

Dickens' A Tale of Two Cities

The novel adapted in Two Acts
by
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Cast of Characters

Narrator: can be any age, either sex.

LONDON:

Sydney Carton: looks reckless and disreputable. Insolent.

Charles Darnay: is well grown and well looking. Dark eyes and strong features.

Lucie Manette: has an air of bright and fixed attention about her.

Jarvis Lorry: is very orderly and methodical, though he looks worn.

Miss Pross: has brawny hands and a large bonnet. A wild looking woman.

Jerry Cruncher: wears jagged black hair growing down almost to his blunt broad nose.

Barsad: is known to have a memorable face and, generally, the look of a spy.

Stryver: is a man of thirty or so but he looks twenty years older. Loud, not delicate.

Little Lucie: A child. The daughter of Charles Darnay and Lucie Manette.

PARIS:

Ernest Defarge: has a clear purpose, is strong, and resolute.

Madame Defarge: is a stout woman with a watchful eye.

Alexandre Manette: looks twice his age. White-haired and gaunt, but bright eyed.

The Vengeance: is a haunting presence, like a thin black bird.

Jacques 1:

Jacques 2: } French patriots. Insiders.

Jacques 3:

Monseigneur: seems hateful and spoiled and is perfectly dressed.

Mender of Roads/Woodcutter: is a poor, clumsy bumpkin.

Seamstress: has a slight girlish form and a spare face with not the slightest bit of color.

Additional Characters:

Tom the Guard, Joe the Driver, Clerk, Bloodthirsty man, Judge, Attorney General, Witness, Waiter, Thin Man, Gaspard, Lazy Servant, French Driver, Attendants, Doorman, Servant, Messenger, Monseigneur in England, Functionary, Haggard Woman, Starving Man, Ragged Cripple, The Smith, Hostile Tribunal, Prudent Tribunal, Bailiff, Jury, Rough Red Cap, Guard, Dirty Man, Ugly Citizen.

ACT I

Scene 1

NARRATOR

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom and the epoch of foolishness, the era of belief and a time of incredulity, it was the season of light and the season of darkness. It was the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five, a time very much like the present. Spiritual revelations were conceded to England while France entertained itself with such humane achievements as sentencing a youth to have his hands cut off, his tongue torn out with pinchers and his body burned alive because he did not kneel down in the rain to honor a dirty procession of monks which passed within his view. It was later revealed that the boy was blind, but what's done is done.

(JACQUES 1,2,3, MADAME DEFARGE, DEFARGE
and THE VENGEANCE enter and cross to the wine-shop.)

It's likely, I think, that at that very time, rooted in the dark woods of France, were trees growing silently, already marked by that eternal Woodman, Fate, to come down and be sawed into boards to make a certain framework that would prove itself terrible. It is likely enough as well that in some rough outhouse, sheltered from the weather, were rude carts, splattered with rustic mire, sniffed at by pigs and roosted in by chickens, which the Harvester, Death, had already set apart to be his tumbrels of the Revolution.

(JOE, TOM and LORRY enter and set two crates which
serve as a carriage. JOE and LORRY sit on the crates as
driver and passenger.)

But that Woodman and that Farmer, though they work unceasingly, work silently, and no one heard their muffled tread.

(ALL exit the wine-shop.)

It was the Dover road that lay that day before the first of those with whom history had it's business.

JOE THE DRIVER

(In the pouring rain he yells to the horses.)

Whoa then and now go! One more pull and you're at the top.

TOM THE GUARD

Hello up there. What time do ya think it is?

JOE

Wait a minute! Whoa!

TOM

What? What is it? What's the matter?

JOE

A galloping horse is approaching.

TOM

Nay, I say that's a horse on the dead run!

JOE

Whatever. Grab your guns!

TOM (to JERRY)

You there! Stand still or I'll fire!

JERRY

(from offstage)

Is that the Dover coach?

JOE

Never mind what it is, what are you?

JERRY

The mail!

TOM

The mail?

JERRY

The mail.

TOM

Oh the mail.

(to LORRY)

It's just the mail.

JERRY

I have something for Mr. Jarvis Lorry.

JOE

That's fine but stay where you are.

(to the interior of the coach)

Gentleman by the name of Jarvis Lorry, you have some mail.

LORRY

What mail, here?

JERRY

It's me sir!

LORRY

Oh, Jerry. What's the matter?

JERRY

I have a message, from Tellson and Company.

LORRY

Guard, I know this messenger. Let him approach there's nothing wrong with him.

TOM

That may be but I don't much like his voice.

(JERRY enters)

Hello there you!

JERRY

And hello there to you too!

(LORRY steps out of the coach and JERRY hands him the message.)

LORRY

Thank you Jerry.

(LORRY reads the message.)

Say that my answer is "recalled to life".

JERRY

That's a strange answer.

LORRY

Tell them "recalled to life". They'll know that I received the message better than if I'd written one in return.

JERRY

Recalled to life?

LORRY

Recalled to life.

(JERRY exits. LORRY ducks back into the coach. JOE whips the horses and they continue on their way.)

TOM
(softly over the coach roof)

Joe!

JOE

What?

TOM

Did you hear that message?

JOE

I did.

TOM

What do you make of it?

JOE

Nothing at all Tom. Nothing at all.

TOM

That's a strange coincidence. For I made the same of it myself.

(TOM and JOE exit with the crates. LORRY crosses to the table by the bar and sits with a cup of tea.)

Scene 2

SETTING: A hotel in Paris

LORRY is waiting at a table
in the hotel cafe.

WAITER (entering)

Miss Manette has arrived from London and would be happy to see you now sir.

LORRY

Oh yes. Of course, right. Please bring her in.

(With a gesture the WAITER welcomes LUCIE into
the room. LORRY stands to greet her. WAITER exits)

Won't you sit down?

(They sit.)

LUCIE

I received a message from the Tellson's Bank, sir, yesterday, informing me that some intelligence - or discovery --

LORRY

The word is not important Miss, either one will do.

LUCIE

Regarding the small property of my father - whom I never met. And that it was necessary that I should come to Paris to communicate with a gentleman who had been dispatched there.

LORRY

Me.

LUCIE

Yes I think so.

LORRY

It is definitely so.

LUCIE

Good. Thank you.

LORRY

I'm happy to do it. Though, it is very difficult to begin.

LUCIE

Have we met before Mr. Lorry?

LORRY

Not exactly.

LUCIE

I'm sorry, but what do you mean not exactly?

LORRY

Miss Manette, I am a man of business. Here I have a business to attend to. In your reception of it, think of me only as a speaking machine, truly, I am not much else. Given your permission, I will relate to you the story of one of our customers.

LUCIE

Go on.

LORRY

In this case he was a French gentleman, a scientific man, a doctor in fact.

LUCIE

Not of Beauvais?

LORRY

Why yes, of Beauvais. Like your father, the gentleman was of Beauvais. Also like your father, the gentleman was of high repute in Paris and I had the honor of knowing him there. Our relations were, of course, business relations, but very confidential. I was at that time in our French office.

LUCIE

At what time, sir, if I may ask?

LORRY

It was twenty years ago. He married an English woman and I was one--

LUCIE

But this is my father's story. And I begin to think that when my mother died - it was you who brought me to England. I'm certain of it.

LORRY

It's true, but you will notice, as I am merely a man of business and have no feelings on the subject at all, that I have not seen you since. Certainly not! You have been the responsibility of Tellson's Bank and I have been busy with other work. Feelings, I have no time for them. But it is as you say Miss. And this is the story of your father, though now comes the difference. Had your father not died when you thought he did--

LUCIE

What?!

LORRY

Don't be afraid child. Control yourself - a matter of business.

LUCIE

Tell me more.

LORRY

Can you bear it?

LUCIE

I can bear anything better than the uncertainty you leave me with in this moment.

(There comes a loud crash and a great noise as several people rush onto the stage. LORRY and LUCIE exit.)

Scene 3

SETTING: In the street just outside DEFARGE's wine-shop.

HAGGARD WOMAN

The wine!

(NARRATOR enters. DEFARGE and JACQUES 3 enter and observe.)

