

The Bet (short story)

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The Bet is an [1889](#) short story by [Anton Chekhov](#) about a banker and a young man who make a bet with each other based on capital punishment and whether the death penalty is better or worse than life in prison. An ironic twist responds to this exploration of the value of a human life with an unexpected result. The terms of the wager state that if the lawyer can live in solitary confinement for 15 years, he will be given 2 million rubles.

The lawyer spends his time in confinement reading books. In the meantime, the banker's fortune declines and he realizes that he will be unable to pay off the bet. The banker resolves the day before the bet is to be up to kill the lawyer so as to not owe him the money. However, the banker finds when he comes to the man a note written by the man. The note declares that in his time in confinement the lawyer has learned to despise material goods for the fleeting things they are. Therefore, to demonstrate his contempt, he intends to leave confinement five minutes prior to when the bet would be up, thus losing the bet and unwittingly saving his own life.

The Bet is a short story written by Anton Chekhov, who writes based on realistic characters and situations. I have analyze this story to prove to the reader who is the winner of The Bet. This short story portrays a situation in which the banker and lawyer wages a bet based on the idea of the death penalty and life imprisonment. The banker puts on the line two million dollars compared to the lawyer's life worth of fifteen years. For the next fifteen years the lawyer was placed in the banker's backyard without the knowledge of the outside world. It was clear that any attempt on the lawyer's part to break the conditions will result in the lawyer's loss of the bet. Fifteen years later, the banker is near bankruptcy from gambling on the stock market. If he pays the lawyer for winning the bet, he will be ruined. His only escape from his tragedy would be to kill the lawyer. When the banker opens the door into the cell, he discovers the lawyer now looking like a skeleton. He discovers a letter and reads it, but soon realizes the lawyer plans to lose. Five hours before the lawyer's time is complete, he runs away and terminates his eligibility to win the bet. From these events in the story, I have concluded that it was the banker who won the bet and the argument of whether life imprisonment is better than death.

The bet has been argued to be many different aspects. It was stated in the story, "I'll bet you two millions you wouldn't stay in solitary confinement for five years" (1). Taking this idea as the bet, it was shown at the end of the story that the lawyer lost the bet. The rule was clearly stated, "The slightest attempt on his part to break the conditions, if only two minuets before the end, released the banker from the obligation to pay him two millions" (2). It was apparent that the rules were established, but violated. The lawyer stated, "I shall go out from here fire minutes before the time fixed, and so break the compact...Next morning...they had seen the man who lived in the lodge climb out of the window into the garden, go to the gate, and disappear" (5). It is clear that the lawyer's action was to forfeit the bet by leaving and therefore the banker winning the bet.

"The Bet" is a short story that explores a moral theme regarding the value of human life. However, the story is constructed with an important ironic twist that brings the reader back to the original

context of the bet (if the lawyer could endure solitary confinement for fifteen years), and presents an unexpected result. One can ultimately see that Anton Chekhov presents the readers with two different paths in the story. One of them is the banker, who refuses to face his own morality and the ot...

Approximate word count: 596

the Lottery ticket

Paper Summary:

This paper discusses how Anton Chekhov demonstrates that the mere thought of money can severely impact a personal relationship in his short story, "The Lottery Ticket." An older couple with a family holds what could be a winning lottery ticket, but resists checking the numbers while they daydream about what they might do with the money. It examines how, at first, their reaction to the possibility of wealth is joyful; but rather than share their dreams and communicate their wishes, it looks at how Ivan Dmitritch and his wife, Masha, recede into their own worlds. It attempts to show how money definitely does not buy love and how, in fact, it has the potential to destroy it.

The Lottery Ticket's Hidden Meaning

The Lottery Ticket's Hidden Meaning

In the short story "The Lottery Ticket" by Anton Chekhov, a couple which thinks they may have won the lottery fantasize about how to spend the winnings. Chekhov's portrayal of the couple and the depiction of the setting dramatize the theme that some believe that those that find joy in life are lucky, as if they were winners of the state lottery, not masters of their own destiny. Chekhov demonstrates how paralyzing depending on good fortune can be as opposed to striving for growth, happiness, and satisfaction to improve one's lot in life.

Through the characterization of the main character, Ivan, Chekhov sets the tone as he identifies Ivan as a "middle-class man who lived with his family on an income of twelve hundred a year and was very well satisfied with his lot" (1). Chekhov proceeds to illustrate how even the possibility of a life transformation can be euphoric demonstrating the irony of how people seemingly content with their lives are actually yearning for a more rewarding life. The anticipation of their lives changing brings enthusiasm to their otherwise predictable and dull life. As Ivan and his wife refrain from seeking the number of the ticket, they share a thrill

ling adventure filled with heart-thumping excitement as they "began laughing and staring at one another in silence"(Chekhov 2). For a brief moment, they share something new, stimulating, and different. This expectation alone is a source of happiness. Though the outcome is not likely, they delight in the mental images of how winning seventy five thousand dollars could transform their lives. Chekhov is demonstrating how the couple believes they are not empowered to initiate such a change through their own achievements. Then as though Ivan's subconscious forces him to see through the illusion that he and his wife have failed to achieve oneness he states, "the ticket is yours"(Chekhov 2).

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Many features of the setting in the Ivan's fantasy suggest wealth will bring a new start for Ivan with fresh vegetables from the earth. A life of leisure with long walks, lying around on the sofa reading magazines. Chekhov demonstrates through Ivan's reference to his children how often people have

regrets about their past and if only the circumstances were different their lives would be fulfilled. The reality is that the summer that follows is dark and gloomy with nowhere to go

Some topics in this essay: