JIMMY: Uh, there are a lot of nickel-plated **shoehorns** in there. I'm going to return them in Little Rock.

ADAMS: Before you go, you must come see the new vault. We've just had it installed!

ANNABEL: It's very impressive.

N1: Mr. Adams proudly explains how the vault works.

MAY: It's so shiny!

ADAMS: It has a new, **patented** door.

AGATHA: What a funny clock it has!

ADAMS: That's the time lock.

MAY: And look at all the knobs.

ADAMS: It fastens with three solid-steel bolts thrown by a single twist of the handle.

N2: Meanwhile, Ben Price has been leaning against the counter, looking casually between the railings.

TELLER: Can I help you, sir?

PRICE: Just waiting for a man I know.

N1: Suddenly, there's a scream.

MATILDA: One of the children has gotten locked inside the vault!

MAY (woefully): I didn't mean to shut Agatha inside! I didn't think it would lock!

N2: Adams tugs at the handle.

ADAMS: It can't be opened. The combination hasn't been set.

MATILDA (crying): Oh, my baby!

ADAMS: Hush! Be quiet a moment.

N1: He puts his ear to the safe.

ADAMS (yelling): Agatha! Can you hear me?

N2: They all hear the faint sound of wild shrieking.

MATILDA: My precious darling! Open the door! Oh, break it open! Can't you do something?

ADAMS: There isn't anyone in Elmore who can open it. What shall we do? That child can't stand it long in there. She'll run out of air!

N1: Matilda pounds helplessly on the vault.

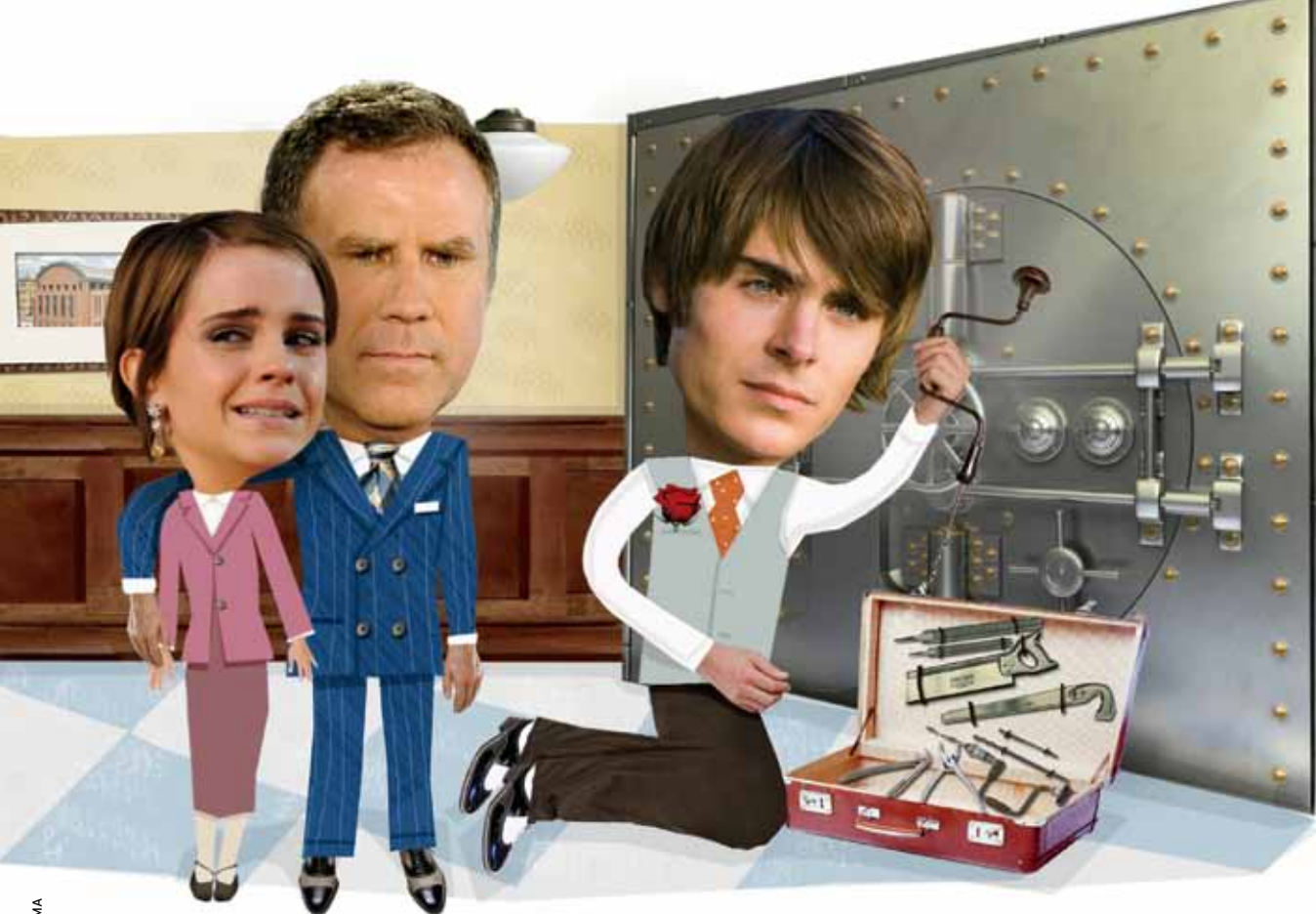
TELLER: What about dynamite?

ADAMS: The vault is too strong.

N2: Annabel turns to Jimmy, her large eyes full of anguish.

ANNABEL: Can't you do something? Try, won't you, Ralph?

N1: After glancing toward the front counter, Jimmy gives Annabel a



LEFT TO RIGHT: JON FURNISS/WIREIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES; PETER KRAMER/NBC NEWS/WIRE/AP IMAGES; IT AGAIN/NEW LINE CINEMA

bittersweet smile.

JIMMY: Annabel, give me the rose you're wearing, will you?

N2: Jimmy stuffs the rose in his vest pocket and throws off his coat.

N1: He's no longer Ralph Spencer. Jimmy Valentine has returned.

JIMMY: Get away from the door, all of you.

N2: He opens his suitcase and takes out his shining instruments, whistling softly to himself—just as

he always did while safecracking.

N1: The others watch him as if under a spell.

N2: In a minute, Jimmy's drill bites smoothly into the steel door. In 10 minutes—breaking his own record—he throws back the bolts.

MATILDA: Oh, Agatha!

AGATHA: Mommy!

N1: Jimmy puts on his coat and walks directly toward Ben Price.

ANNABEL: Where are you going?

JIMMY: Hello, Ben. Found me at last, have you? Well, let's go. I don't know that it makes much difference now.

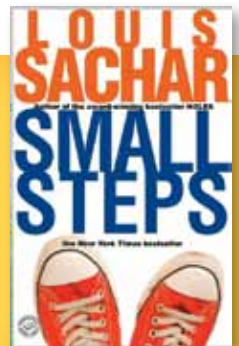
N2: Ben Price looks at Jimmy strangely.

PRICE: Guess you're mistaken, Mr. Spencer. Don't believe I recognize you.

N1: And then Ben Price turns, leaves the bank, and strolls down the street. ●

CONTEST

Writing About Reformation A reformed person has changed for the better. Is Jimmy reformed by the end of the play? Do you think people in general can change for the better? Write a paragraph explaining your answers. Use details from the play to support your ideas. Send it to **O. HENRY CONTEST**. Five winners will get Louis Sachar's *Small Steps*. See page 2 for details.



GET THIS
ACTIVITY
ONLINE