NARRATOR

A large cask of wine had dropped and broken in the street. Shattered like a walnut shell, it lay broken on the stones just outside the wine-shop. The rough irregular stones of the street had damned the wine into little pools that were surrounded, each by its own jostling group or crowd according to its size. There was no drainage to carry off the wine, and not only did it all get taken up, but so much mud got taken up with it, that there might have been a monster in the street, a scavenger, that thrived on dirt and grime. But no one yet believed in such a miraculous presence.

NARRATOR/JERRY (entering)

Those who had been greedy with the cask had acquired a tigerish smear about the mouth. And one tall joker so besmirched, dipped his finger in the winey mud and scrawled upon the wall - Blood.

NARRATOR

The time was to come when that wine too would spill upon these very stones.

JACQUES 3

What do you make of this mess?

DEFARGE

It's not my business. The people from the market did it; let them bring another.

(DEFARGE and JACQUES 3 make their way across the stage as the small crowd exits. LORRY and LUCIE enter noticing DEFARGE and several others in the wine-shop, including THE VENGEANCE, JACQUES 1,2 and MADAME DEFARGE who stands behind the bar knitting.)

LORRY

(to LUCIE)

That's our man.

JACQUES 1

How goes it Jacques? Is all the spilt wine swallowed?

DEFARGE

Every drop.

JACQUES 2

It is not often that these miserable beasts know the taste of wine, or of anything but black bread and death. Is it not so, Jacques?

DEFARGE

It is so, Jacques.

JACQUES 3

They live and die with a bitter taste in their mouths. Am I right?

DEFARGE

You are right, Jacques.

(He looks cautiously around the room. Then to JACQUES 2)

The chamber you wished to see is on the second floor. That is the doorway to the staircase, there. Adieu.

(JACQUES 1,2,3 exit. MANETTE enters on the upstage platform and begins his work with a small bench and some tools . LORRY approaches DEFARGE.)

LORRY

Is he alone then?

DEFARGE

Who would be with him?

LORRY

Is he always alone then?

DEFARGE

Yes.

LORRY

Of his own desire?

DEFARGE

Of his own necessity. When I first saw him, six weeks ago, after they found me and demanded to know if I would take him in . . . as he was then, he is now.

LORRY

He is greatly changed?

DEFARGE

Greatly.

(DEFARGE takes a key from his pocket.)

LORRY

My friend, the door is locked?

DEFARGE

Yes.

LORRY

You think it's necessary to keep the unfortunate gentleman so confined?

DEFARGE

I think it's necessary to turn the key.

LORRY

Why?

DEFARGE

Why?! Because he has lived so long locked up that he would be frightened if he thought his door was left open.

LORRY

Is it possible?

DEFARGE

Many things are possible in this world. And not only possible, but done. Eighteen Years. A long time, no?

(LORRY signals LUCIE to join him with DEFARGE.
MADAME DEFARGE stares at them, still knitting.)

LORRY

Have courage dear miss, the worst will be over in a moment. Think of all the good, the relief and the happiness you bring him just by entering the room. Think of that.

(DEFARGE, LORRY and LUCIE cross up behind the platform and notice JACQUES 1,2,3 peering at MANETTE who works mechanically on a pair of shoes.)

DEFARGE

I'm sorry, I forgot them in the surprise of your visit.

(to JACQUES 1,2,3)

Leave us now, we have business here.

(JACQUES 1,2,3 exit.)

LORRY

Do you make a show of Monsieur Manette?

DEFARGE

I show him to a chosen few.

LORRY

Is that well?

DEFARGE

I think it is well. Stand back!

(DEFARGE opens the door.)

LUCIE

I am afraid - afraid of this.

LORRY

Of what?

LUCIE

Of my father.

LORRY

Business child, it's just . . . business. Go ahead.

(DEFARGE, LORRY and LUCIE approach, unnoticed by MANETTE who sits hunched over his bench working. MANETTE looks frail and very old, but works quickly.)

DEFARGE

Good day!

MANETTE

Good day.

DEFARGE

You are still hard at work I see?

MANETTE

Yes - I am working.

DEFARGE

I want to let a little more light in here. Can you bear a little more light?

(MANETTE continues to work. Suddenly he stops, as if startled.)

MANETTE

What did you say?

DEFARGE

Can you bear a little more light?

MANETTE

I must bear it - if you let it in.

(DEFARGE lets in the light.)

DEFARGE

Are you going to finish that pair of shoes today?

MANETTE

What did you say?

DEFARGE

Do you mean to finish that pair of shoes today?

MANETTE

I can't say that I mean to. I suppose so. I don't know.

(MANETTE resumes his work.)

DEFARGE

You have someone here to see you.

MANETTE

What did you say?

DEFARGE

You have a visitor. And he is a man who knows a well made pair of shoes when he sees one. Show him the shoe you are working on.

(to LORRY)

Take it Monsieur.

(to MANETTE)

Tell him what kind of shoe it is and the maker's name.

MANETTE (timidly)

I forgot what it was you asked me.

DEFARGE

I said, couldn't you describe the kind of shoe, for Monsieur's information?

MANETTE

It is a lady's shoe. A young lady's walking shoe. In the current style. I never saw the style; I use a pattern.

DEFARGE

And the maker's name?

MANETTE

(staring blankly, for a moment, at DEFARGE)

Did you ask me for my name?

DEFARGE

Yes. I did.

MANETTE

One Hundred and Five, North Tower

DEFARGE

Is that all?

MANETTE

One Hundred and Five, North Tower.

LORRY

Sir, you are not a shoemaker by trade.

MANETTE

No, I am not a shoemaker by trade. I learned it here. I asked permission to . . . to teach myself.

LORRY

Monsieur Manette, do you remember nothing of me? Or of him, is there no old servant? No old time or memory rising in your mind?

(MANETTE returns to work on the shoes. After several seconds LUCIE goes to him.)

MANETTE

What is this? You are not the jailer's daughter.

LUCIE

No.

MANETTE

Who then?

(MANETTE takes from around his neck a scrap of folded rag. He opens it carefully and removes a very little bit of hair.)

It is the same! How can that be? What has happened here? She laid her head upon my shoulder the night that I was taken away. They found them on my sleeve in the North Tower and I begged, "Let me keep them? They will never help me escape in body, only in spirit." Those were my words. Was it you?

(MANETTE reaches for LUCIE. LORRY and DEFARGE start towards them.)

LUCIE

No. Stay where you are.

MANETTE

Listen! Whose voice was that? The sound of an angel! My love, but no, you are too young. Look at the prisoner's hands. These are not the hands she knew, or the face. This is not a voice she ever heard. No! She was - he was, before the North Tower.

LUCIE

Dear man, if you hear in my voice any resemblance to a voice that was once sweet music in your ears, then weep for it. If in touching my hair, you recall a beloved head that once lay upon your chest when you were young and free, then touch it and weep for that as well. I will tell you my story and my name, and the name of my father who is living, and of my mother who is dead. I will tell you and I will take care of you. And you may tell me what you will, when you are able. Take my hand; hold it in both your own. You will never be alone again.

(LORRY, LUCIE and MANETTE exit. DEFARGE crosses downstage. JERRY enters and finds a seat.)

Scene 4

SETTING: London. Outside Tellson's Bank.

JERRY CRUNCHER is sitting slumped outside the bank trying to clean his rust stained hands without anyone noticing.

NARRATOR/DEFARGE

Back in England, putting to Death was a popular recipe. Death, as the story went, was Nature's remedy for all things - so why not Legislation's as well? Accordingly, the forger was put to Death, the writer of a bad check was put to Death, the unlawful opener of a letter was put to Death - and on from there. Not that it did any good, in fact, it was exactly the reverse. On the plus side however, it spared the world some trouble and it left very little to be looked after. Plainly spoke, killing people was simpler than jailing them.

(DEFARGE exits. CLERK enters.)

CLERK

Cruncher! Do you know where the courthouse is?

JERRY

'Course I do.

CLERK

Yes, of course you do. And you know Mr. Lorry as well, don't you?

JERRY

I know Mr. Lorry, sir, much better'n I know the courthouse, much better sir.

CLERK

Good. Go to the courthouse, show the doorman this note and he will let you in.

JERRY

Am I to wait in the court, sir?

CLERK

You are to go to the court and give this note to the doorkeeper. He will let you in and then forward the note to Mr. Lorry. Then you make a gesture, any gesture that will attract Mr. Lorry's attention, and show him where you stand. That is all.

JERRY

That's all?

CLERK

Yes.

JERRY

But why should I just be standin' there?

CLERK

Mr. Lorry wishes to have a messenger at hand. Your gesture will alert him that you are ready to take a message should he have one to give you. Just stand there, he'll let you know what to do next. Understand?

JERRY

Oh yes. Absolutely. I understand completely. I do. I'll just wait there for 'im to tell me if I should do somethin' else.

CLERK

That's it!

JERRY

That's it!

CLERK

That's all you have to do.

JERRY

Nothin' else at all?

CLERK

Nothing else.

(Waiting, they look at each other.)

Good day then!

JERRY

Good day!

(They stare uncomfortably at one another until, finally,
the CLERK tips JERRY and turns to leave.)

Sir?

CLERK

What now, Cruncher?

JERRY

I suppose they'll be tryin' forgeries this mornin'?

CLERK

No not forgeries, much worse.

JERRY

Bad checks?

CLERK

No, much worse.

(A moment passes while JERRY thinks of a crime
worse than writing bad checks.)

Treason!

JERRY

That means quarterin'. Barbarous!

CLERK

It's the law.

JERRY

It's hard for the law to quarter a man I think. It's hard enough to kill 'im, but to quarter
'im as well? I think that's very hard.

CLERK

Good day Cruncher.

(JERRY crosses downstage practicing his gesture.
BLOODTHIRSTY MAN enters behind him.)

Scene 5

SETTING: Courthouse. London

Various people file past assembling
for the upcoming court scene.

What's on?
JERRY

Nothing yet.
BLOODTHIRSTY MAN

What's comin' on?
JERRY

The Treason case.
BLOODTHIRSTY MAN

The quarterin' one?
JERRY

Ah yes! He'll be drawn on a rack until he's half hanged and then he'll be taken down and sliced before his own face. Then his insides will be pulled out and burnt and his head will be chopped off. And then, he'll be cut into quarters. That's the sentence.

If he's found guilty you mean?
JERRY

Oh he'll be found guilty, don't you be afraid of that.
BLOODTHIRSTY MAN

(LUCIE and MANETTE enter.)

Who're they?
JERRY

Witnesses.
BLOODTHIRSTY MAN

For which side?
JERRY

BLOODTHIRSTY MAN

Against.

JERRY

Against which side?

BLOODTHIRSTY MAN

The prisoner's!

JUDGE

Silence in the court! Charles Darnay has yesterday pleaded Not Guilty to an indictment denouncing him and further has claimed that he was not a traitor against our serene, illustrious, excellent, and so forth, Lord the King. And that he had not assisted Lewis, the French King, in his wars against our said serene, illustrious, excellent and so forth, that is to say, his comings and goings between their country and our own, though unusual, suspicious and frequent, were perfectly innocent and that he had not revealed to Lewis, the French King, what our forces, that is those of our serene, illustrious, excellent and so forth country were planning in Canada and North America. Sir how do you plead?

DARNAY

Not Guilty.

JUDGE

Still? Well, then let's begin!

NARRATOR (entering)

Mr. Attorney General then informed the jury that the man before them, though young in years, was old in treasonable practices. That the prisoner had long been passing and repassing between England and France on secret business of which he could give no honest account and that the evidence he would set before them would, doubtless, leave no other choice but the guilty verdict. The defense had only to prevent it.

(BARSAD takes the stand)

STRYVER

Mr. Barsad, have you ever been a spy yourself?

BARSAD

No! And I resent the insinuation.

STRYVER

How do you earn your living?

Investments. Property. I own property.

Really, where is your property?

Well, I don't know exactly.

What sort of property is it?

No business of yours.

You inherited it?

Yes, I inherited it.

From whom?

A distant cousin.

Very distant?

Rather distant, yes.

Ever been in prison?

Certainly not!

Never been in a debtor's prison?

I don't see what that has to do with anything.

BARSAD

STRYVER

BARSAD

STRYVER

BARSAD

STRYVER

BARSAD

STRYVER

BARSAD

STRYVER

BARSAD

STRYVER

BARSAD

STRYVER

BARSAD

Never? STRYVER

Yes. BARSAD

How many times? STRYVER

Two or three. BARSAD

Not five or six? STRYVER

Maybe four or five. BARSAD

Ever been kicked down a flight of stairs? STRYVER

What? BARSAD

Have you ever been kicked down a flight of stairs? STRYVER

No! BARSAD

Never? STRYVER

Never! I once received a kick at the top of a staircase but I fell of my own accord. I assure you of that! BARSAD

Kicked on that occasion for cheating at dice. STRYVER

Something to that effect was said by the intoxicated liar who committed the assault. BARSAD

Ever borrow money from the prisoner? STRYVER

Yes. BARSAD (reluctantly)

Ever pay him? STRYVER

No. BARSAD

STRYVER
In truth, was not your acquaintance with the prisoner but a very slight one and are you not a rotten, thieving, lying, cheating scoundrel who would do or say anything if the price were right.

No! BARSAD

Swear that? STRYVER

Uh, well . . . BARSAD

No more questions your honor. STRYVER

(BARSAD returns to his seat.)

NARRATOR
The next unlucky witness was Lucie Manette, unlucky due to the misfortune of meeting Mr. Charles Darnay under most unusual circumstances.

(LUCIE takes the stand.)

ATTORNEY GENERAL
Miss Manette, look upon the prisoner. You have seen him before?

I have. LUCIE

Where? ATTORNEY GENERAL

LUCIE

On board a ship. Traveling from France to England.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Had you any conversation with the prisoner on that passage across the channel?

LUCIE

Yes sir.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Recall it?

LUCIE

When the gentleman came on board--

JUDGE

Do you mean the prisoner?

LUCIE

Yes your honor.

JUDGE

Then say it! Say "the prisoner"!

LUCIE

When the prisoner came on board, he noticed that my father was much fatigued and in a very weak state of health. He advised me on how I might better shelter my father from the wind and the weather. He expressed great gentleness and kindness for my father.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Let me interrupt you for a moment. Did he come on board alone?

LUCIE

No.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

How many were with him?

LUCIE

Two.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

English or French?

LUCIE

French.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

And they conferred together?

LUCIE

Yes.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Until the last moment?

LUCIE

Until the last moment when it became necessary for the French gentlemen to be landed in their boat.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Did they exchange papers, perhaps these very lists?

LUCIE

I don't know, they had some papers--

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Like these in size and shape?

LUCIE

Perhaps. It's difficult to say.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

But you were very close to them were you not?

LUCIE

I was, but it was very dark; I only saw that they looked at papers as they spoke.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

What did they speak of?

LUCIE

I don't know what they spoke of.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Well what did they say.

LUCIE

I don't know that either; I couldn't hear them.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Can you hear me?

LUCIE

Yes.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Am I more near or more far from you than the prisoner and his conspirators were that evening?

LUCIE

You are farther from me than they were.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Well then why in the world couldn't you hear them, when you so plainly hear me?

LUCIE

They were speaking quietly.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

They were whispering?!

LUCIE

Sir, this man spoke openly with me. He was respectful, and dignified. In our difficult situation he was kind and good and useful to my father. I hope I may not repay him by doing him harm here today.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

If the prisoner, Miss Manette, does not fully understand that the evidence you offer today is your duty to give, and that you must give it, and that you cannot escape from giving it, then he is the only person present in such an ignorant state. Now please continue.

LUCIE

He told me he was traveling on business of a delicate and difficult nature, which might get people into trouble.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Did he say anything about America, Miss Manette? Be specific.

LUCIE

He explained to me, in his opinion, how the quarrel had arisen. And said that, so far as he could judge, it was a wrong and foolish one on England's part and in a joking manner suggested that perhaps one day George Washington might gain as great a historical name as George the Third --

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Enough!

LUCIE

But there was no harm in his way of--

JUDGE

Enough!

(LUCIE returns to her seat. WITNESS takes the stand.)

NARRATOR/LORRY (rising)

A singular circumstance then arose in the case. The object of the Attorney General was to prove that the prisoner had been here or there, doing this or that, at one time or another. To obtain this end, he needed only from his witness a positive identification of Mr. Darnay which, ordinarily, would have been a simple task. On this occasion, however, the task was complicated by one Sydney Carton.

(CARTON, who previously had been paying no attention to the proceedings, passes a note to STRYVER who is cross-examining WITNESS.)

STRYVER

You say again that you are quite sure that it was the prisoner you saw that night?

