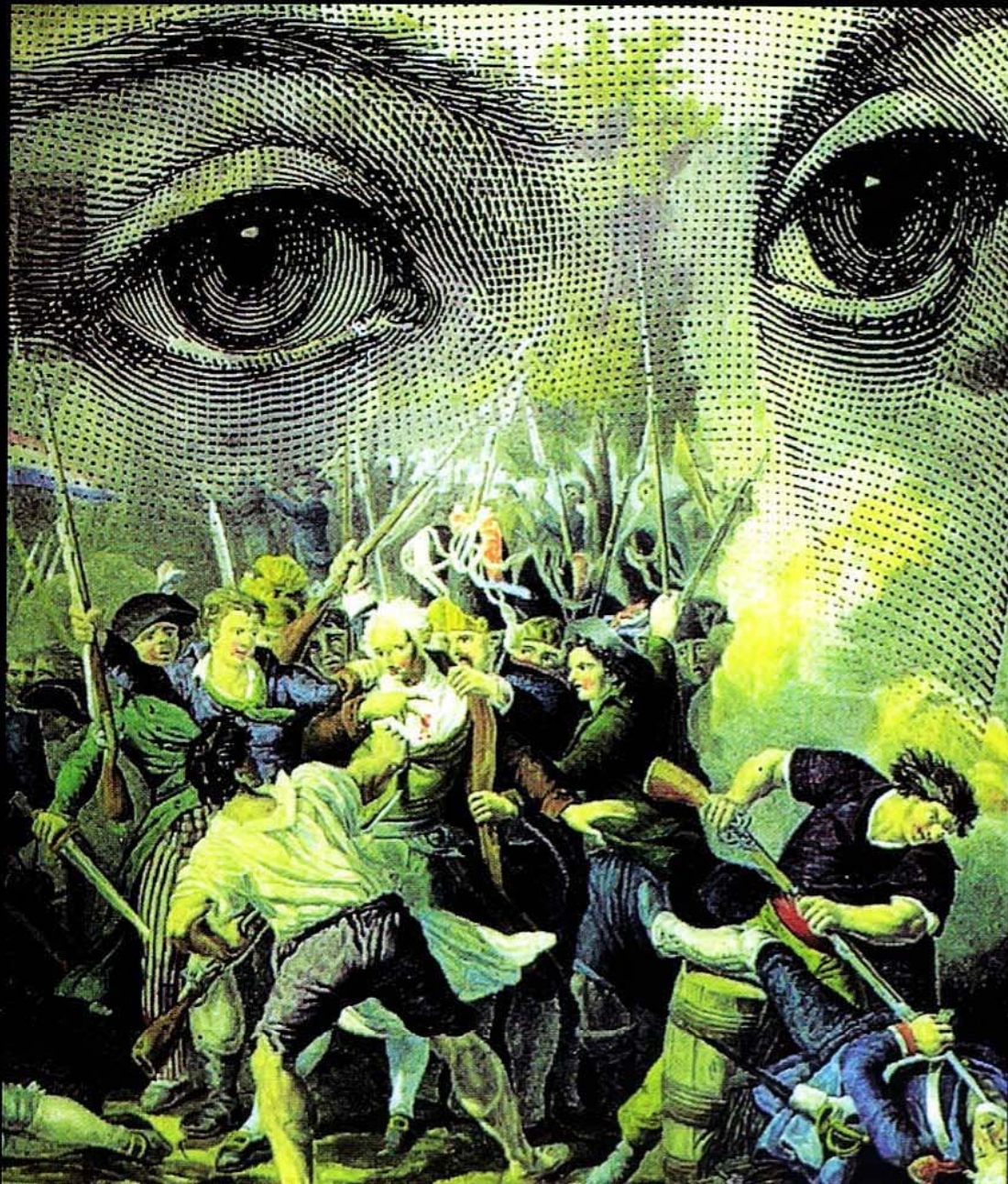


# A TALE OF TWO CITIES

CHARLES DICKENS







# A TALE OF TWO CITIES

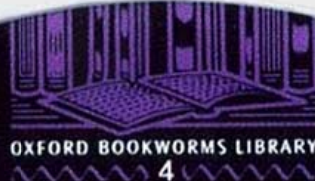
'The Marquis lay there, like stone, with a knife pushed into his heart. On his chest lay a piece of paper, with the words: *Drive him fast to the grave. This is from JACQUES.*'

The French Revolution brings terror and death to many people. But even in these troubled times people can still love and be kind. They can be generous and true-hearted . . . and brave.

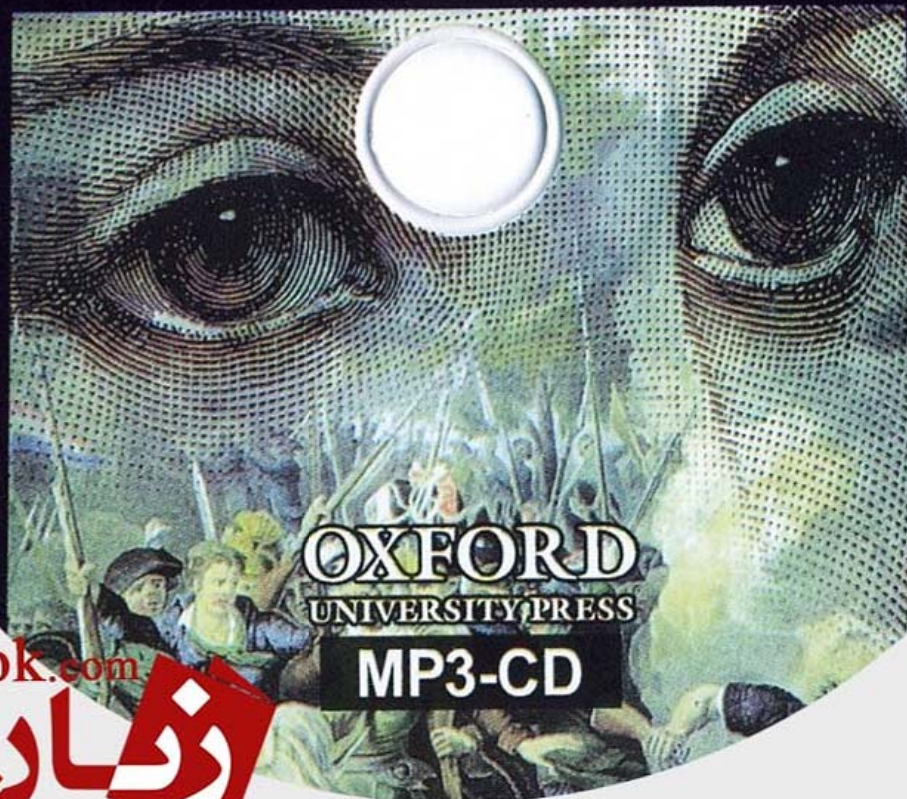
*Text adaptation by Ralph Mowat*

*Cover shows a detail from The Taking of the Bastille, 14th July 1789, French School, photo courtesy of The Bridgeman Art Library Limited/Musee Carnavalet, combined with an image from Dover Publications Inc.*

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# A TALE OF TWO CITIES



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## A TALE OF TWO CITIES

The year is 1775 and in a room above a wine-shop in Paris sits a white-haired man, busy making shoes. For eighteen years he was a prisoner in the Bastille. Now he is a free man, but he does not know his name, or recognize his friends. He knows only that he must go on making shoes.

In a coach driving into Paris sits Lucie, the daughter he has never seen. Lucie takes her father back to London and with her love and care, he forgets the past and learns to live again as a free man.

But in the stormy years of the French Revolution, the past is neither dead, nor forgotten. And soon its dangerous secrets pull Lucie and the people she loves back to Paris . . . where that terrible machine of death, the Guillotine, waits hungrily for the enemies of France.

**OXFORD**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP

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First published in Oxford Bookworms 1994

12 14 16 17 15 13

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ISBN-13: 978 0 19 423047 6

Printed in Hong Kong

Illustrated by: Mark Hargreaves

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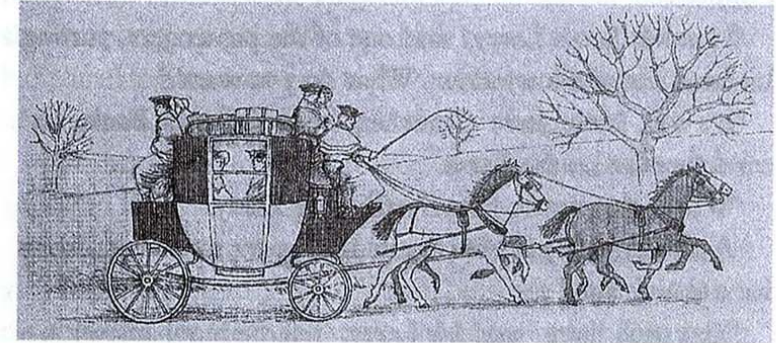
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## I

### The road to Paris – 1775



It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. It was the season of light, it was the season of darkness. It was the spring of hope, it was the winter of sadness. It was the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five.

In France there was a King and a Queen, and in England there was a King and a Queen. They believed that nothing would ever change. But in France things were bad, and getting worse. The people were poor, hungry and unhappy. The King made paper money and spent it, and the people had nothing to eat. Behind closed doors in the homes of the people, voices spoke in whispers against the King and his noblemen; they were only whispers, but they were the angry whispers of desperate people.

Late one November night, in that same year 1775, a coach going from London to Dover stopped at the top of a long hill. The horses were tired, but as they rested, the driver heard



another horse coming fast up the hill behind them. The rider stopped his horse beside the coach and shouted:

‘I want a passenger, Mr Jarvis Lorry, from Tellson’s Bank in London.’

‘I am Mr Jarvis Lorry,’ said one of the passengers, putting his head out of the window. ‘What do you want?’

‘It’s me! Jerry, Jerry Cruncher, from Tellson’s Bank, sir,’ cried the man on the horse.

‘What’s the matter, Jerry?’ called Mr Lorry.

‘A message for you, Mr Lorry. You’ve got to wait at Dover for a young lady.’

‘Very well, Jerry,’ said Mr Lorry. ‘Tell them my answer is – CAME BACK TO LIFE.’

It was a strange message, and a stranger answer. No one in the coach understood what they meant.

The next day Mr Lorry was sitting in his hotel in Dover when a young lady arrived. She was pretty, with golden hair and blue eyes, and Mr Lorry remembered a small child, almost a baby. He had carried her in his arms when he came from Calais to Dover, from France to England, many years ago. Mr Lorry asked the young lady to sit down.

‘Miss Manette,’ he said. ‘I have a strange story to tell you, about one of the customers of Tellson’s Bank. That’s where I work.’

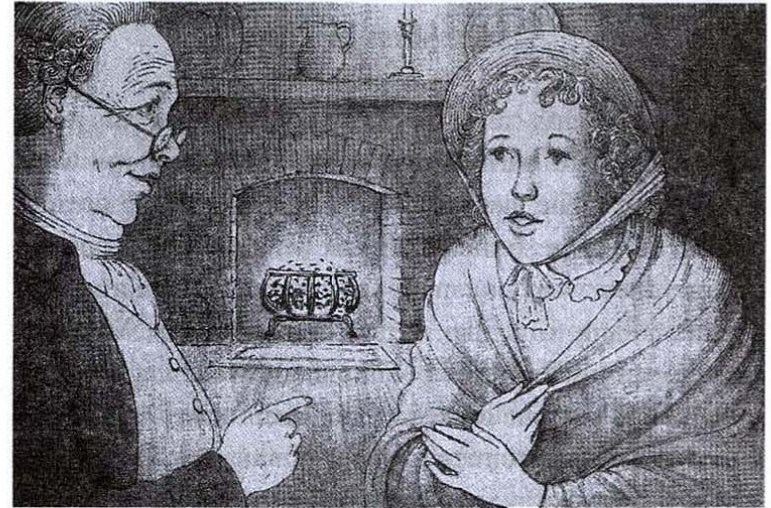
‘Yes, but I don’t quite understand, Mr Lorry,’ said the young lady. ‘I received a message from Tellson’s Bank, asking me to come here to meet you. I understood there was some

news about my poor father’s money. He died so long ago – before I was born. What is this story you want to tell me?’

‘About twenty years ago, Miss Manette, a French doctor married an English lady. They had a daughter, but just before she was born, her father disappeared. Nobody knew what had happened to him. Not long afterwards his unhappy wife died, and their daughter was brought back to England.’

‘But this is like my father’s story, Mr Lorry. And wasn’t it you who brought me back to England?’

‘Yes, that’s true, Miss Manette. Many years ago I brought you from France to England, and Tellson’s Bank has taken care of you since then. You were told that your father had died. But think, Miss Manette. Perhaps your father wasn’t dead. Perhaps he was in prison. Not because he had done something



‘What is this story you want to tell me?’



wrong! But just because he had a powerful enemy – an enemy with the power to send him to prison and to keep him there, hidden and forgotten, for eighteen years!’

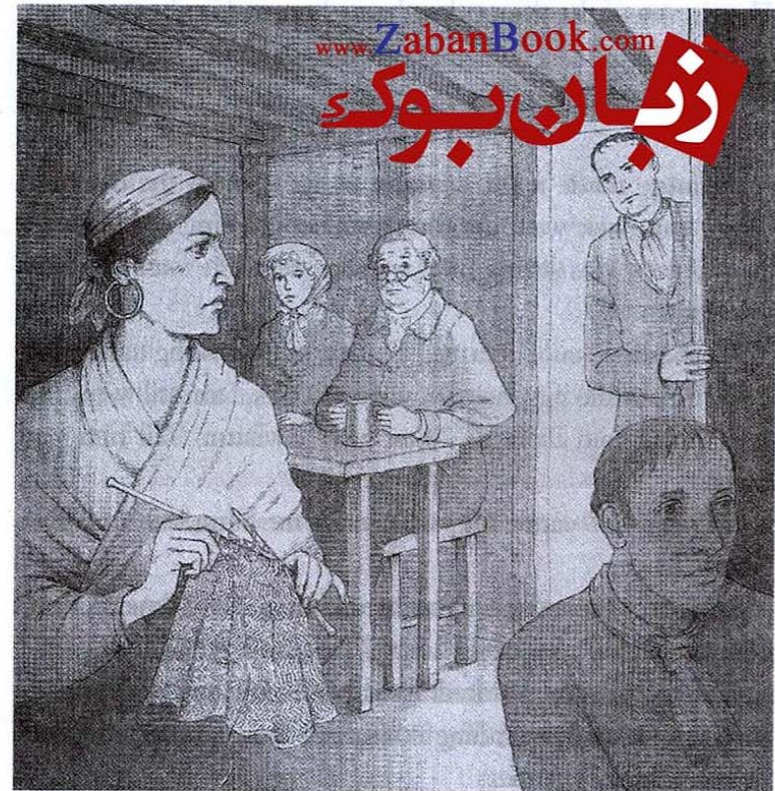
‘Can it be true? Is it possible that my father is still alive?’ Lucie Manette stared at Mr Lorry. Her face was white and her hands trembled. ‘It will be his ghost – not him!’

‘No, Miss Manette,’ said Mr Lorry gently. ‘He is alive, but he has changed very much. Even his name had been forgotten! And we must ask no questions about the past, no questions at all. It would be too dangerous. He has been taken to the house of an old servant in Paris, and we are going there to bring him back to life.’

## 2

### A wine-shop in Paris

In the part of Paris called Saint Antoine everyone was poor. The streets were narrow and dirty, the food-shops were almost empty. The faces of the children looked old already, because they were so hungry. In the wine-shop of Monsieur Defarge there were not many customers and Defarge was outside, talking to a man in the street. His wife, Madame Defarge, sat inside the shop, knitting and watching. Defarge came in and his wife looked at him, then turned her eyes to look at two new customers, a man of about sixty and a young lady. Defarge went over to speak to them, suddenly kissed the young lady’s hand, and led them out of the back of the shop.



*Madame Defarge sat inside the wine-shop,  
knitting and watching.*

They followed him upstairs, many stairs, until they reached the top. Defarge took a key out of his pocket.

‘Why is the door locked?’ asked Mr Lorry in surprise. ‘He is a free man now.’

‘Because he has lived too long behind a locked door,’ replied Defarge angrily. ‘He is afraid if the door is not locked!’



That is one of the things they have done to him.'

'I'm afraid, too,' whispered Miss Manette. Her blue eyes looked worriedly at Mr Lorry. 'I am afraid of him – of my father.'

Defarge made a lot of noise as he opened the door. Mr Lorry and Lucie went into the room behind him. A thin, white-haired man was sitting on a wooden seat. He was very busy, making shoes.

'Good day,' said Defarge. 'You are still working hard, I see.'

After a while they heard a whisper. 'Yes, I am still working.'

'Come,' said Defarge. 'You have a visitor. Tell him your name.'

'My name?' came the whisper. 'One Hundred and Five, North Tower.'

Mr Lorry moved closer to the old man. 'Dr Manette, don't you remember me, Jarvis Lorry?' he asked gently.

The old prisoner looked up at Mr Lorry, but there was no surprise, no understanding in his tired face, and he went back to work making shoes.

Slowly Lucie came near to the old man. After a while he noticed her.

'Who are you?' he asked.

Lucie put her arms around the old man and held him, tears of happiness and sadness running down her face. From a little bag the old man took some golden hair. He looked at it, and then he looked at Lucie's hair. 'It is the same. How can it be?' He stared into Lucie's face. 'No, no, you are too young, too young.'



*Lucie put her arms around the old man and held him.*

Through her tears Lucie tried to explain that she was the daughter he had never seen. The old man still did not understand, but he seemed to like the sound of Lucie's voice and the touch of her warm young hand on his.

Then Lucie said to Mr Lorry, 'I think we should leave Paris at once. Can you arrange it?'

'Yes, of course,' said Mr Lorry. 'But do you think he is able to travel?'

'He will be better far away from this city where he has lost so much of his life,' said Lucie.

'You are right,' said Defarge. 'And there are many other reasons why Dr Manette should leave France now.'

While Mr Lorry and Defarge went to arrange for a coach to take them out of Paris, Lucie sat with her father. Exhausted by



the meeting, he fell asleep on the floor, and his daughter watched him quietly and patiently until it was time to go.

When Mr Lorry returned, he and Defarge brought food and clothes for Dr Manette. The Doctor did everything they told him to do; he had been used to obeying orders for so many years. As he came down the stairs, Mr Lorry heard him say again and again, 'One Hundred and Five, North Tower.'

When they went to the coach, only one person saw them go: Madame Defarge. She stood in the doorway, and knitted and watched, seeing everything . . . and seeing nothing.

### 3

#### **A trial in London – 1780**

Tellson's Bank in the City of London was an old, dark, and ugly building. It smelt of dust and old papers, and the people who worked there all seemed old and dusty, too. Outside the building sat Jerry Cruncher, who carried messages for people in the bank.