WITNESS

I'm certain.

STRYVER

Did you ever see anyone that looked very much like the prisoner?

WITNESS

Not so much like him that I might mistake the one for the other.

STRYVER

Look upon my learned friend there, and then again upon the prisoner. What do you say, are they not very much alike?

WITNESS

They are.

JUDGE

Remarkable!

STRYVER

Now I don't suppose we'll try my learned friend, Mr. Carton, for treason will we? Certainly not because he might be mistakenly identified as "the prisoner".

WITNESS

Certainly not.

JUDGE

Certainly not!

STRYVER

So then we ought not try this man merely because he looks like the gentleman the witness saw that night in the country, or because he looks like the man the previous witness spoke with while crossing the channel. And certainly not because he looks like the man the witness before her knew as a lender.

(All exit but LORRY, JERRY and CARTON, who crosses downstage.)

NARRATOR/CARTON

So the jury withdrew to consider it's options, and an hour and a half limped by heavily. Until, on the crowded steps of the courthouse, our man Jerry Cruncher was called into action.

(CARTON crosses to the bar, pours a drink and sits down at a table.)

LORRY

Jerry, this is very important. Take the message: Acquitted.

JERRY

Acquitted?

LORRY

Acquitted.

JERRY

Sir, had your message been "recalled to life" I certainly would've known what you meant this time.

LORRY

Hurry.

JERRY

Yes sir! Acquitted!

(JERRY exits. LORRY exits.)

Scene 6

SETTING:

Later that evening in a cafe near
the courthouse.

CARTON is alone drinking when
DARNAY enters.

DARNAY

Mr. Carton?

CARTON

Darnay! Good evening. Some luck that throws you and me together again. This must be
a strange night for you, to walk upon street stones and sit in cafe chairs.

DARNAY

True. I hardly feel that I belong to this world.

CARTON

No wonder. It was not so long ago that you were well on your way to another.

DARNAY

That's true also. Thank you.

CARTON

For what?

DARNAY

For your part in keeping me here.

CARTON

Don't thank me. God don't thank me. If you must express yourself you might offer a
toast?

DARNAY

A toast then to Mr. Cart--

CARTON

No, not to me. You can do better. It's on the tip of your tongue; it ought to be at least.
Look, I swear it's right there!

DARNAY

Miss Manette then!

CARTON

Miss Manette then! A fair young lady to be pitied and wept for by.

(CARTON finishes his wine and refills
his glass sloppily, spilling on the table.)

How does it feel? Is it worth being tried for one's life to be the object of such sympathy and compassion?

(Silence as CARTON waits for an answer)

Tell me Darnay, do you think I particularly like you?

DARNAY

Really Mr. Carton, I have not asked myself the question.

CARTON

But you ask yourself the question now.

DARNAY

You have acted as if you do, though, I don't think that you do.

CARTON

I don't think I do either - though I can't see why I shouldn't. And I begin to have a very good opinion of your understanding.

DARNAY

Nevertheless, there is nothing in that, I hope, to prevent my remembering our meeting
(DARNAY stands.)
and our parting without ill blood on either side.

CARTON

No nothing at all, nothing in life!

(They stare at each other.)

You think I am drunk?

DARNAY

I think you have been drinking.

CARTON

You know I have been drinking.

DARNAY

Since I must say so, I know it.

CARTON

And you should also know why. I am a disappointed drudge, sir, I care for no man on earth and no man on earth cares for me.

DARNAY

Much to be regretted. You might have used your talents better.

CARTON

Maybe so, maybe not. But don't let your sober face elate you; you never know what it may come to. Goodnight.

(DARNAY exits. LUCIE enters. CARTON stares into his glass.)

Do you particularly like the man? Why should you particularly like a man who resembles you? There is nothing in you to like. But what a reason to compare yourself. He shows you what you might have been, what you have fallen away from. You might have been looked at by those blue eyes as he was. Come on then let's hear it in plain words, you hate him.

NARRATOR/LUCIE

He then resorted to his pint of wine for consolation, drank it all in a few minutes and fell asleep on his arms, with his hair straggling over onto the table and a long winding sheet in the candle dripping down upon him.

(LUCIE exits. CARTON exits. LAZY SERVANT enters and collapses on a bench center stage.)

Scene 7

SETTING: The Manette home.

LORRY knocks several times.
Finally, he enters and discovers
LAZY SERVANT napping.

Oh, hello there.

LAZY SERVANT

Hello.

LORRY

I knocked.

LAZY SERVANT

Did you?

LORRY

Several times, at least.

LAZY SERVANT

That's strange. I didn't hear anyone knocking for if I had I would've promptly opened the door.

LORRY

You were sleeping.

LAZY SERVANT

I was not!

LORRY

You were. You were sleeping and that's why you didn't hear me knocking.

LAZY SERVANT

Sir, I was most certainly not asleep. What you saw when you entered the chamber was a man deep in thought.

LORRY

It doesn't matter. I'm not upset.

LAZY SERVANT

I would hope not. I should think most people would be glad to encounter a household assistant who thinks.

LORRY

Do you think Dr. Manette is home?

LAZY SERVANT

Expected home.

LORRY

Miss Pross at home?

LAZY SERVANT

Possibly at home, depending on who is calling.

LORRY (irritated)

Well then, as I myself am at home in this house, I'll go upstairs and look for her.

LAZY SERVANT

Suit yourself.

(LAZY SERVANT exits. LORRY turns upstage and notices MANETTE's small workbench.)

LORRY

(to himself)

I wonder why he keeps this reminder of his suffering?

PROSS

(appearing behind him)

And why wonder about that?

LORRY

I would think that after--

PROSS

How do you do?

LORRY

I am pretty well thank you. How are you?

PROSS

Nothing to brag about. My new help's lazy.

LORRY

Indeed?

PROSS

Yes indeed. I'm very unhappy about it. In fact I'm angry.

LORRY

Indeed?

PROSS

For God's sake, say something else besides indeed or you'll fidget me to death.

LORRY

Really, then?

PROSS

Really is a crock as well, but better than indeed.

LORRY

Miss Pross, we are alone here and, as we are both people of business, there is something I must ask you. Does the Doctor, when talking to Lucie, never refer to . . . to the shoemaking time?

PROSS

Never.

LORRY

And yet he keeps that bench and those tools?

PROSS

I didn't say he never referred to that time within himself.

LORRY

Do you believe he thinks of it often?

PROSS

I do.

LORRY

Do you imagine--

PROSS

I never imagine. I have no imagination whatsoever.

LORRY

Do you suppose then, you do suppose don't you?

PROSS

Now and then.

LORRY

Do you suppose that Doctor Manette has a theory about the cause of his being so oppressed those years ago, perhaps even the name of his oppressor?

PROSS

I suppose that he is afraid of the subject.

LORRY

Why should he be afraid?

PROSS

It's plain enough I should think. It's a terrible thing to remember. Besides that, his loss of himself grew out of it. Not knowing how he lost himself, or how he was recovered, he may never feel certain of not losing himself again. Think about it, there's plenty to fear.

(Pause)

Here they come!

(STRYVER enters. LUCIE, MANETTE, DARNAY
and CARTON enter, quietly conversing.)

NARRATOR/STRYVER

The usual group, including Carton in his standard state of half-drunken depression, entered in unusually good spirits, spirits that soared as they enjoyed each other's company and then a magnificent meal. Its creator, Miss Pross, was a virtuoso in the kitchen who conducted herself marvelously. Her dinners, half English and half French, were so well cooked and served that nothing could be better. She was a sorceress who sent for a chicken, a rabbit and a vegetable or two from the garden and then changed them into anything she pleased. It was Lucie, somewhat intoxicated by the supper, who suggested they retire to the garden for some fresh air.

DARNAY

Dr. Manette, have you seen much of the Tower since you've been in London?

MANETTE

Lucie and I have been there, but only casually. Though we have seen enough to know that it is very interesting.

LUCIE

(to DARNAY)

Do you know of something in particular?

DARNAY

Well, I was told that a group of workman, while remodeling it, came upon a dungeon which had been covered and forgotten for many years. When they got into it with their torches they realized that on every stone of it's inner wall were inscriptions carved by prisoners - dates, names, complaints, and even prayers. On one stone in particular a prisoner who seemed to have gone to execution had carved, as his last work, the initials D.I.C. The letters were carved with a very poor instrument and hurriedly, in an unsteady hand, but eventually it was determined that the last letter was not a C, but a G. There was no record or legend of a prisoner with those initials and after many fruitless guesses it was eventually suggested that the letters were not initials but formed one complete word, DIG. So they did. And in the earth below a stone, which was below a tile or some fragment of concrete, were found the ashes of a paper mixed with the ashes of a small leather case. What the unknown prisoner had written will never be read but he had written something, and then hidden it away to keep it from the jailer.

(MANETTE falters.)

LUCIE

Father! What's wrong?

MANETTE

Nothing. Nothing wrong. Just drops of rain. They startled me. Nothing wrong. Just the rain. We better go in. I'm still not yet proof against surprises. Maybe I never will be. Just the rain that surprised, you know, startled me.

(ALL cross upstage as NARRATOR enters.)

NARRATOR

He recovered himself almost instantly and started into the house. Yet Mr. Lorry, with his eagle eye, all business, would've sworn that he detected a single salty drop on the face of the good doctor as he turned it once again toward Charles Darnay.

(exit NARRATOR)

MANETTE

The raindrops are still falling, large, heavy and few. It comes slowly.

CARTON

It comes surely.

DARNAY

A multitude of people and yet a solitude!

LUCIE

It is impressive. Sometimes I sit here at night listening to the rain until I have made the echoes of it into the echoes of the footsteps that are coming by and by into our lives.

CARTON

It sounds to me like a great crowd.

DARNAY

Are all these footsteps destined to come to all of us, or are we to divide them among us?

LUCIE

I don't know. It's foolish anyway, but I imagine them coming into my life, and my father's.

CARTON

And I take them into mine! With no questions and no stipulations. There is a great crowd bearing down upon us, Miss Manette, and I see them!

(flash of lightning)

By the lightning.

(peal of thunder)

And I hear them! Here they come fast, fierce and furious!

NARRATOR/PROSS (entering)

It was the rush of water that inspired him, and stopped him too, for no voice could be heard in it. An amazing storm broke with that sweep of water and there was not a moment's interval in the crash, fire and rain until the moon rose, well after midnight.

(ALL exit. Enter MADAME DEFARGE. Enter MONSEIGNEUR with three ATTENDANTS.)

NARRATOR/MADAME DEFARGE

Meanwhile, on the other side of the sea, Monseigneur, a great lord of power, held his annual reception in the Grand Hotel. On this particular evening he was about to take his chocolate. Monseigneur could swallow a great many things with ease, but this chocolate could not so much as enter his mouth without the help of four strong men besides the Cook. One carried the chocolate pot into the sacred presence; a second stirred and frothed the chocolate with a little instrument he carried especially for that project, a third presented the napkin and the fourth poured the chocolate out. Deep would have been the wound in Monseigneur's pride had he and his chocolate been served by only three men; he would've died with only two.

(Exit MADAME DEFARGE. Enter DEFARGE and JACQUES 3 to a window)

MONSEIGNEUR

The Earth and the fullness therein are mine saith Monseigneur.

DEFARGE

(from the window)

The leprosy of unreality has disfigured every human creature in his attendance.

JACQUES 3

Agreed, though you must admit, they are perfectly dressed. If the Judgment Day were a dress day everybody there would be eternally correct.

DEFARGE

But it is not. And they are not. Monseigneur, I devote you to the Devil!

(DEFARGE and JACQUES 3 exit. THE VENGEANCE enters as MONSEIGNEUR and his attendants cross downstage to the carriage.)

NARRATOR/THE VENGEANCE

Monseigneur, having eased his four men of their burdens and taken his chocolate, caused the doors to be thrown open and issued forth. Whereupon he went downstairs and into the courtyard, got into his carriage and drove away.

(Enter MADAME DEFARGE and a small crowd including GASPARD and THIN MAN.)

NARRATOR/MADAME DEFARGE

It pleased him to see the peasants scatter before his horses to escape being run down. His man drove as if he were charging an enemy. With a wild rattle and clatter, and an utter disregard for all things in its path, the carriage dashed through the streets and swept around corners with women screaming before it and men clutching each other, and their children, out of its way. That is, until one of its wheels voiced a sickening thud and a loud cry rang out in the muddy street.

MONSEIGNEUR

What's wrong? Why are we stopped?

(Howling and crying like a wild animal GASPARD takes up a bundle from the horses' feet)

THIN MAN

Pardon, Monsieur the Marquis. It is a child!

MONSEIGNEUR

Why does he make that terrible noise? Is it his child?

THIN MAN

Excuse me sir. It is a pity, but yes, it is his child.

(GASPARD turns toward the carriage and charges. He is held back.)

GASPARD

Killed! Dead! My child is dead!

MONSEIGNEUR

It is extraordinary to me that you people cannot take care of yourselves and your children. One or the other of you is forever in the way. You've probably injured my horses with your stupid child!

(Again GASPARD charges and is again restrained.)

GASPARD

Dead! He's dead!

MONSEIGNEUR

(Throwing a gold coin toward the THIN MAN)

There, give him that.

(The crowd makes way for DEFARGE.)

DEFARGE

I know. I know it all. Be brave my friend, my dear Gaspard! It is better for the little man to die so than to live. He died in a moment without pain. Could he have lived an hour as happily?

MONSEIGNEUR

You there, philosopher, what do they call you?

DEFARGE

Defarge.

MONSEIGNEUR

And what do you do, Defarge?

DEFARGE

Vendor of wine.

MONSEIGNEUR

Well Defarge, philosopher and vendor of wine, here is a coin for you.

(He throws it on the ground.)

Pick it up and spend it where you will. The horses there, are they all right?

FRENCH DRIVER

Yes, Monsieur.

(Suddenly a coin flies into the carriage and rings loudly on the floor.)

MONSEIGNEUR

Hold! Hold the horses! Who threw that?

(MONSEIGNEUR looks toward DEFARGE and sees
MADAME DEFARGE is in his place, knitting.)

You dogs, I would gladly exterminate you from the Earth! If I knew which one of you rats threw that coin, and you were near me, I would crush you under my wheels without a second thought. Driver!

(FRENCH DRIVER whips the horses. GASPARD ducks behind the carriage as they go clattering off. NARRATOR enters.)

NARRATOR

And with that he was driven away. The women, who had tended the bundle where it lay at the base of the fountain, sat there watching the running of the water and the rolling of the Fancy Ball. But one woman stood, conspicuous, knitting with the steadfastness of Fate. The water of the fountain ran, the river ran, the day ran into evening, and life into death according to the rule. Time and tide waited for no one.

(Crowd exits. DEFARGE enters.)

NARRATOR/DEFARGE

Later that evening, the Monseigneur, his traveling carriage steeped in crimson and about one man heavier than it might have been, entered a village on the way to his Chateau.

(Carriage stops and GASPARD rolls out from under it.)

The village, with its one poor street, contained one poor brewery, a poor tannery, poor tavern and a poor fountain - all the usual appointments and, of course, it had its poor people too.

(MENDER OF ROADS wanders on.)

MONSEIGNEUR

Bring me that fellow!

(ATTENDANTS fetch MENDER OF ROADS)

I passed you on the road?

MENDER OF ROADS

Monseigneur it is true. I had the honour of being passed by you on the road.

MONSEIGNEUR

Coming up the hill and at the top of the hill both. Am I correct?

MENDER OF ROADS

It is true Monseigneur. You are correct.

MONSEIGNEUR

What were you staring at so intently?

MENDER OF ROADS

(pointing under the carriage)

Monseigneur, I looked at the man.

MONSEIGNEUR

What man, pig? And why do you point under my coach?

MENDER OF ROADS

Pardon me sir; he swung by a chain under the carriage. By the brake.

MONSEIGNEUR

Who?

MENDER OF ROADS

The man, Monseigneur.

MONSEIGNEUR

You idiot! What was his name?

(no reply)

You know all the men in this part of the country don't you?

MENDER OF ROADS

Yes, I think I do.

MONSEIGNEUR

Then what was the name of this one?

MENDER OF ROADS

I'm so sorry sir, but he was not from this part of the country. I have never, in all the days of my life, seen him before. I'm sorry.

MONSEIGNEUR

Swinging by a chain, under the coach, like a caught weed? He would've suffocated in the dust.