One morning in March 1780, Jerry had to go to the Old Bailey to collect an important message from Mr Lorry. Trials at the Old Bailey were usually for very dangerous criminals, and the prisoner that morning was a young man of about twenty-five, well dressed and quite calm.

'What's he done?' Jerry asked the doorman quietly.

'He's a spy! A French spy!' the doorman told him. 'He

travels from England to France and tells the French King secret information about our English army.'

'What'll happen if he's guilty?' asked Jerry.

'Oh, he'll have to die, no question of that,' replied the doorman enthusiastically. 'They'll hang him.'

'What's his name?'

'Darnay, Charles Darnay. Not an English name, is it?'

While Jerry waited, he looked around at the crowd inside the Old Bailey and noticed a young lady of about twenty years, and her father, a gentleman with very white hair. The young lady seemed very sad when she looked at the prisoner, and held herself close to her father.

Then the trial began, and the first person who spoke against Charles Darnay was called John Barsad.

He was an honest man, he said, and proud to be an Englishman. Yes, he was, or had been, a friend of the prisoner's. And in the prisoner's pockets he had seen important plans and lists about the English armies. No, of course he had not put the lists there himself. And no, he was not a spy himself, he was not someone paid to make traps for innocent people.

Next the young lady spoke. She said that she had met the prisoner on the boat which had carried her and her father from France to England. 'He was very good and kind to my father and to me,' she said.

'Was he travelling alone on the ship?'

'No, he was with two French gentlemen.'

'Now, Miss Manette, did you see him show them any papers, or anything that looked like a list?'



'No, I didn't see anything like that.'

Questions, questions, questions! The trial went on, and finally, a small, red-haired man spoke. He told the judge that he had seen Mr Darnay at a hotel in a town where there were many soldiers and ships. Then one of the lawyers, a man called Sydney Carton, wrote some words on a piece of paper, and gave it to Mr Stryver, the lawyer who was speaking for Mr Darnay.

'Are you quite sure that the prisoner is the man you saw?' Mr Stryver asked the red-haired man.

'Quite sure,' said the man.

'Have you ever seen anyone like the prisoner?' asked Mr Stryver.

'I'd always be able to recognize him.' The red-haired man was very confident.

'Then I must ask you to look at the gentleman over there,' said Mr Stryver, pointing to Sydney Carton. 'Don't you think that he is very like the prisoner?'

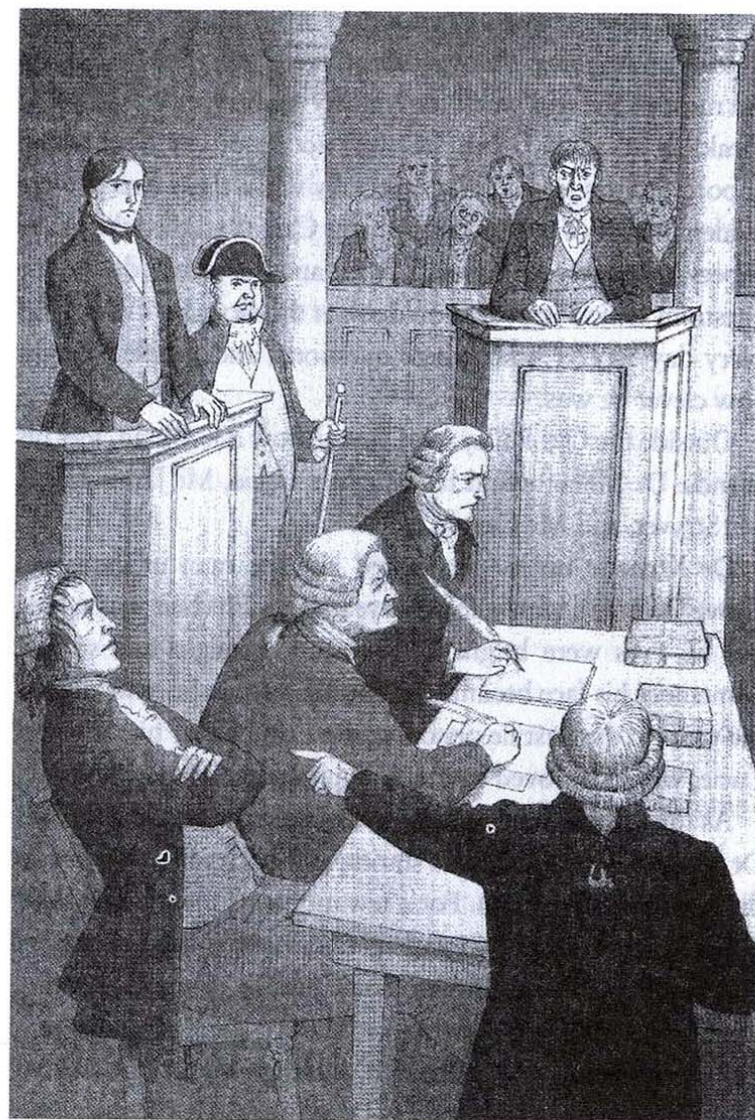
Everyone in the court could see that Sydney Carton and Charles Darnay were indeed very similar.