MENDER OF ROADS

That's the wonder of it! He was whiter than the miller, his head hanging over like this, and all covered in dust. White as a specter, tall like a specter as well! That's why I stared.

MONSEIGNEUR

And you think you did well to see a thief hiding under my carriage and not open your stupid mouth about it? Get out of my sight!

(MENDER OF ROADS runs off. JACQUES 2 enters.)

NARRATOR/JACQUES 2

And off again they rode.

(Carriage continues. DARNAY enters. JACQUES 2 exits.)

NARRATOR/DARNAY

Soon the sweet scents of summer rose all around him and rose, as the rain falls, impartially, upon the dusty and the ragged as well. And the shadow of a high roofed house and many overhanging trees came quickly into view. It was a heavy mass of a building, that Chateau of Monsieur the Marquis, with a large stone courtyard before it and two stone sweeps of staircase meeting at a stone terrace. It was a stony business altogether, with heavy stone flowers in stone urns and stone cold faces of men in all directions. It was as if Medusa had looked upon it all just as they approached.

(Carriage stops. All rise. DOORMAN helps MONSEIGNEUR from the carriage and SERVANT clears the carriage.)

MONSEIGNEUR

(Stepping from the carriage)

Monsieur Charles, whom I expect from England, has he arrived?

DOORMAN

Not yet, Monseigneur.

(DOORMAN exits. MONSEIGNEUR crosses. SERVANT enters.)

SERVANT

Your nephew has not yet arrived Monseigneur.

MONSEIGNEUR

So I'm told.

SERVANT

Shall I clear the table then?

MONSEIGNEUR

No, leave it.

(MONSEIGNEUR sits, then looks toward the window.)

What is that?

SERVANT

Monseigneur? That?

MONSEIGNEUR

Outside the window. Open the blinds!

SERVANT

(SERVANT goes to the window)

Monseigneur, it is nothing. The trees and the night are all that are there.

MONSEIGNEUR

Good. Close the blinds and leave me awhile. If my nephew should arrive send him up. Otherwise do not disturb me.

(SERVANT exits. DARNAY enters.)

MONSEIGNEUR

Well, good evening. Will you sit with me?

DARNAY

I will. You were in Paris yesterday, sir.

MONSEIGNEUR

I was, and you?

DARNAY

I come direct.

MONSEIGNEUR

From London?

DARNAY

Yes.

MONSEIGNEUR

You have been a long time coming.

DARNAY

On the contrary, I come direct, as I've told you.

MONSEIGNEUR

Pardon me. I mean not a long time on the journey but a long time intending the journey.

DARNAY

I have been detained by various business.

MONSEIGNEUR

No doubt.

DARNAY

I wonder sir, did anything unusual happen to you while in Paris?

MONSEIGNEUR

Not a thing. What makes you ask?

DARNAY

Nothing to do with your carriage?

MONSEIGNEUR

No. Nothing. Have you come here to ask me about my trip to Paris?

DARNAY

I have come back, as you know, to finish the business that took me away and, I must say, led me into a rather unexpected danger. Yet it is, I think, a worthy pursuit and had it led me to my death I hope that it would've sustained me.

MONSEIGNEUR

Not to your death - I don't think it's necessary to say that.

DARNAY

If it had carried me to the utmost brink of death I doubt that you would've cared to stop me there. In fact, I half suspect that you may have even worked to make my already unusual circumstances appear all the more suspicious.

MONSEIGNEUR

No, I haven't. Though as you said, I could've.

DARNAY

Is nothing out of your reach?

MONSEIGNEUR

To be sure, there are many things, well, several things, that are out of my reach. Here in France things are changed, and for the worse, I assure you. Our ancestors held the right of life and death over those vulgar dogs. From this very room have been sent the orders to hang no less than a hundred of them. But we've lost many privileges, a new philosophy has come into style and the assertion of our station, our privileges, might eventually become - inconvenient.

DARNAY

Inconvenient?

MONSEIGNEUR

It's true.

DARNAY

We have so often and so cruelly asserted our privileges that I believe our name to be more detested than any name in France.

MONSEIGNEUR

Let us hope so. Detestation of the high is the involuntary homage of the low.

DARNAY

There is not a face in this country that I can look at openly. Not a single set of eyes stares at me but through a dark mask of fear and slavery.

MONSEIGNEUR

A compliment! Repression is the only lasting philosophy, my friend. That dark mask of fear and slavery will keep the dogs obedient to the whip.

DARNAY

Sir, we have done wrong and we're reaping the fruits of wrong.

MONSEIGNEUR

I will die perpetuating the system under which I have lived.

DARNAY

Then you will die a slave to it.

MONSEIGNEUR

Look around! Do these look like the quarters of a slave? The clothes of a slave? Have you ever seen a slave with these shoes? Perhaps it's my jewelry, it resembles shackles?

DARNAY

In its way, it does.

MONSEIGNEUR

Really Charles, I'm disappointed in you.

DARNAY

And I'm disappointed as well. I promise you, I am sick with disappointment. This property and France are lost to me. I renounce them!

MONSEIGNEUR

Are they yours to renounce?

DARNAY

I would not claim them if they passed from you to me tomorrow.

MONSEIGNEUR

Which I hope is not the case.

DARNAY

It's not much to lose: a crumbling tower of waste and oppression, a pit of nakedness and suffering. Truthfully uncle, you are a curse, a wilderness of misery and ruin.

MONSEIGNEUR

Ha! This is outrageous. I think you must be exhausted and sleep deprived.

DARNAY

I have a clear mind, and I'm not surprised that you don't recognize it.

MONSEIGNEUR

Goodnight Charles.

(DARNAY exits. NARRATOR enters.
MONSEIGNEUR lays down to sleep.)

NARRATOR

So for now was the conversation ended, and the stone faces on the Chateau's outer walls stared blindly at the black night for three solid, heavy hours. Three hours the horses in the stables rattled in their racks and the dogs barked and the snakes drug their rough bellies through the dust. The fountain in the village flowed unseen and the fountain at the Chateau dropped unheard, both melting away, like the minutes that were falling from the spring of Time, through three dark hours. And then, the heavy grey water of both turned ghostly in the Light, and the eyes of one of the stone faces opened.

(GASPARD enters and crosses to MONSEIGNEUR.
NARRATOR exits.)

NARRATOR/GASPARD

In the glow, the water of the Chateau fountain turned to blood and the stone faces crimsoned. And with his mouth hung stupidly open, the newest stone face stared, amazed at me and struck with awe.

(Enter DARNAY. GASPARD stabs MONSEIGNEUR.)

NARRATOR/DARNAY

Then it lay back on the pillow like a fine mask, a dark mask, suddenly startled, and made angry. And then petrified. Driven home into the heart of the stone figure, Monsieur the Marquis, was a knife. Round it's hilt was a paper on which was scrawled:

NARRATOR/GASPARD

Drive him fast to his tomb. From Jacques.

(Exit GASPARD. DARNAY and MONSEIGNEUR
exit as LORRY enters)

Scene 8

SETTING: The Manette house in London.

NARRATOR/LORRY

Twelve months came and went while Mr. Charles Darnay established himself as an academic. In London he didn't expect a bed of roses. He had expected Labor, and he found it, and he did it, and he made the best of it. In that, his prosperity consisted.

(Exit LORRY. Enter CARTON. Enter MANETTE with two benches that he places center stage.)

NARRATOR/CARTON

He'd loved Lucie Manette from the hour of his Danger. He had never felt a gaze so warm and bright as the one she showered over him nor had he ever seen a face so tenderly beautiful as hers.

(DARNAY enters.)

MANETTE

Charles Darnay! It's good to see you. We've been counting on your return these past three or four days. Both Sydney Carton and Mr. Lorry have been by and made you seem a little overdue.

DARNAY

What can I say? I'm flattered that you thought of me. Miss Manette . . . ?

MANETTE

Is well. She has gone out on an errand but will be home soon.

DARNAY

Sir, I knew she was out. I came to speak to you.

MANETTE

Oh, really?

DARNAY

I have been lucky enough this past year and a half to be welcome here. And so happy to visit often, as much as I can. I hope the topic on which I am about to touch will not--

MANETTE

Is Lucie the topic?

DARNAY

Yes.

MANETTE

It is hard for me to speak of her, at any time. It is very hard for me to hear her spoken of in that tone of yours, Charles Darnay.

DARNAY

It is the tone of admiration, respect and deep love, Doctor Manette.

MANETTE

I believe you.

DARNAY

You know what I would say though you cannot know how earnestly I feel it without knowing my heart and the hopes and fears that have so long weighed it down. Sir, I love your daughter. I love her dearly, and devotedly. If ever in the world there were love then I love her. You yourself have loved; let your old love speak for me.

MANETTE

Not that sir! Let that be.

DARNAY

I'm sorry.

MANETTE

I do not doubt that you love her, satisfy yourself of that. Have you spoken to her about this?

DARNAY

No.

MANETTE

Nor written?

DARNAY

No. Not without first--

MANETTE (coldly)

It would be ungenerous not to admit that your self-restraint is in consideration of her father. Her father thanks you.

DARNAY

Sir, I have seen you together from day to day and I know, how can I not know, that between you is a love so unusual, so touching, and so belonging, that it is unparalleled, even in the tenderness between a father and a child. I know that when she is clinging to you that the hands of a baby, and of a girl, and also of a woman, are around your neck. I have known this, night and day, since I have known you in your home.

MANETTE

Have you any reason to believe that Lucie loves you?

DARNAY

None.

MANETTE

Do you seek any guidance from me?

DARNAY

I ask none sir, but I have thought it possible that you might, if you think it is right, give me some.

MANETTE

Do you seek any promise from me?

DARNAY

I do seek that.

MANETTE

What is it?

DARNAY

It is that if Lucie should bring to you, at any time, such a confidence that I lay before you now, that you will tell her what I have said today and your true feelings about it.

MANETTE

If she should ever tell me that you are essential to her perfect happiness then I will give her to you. And if there were, Mr. Darnay, any charges, old or new against the man she really loved, and the direct responsibility for them not lying on his head, then they should be obliterated for her sake. She is everything to me. She means more to me than suffering, more to me than wrong.

DARNAY

Your confidence in me ought to be returned with full confidence on my part. My present name, though but slightly changed from my mother's, is not my own. I wish to tell you what it is and why I am in England --

MANETTE

Stop! Enough for now. If Lucie should love you then you'll tell me on the morning of your wedding.

DARNAY

Of course.

MANETTE

She'll be home directly. She shouldn't see us together tonight.

DARNAY

Goodnight.

(DARNAY exits. MANETTE goes to his bench, organizes his tools and exits. CARTON enters. LUCIE enters.)

Scene 9

SETTING:

Later that evening in the Manette home.

CARTON stares out of the window.
LUCIE waits, looking at him occasionally.

(Enter DARNAY)

NARRATOR/DARNAY

If Sydney Carton shone anywhere it was not the house of Doctor and Lucie Manette. He had been there often and often was moody and morose. When he cared to talk he talked well, but over him hung a cloud of caring for nothing. It overshadowed him with such a fatal darkness, that one rarely saw the light within him.

(DARNAY exits.)

LUCIE

I fear you are not well Mr. Carton.

CARTON

No, I'm not well. But then again, the life I lead is not so conducive to health.

LUCIE

Then why not change it?

CARTON

Too late for that. I'll never be any better than I am right now, in fact I'll probably only sink lower and get worse.

(pause)

I'm sorry. There is something I want to tell you. Will you hear it?

LUCIE

If it will do you good Mr. Carton. If it will make you a little happier, I will hear it.

CARTON

Don't worry. Don't be afraid of what I have to say. It's true, I'm not well and I'm not happy but, well, you see, I am like one who died young; all my life might have been.

LUCIE

I don't think so Mr. Carton. I think the best of it might still be. I'm sure you may yet be much more worthy of yourself.

CARTON

Although I'm afraid I know better, I thank you for saying it. I won't forget it. But hear me a little more. I want you to know that you have been the last dream of my soul. In my degradation I have not been so degraded that the sight of you, and your father, and the home you've built together did not stir some old shadows in me. It did! Shadows that I thought had long ago died out and disappeared. Since I met you I've been troubled by a remorse that I thought I could never again feel, and I've heard whispers of old voices that I thought had long gone silent. I've had new ideas, unformed and striving. I've begun anew and shaken off sloth and sensuality, and, fought the abandoned fight!

(pause)

It's just a dream, of course, a dream that ends in nothing and leaves the sleeper where he lay. But I want you to know that you inspired it.

LUCIE

Will nothing of it remain?

CARTON

No. But you've kindled me, heap of ashes that I am, into a flame - a fire inseparable from myself, but quickening nothing, lighting nothing, doing no service, just burning away.

LUCIE

Since it is my misfortune to have made you worse than before you met me--

CARTON

No don't say that. You would've reclaimed me if anything could've. You haven't made me worse.

LUCIE

What good have I done you?

CARTON

The most good. The very most that I am capable of now I have come here to realize. Let me carry with me, throughout the rest of my misdirected life, the memory that I opened my heart to you, the last person in all the world, and that there was something left in me that you could love.

LUCIE

There is, there are many things.

CARTON

Will you also let me believe that this, the last secret of my life, was given to you and that it lies in your breast alone and will be shared by no one?

LUCIE

If that is consolation to you, then yes. The secret is yours Mr. Carton, not mine. If you give it to me I will respect it.

CARTON

Thank you. Thank you. Be assured that I will never refer to this conversation again. Were I dead it would not be surer than it is now. And in the hour of my death I will hold sacred one memory: that my last vow was made to you, and that my name and my faults and my miseries were carried so gently in your heart, may it otherwise be light and happy!

LUCIE

Thank you Mr. Carton.

CARTON

There is but one thing more I wish to say- it is a small thing and then I will leave. Though it is useless, it rises so completely from out of my soul that I cannot but say it.

LUCIE

What is it?

CARTON

I would embrace any sacrifice for you or those dear to you. For you, I would do anything. Try to hold me in your mind, try to believe that I am sincere in this one thing. The time will come, it will not be long in coming, when new ties will be formed around you, ties that will bind you more tenderly yet more strongly than any before. Oh Lucie, when a happy father's face looks up at yours, when you see your own bright beauty springing up anew at your feet, think now and then that there is a man who would give his life to keep a life you love beside you. Goodnight Lucie.

(She nods. CARTON exits. GHOST OF MONSEIGNEUR enters. LUCIE exits. JACQUES 1,2,3, enter and arrange stools in the wine-shop. THE VENGEANCE and MADAME DEFARGE enter and tend the bar.)

Scene 10

SETTING: Paris. DEFARGE's wine-shop.

Several people are inside, drinking
and conversing.

NARRATOR/GHOST OF MONSEIGNEUR

There had been earlier drinking than usual in the wine-shop of Monsieur Defarge. As early as six-o clock in the morning sallow faces peeping through barred windows had made out the shapes of other faces within. Defarge sold a very thin wine even in the best of times, but it was an unusually thin wine that he sold at this time. A sour wine, in fact, whose influence on those who drank it was to make them gloomy. No vivacious bacchanalian flame leaped out of these pressed grapes, but a smoldering fire burnt in their dregs.

(DEFARGE and MENDER OF ROADS enter.)

DEFARGE

My good wife, I've traveled a long way with this good mender of roads. He is called Jacques. I met him, by accident, a day and a half outside of Paris. He is a good child this mender of roads, called Jacques. He is thirsty. He should have some wine.

MADAME DEFARGE

He shall.

(MADAME DEFARGE pours wine for both.)

MENDER OF ROADS

Thank You. Thank you.

(MENDER OF ROADS pulls some bread out of his hat
and eats it carefully while the others watch him.)

DEFARGE

Are you finished Jacques?

MENDER OF ROADS

Yes, thank you. Thank you very much.

DEFARGE (to JACQUES 1,2,3)

Come and sit down. Jacques has a story to tell us.

MENDER OF ROADS

Where should I begin?

DEFARGE

At the beginning.

MENDER OF ROADS

I saw him a year ago this summer, underneath the carriage of the Marquis, hanging onto the brake.

JACQUES 1

Had you never seen him before?

MENDER OF ROADS

No. Never.

DEFARGE

Then how did you recognize him later?

MENDER OF ROADS

Because he was so tall. When the Marquis demanded of me that night, "tell me what he is like" I told him "tall as a specter!"

JACQUES 2

You should have said short as a dwarf!