'Well then,' said Mr Stryver, 'it is so easy to find a man like the prisoner that we can even find one in this room. So how can you be so sure that it was the prisoner you saw in that hotel?'

And the red-haired man said not another word.

The lawyers talked and argued, and when at last the trial came to an end, Jerry Cruncher had fallen asleep.

But Mr Lorry woke him up and gave him a piece of paper. 'NOT GUILTY' were the words written on it, and Jerry hurried back to Tellson's Bank with the message.



*'I must ask you to look at the gentleman over there.'*



## ACTIVITIES

### Before Reading

1 Read the back cover and the story introduction on the first page of the book. Answer these questions.

- 1 What are the 'Two Cities' of the title?
- 2 Where was the prisoner kept?
- 3 What is his daughter's name?
- 4 Who killed the Marquis?
- 5 What is 'the Guillotine'?

2 Can you guess what is going to happen in this story? Circle Y (yes) or N (no) for each sentence.

- 1 Lucie and her family will be killed. Y/N
- 2 She will have secrets from her family. Y/N
- 3 Lucie's father will be sent to prison again. Y/N
- 4 He will make money from selling shoes. Y/N
- 5 Revolution will change everybody's lives. Y/N
- 6 Innocent people will die. Y/N

3 Why do you think the French Revolution happened? Choose the best words to complete this passage.

In France in the 19th/18th century *poor/rich* noblemen owned *most/none* of the land, and the poor had *nothing/everything*. They had *easy/hard* lives, *had/did not have* enough to eat, and *loved/hated* the King and his noblemen.

## ACTIVITIES

### While Reading

Read Chapters 1 to 3, and then answer these questions.

Who

- 1 ... brought a message for Mr Lorry on the Dover road?
- 2 ... had brought Lucie back to England as a small child?
- 3 ... owned the wine-shop in Paris?
- 4 ... sat in the wine-shop, knitting and watching?
- 5 ... thought his name was 105, North Tower?
- 6 ... was the prisoner at the Old Bailey trial?
- 7 ... looked very like the prisoner at the trial?
- 8 ... had taken care of Lucie since she was a child?

Read Chapters 4 and 5. Choose the best question-word for these questions, and then answer them.

What / How / Who

- 1 ... died under the wheels of the Marquis's coach?
- 2 ... did Gaspard travel to the Marquis's castle?
- 3 ... did Charles Darnay feel about his French family?
- 4 ... happened to the Marquis?
- 5 ... was in love with Lucie Manette?
- 6 ... did Sydney Carton ask Lucie to remember always?
- 7 ... did Darnay tell Dr Manette on the morning of his marriage to Lucie?
- 8 ... effect did this news have on Dr Manette?