MENDER OF ROADS

But what did I know then? The deed was not yet accomplished. When the Marquis screamed, "Bring him to me, bring me that vile rascal!" I offered him nothing.

DEFARGE

He's right Jacques. Go on.

MENDER OF ROADS

So then I am at work again upon the hillside and just about to go to bed and I see them. Six soldiers and a tall man, bound. They are almost black to my sight except on the sun side, where I see their shadows long like the shadows of giants and with a blood red edge. I see that they are covered with dust and that the dust moves with them up the hillside. Tramp tramp tramp! When they are near me I recognize the tall man and I think he recognizes me but we don't speak a word. His arms are swollen on being bound so tight and his wooden shoes are large and clumsy. And he is lame. And he is slow. But they drive him on with their guns like this! He falls and they laugh at him. They pick him up and his face is bleeding and covered with dust but he cannot touch it. His arms are bound. And swollen like I said. This makes them laugh again. But I do not laugh.

JACQUES 2

And then?

MENDER OF ROADS

I didn't see him for a long time.

(pause)

The next time I see him he is hanged, forty feet in the air, above our village fountain, poisoning it.

JACQUES 1

What?

MENDER OF ROADS

It's awful. How can the women and children draw water? Who can walk in the evening under that shadow? When I left the village on Monday sundown I looked back from the hilltop and that broken shadow lay across the church, struck down, and across the mill and across the prison. Messieurs, it seemed to lie across the Earth!

JACQUES 1

Was there a trial?

DEFARGE (incredulously)

A trial?

JACQUES 1

I only thought that--

DEFARGE

There was no trial! There are never any trials, other than the trial that was his whole life.

JACQUES 2

Was there not a petition?

DEFARGE

There was - a petition showing that he was driven out of his mind by the death of his child. I gave it to the King myself.

JACQUES 2

On what occasion?

DEFARGE

On the occasion of his carriage racing through the street and me stepping out and standing in front of it. Jacques was there.

JACQUES 2

And what happened?

JACQUES 3

The King's guards surrounded him. And then beat him.

JACQUES 2 (to MENDER OF ROADS)

Wait outside the door for us.

(MENDER OF ROADS exits)

What say you Jacques? To be registered?

DEFARGE

To be registered, and doomed to destruction.

JACQUES 3

The Chateau and all the race?

DEFARGE

Extermination.

JACQUES 1

Good.

JACQUES 2

Are you sure that no trouble will arise from our manner of keeping the register? Will we, or should I say, she, always be able to decipher it?

DEFARGE

If Madame my wife decided to keep the register in her memory alone, she would not lose a word of it - not a syllable. Knitted in her own stitches it will remain to her as plain as the sun. Trust me, it would be easier for the weakest most cowardly man that lives to erase himself from existence than to erase one letter of his name or crimes from her knitted register.

JACQUES 2

We should get rid of him, this mender of roads. He's stupid.

DEFARGE

Leave him to me. He's no danger to us. He only wants to glimpse the fine world of the King and the Queen. He'll see them on Sunday and then go home.

JACQUES 3

What? Is it a good sign that he wishes to see royalty?

DEFARGE

Show a cat milk if you want her to thirst for it. Show a dog his natural prey if you want him to bring it down one day.

(THE VENGEANCE and JACQUES 1,2,3 exit as NARRATOR enters. MADAME DEFARGE and DEFARGE cross down right and back up to center where they sit again in the wine-shop.)

NARRATOR

Later that evening, after several errands and hours of visiting, Saint Antoine again enfolded the Defarges in his dusky wings. They picked and wound their way through the black mud of his streets and back into the wine-shop, it was at least midnight by then.

(NARRATOR exits.)

MADAME DEFARGE

What did Jacques of the police say to you back there?

DEFARGE

Not much, but all he knew, I think. There's another spy commissioned for our quarter. There may be more but he knows of one for certain.

MADAME DEFARGE

Well then it is necessary to register him. What do they call him?

DEFARGE

He is English.

MADAME DEFARGE

So much the better. His name?

DEFARGE

Barsad.

MADAME DEFARGE

Barsad. Good.

DEFARGE

First name John.

MADAME DEFARGE

John Barsad. Did they say what he looks like?

DEFARGE

Age, about forty years, height, about five feet nine, black hair, complexion dark, generally rather handsome look, eyes dark, face thin, long and sallow, nose aquiline, but not straight, having a peculiar inclination toward the left cheek, expression therefore, sinister.

MADAME DEFARGE (laughing)

It's a portrait! He shall be registered tomorrow. What's the matter?

DEFARGE

I'm a little tired.

MADAME DEFARGE

You're a little depressed too.

DEFARGE

It is a long time.

MADAME DEFARGE

It is a long time. When is it not a long time? Vengeance and retribution require a long time; it is the rule.

DEFARGE

It does not take a long time to strike a man with lightning.

MADAME DEFARGE

But tell me how long it takes to make and store the lightning. It doesn't take much time for an earthquake to swallow a town but tell me how long it takes to prepare the earthquake.

DEFARGE

A long time, I suppose.

MADAME DEFARGE

But when it is ready, it takes place, and grinds to pieces everything before it. In the meantime it is always preparing.

DEFARGE

I don't question all of this, but . . . it may not come during our lives.

MADAME DEFARGE

Oh well.

DEFARGE

Then we would not see the triumph!

MADAME DEFARGE

But we would have helped it. That is enough for me.

DEFARGE

Well I don't know that it's enough for me.

MADAME DEFARGE

When the time comes, let loose a tiger and a devil, let them loose! But wait, with your devil chained and your tiger hungry, for the proper time.

DEFARGE

I suppose I'll have to wait, whether I want to or not.

MADAME DEFARGE

I suppose so.

(DEFARGE exits. MADAME DEFARGE returns to the bar with THE VENGEANCE. JACQUES 1&2 enter the shop and JACQUES 3 enters speaking.)

NARRATOR/JACQUES 3

The next day noon found the admirable woman in her usual place knitting away with her usual stare. The day was hot and heaps of flies were all about.

(JACQUES 3 joins JACQUES 1&2. BARSAD enters. Recognizing BARSAD, MADAME DEFARGE picks up a rose and pins it in her hair. JACQUES 1,2,3 notice the rose and then BARSAD, and gradually, they exit.)

BARSAD

Good day, Madame.

MADAME DEFARGE

Good day, Monsieur. Good day indeed.

BARSAD

Might I have a glass of cognac?

(MADAME DEFARGE serves BARSAD.)

Marvelous cognac this is, Madame.

MADAME DEFARGE

The cognac is flattered.

(MADAME DEFARGE takes up her knitting.)

BARSAD

You knit with great skill.

MADAME DEFARGE

I've had a lot of practice.

BARSAD

A pretty pattern too!

MADAME DEFARGE

Really, you think so?

BARSAD

Definitely. May I ask what it is for?

MADAME DEFARGE

For my amusement.

BARSAD

Not for use?

MADAME DEFARGE

That depends; I may find a use for it one day. If I do well, then I'll use it.
(HAGGARD WOMAN and STARVING MAN
enter the shop but exit quickly when they notice the
rose in MADAME DEFARGE's hair.)

(Under her breath)

Stay a minute longer John, and I'll have knit Barsad before you go.

BARSAD

Business seems bad.

MADAME DEFARGE

Business is very bad. The people are so poor.

BARSAD

The unfortunate people, so oppressed and miserable, as you say.

MADAME DEFARGE

No, as you say.

BARSAD

Right. It was I who said so, but naturally you think so, don't you?

MADAME DEFARGE

I think I have enough to do helping my husband keep this shop open. All we think about here is how to live - that's enough - I think.

BARSAD

A shame about the execution of poor Gaspard.

MADAME DEFARGE

When people use knives for such purposes they pay for it. He knew beforehand the price of his luxury, and he paid it.

BARSAD

You know, just between us, I think there is much compassion and even anger in this neighborhood regarding the poor man's situation.

MADAME DEFARGE

Is there?

BARSAD

Is there not?

(enter DEFARGE)

MADAME DEFARGE

Oh look, my husband.

BARSAD

Good day Jacques!

(DEFARGE stares at him.)

Good day Jacques.

DEFARGE

Sir, you've mistaken me for someone else. My name is Ernest Defarge.

BARSAD

Good day just the same.

DEFARGE

Good day.

BARSAD

I was just saying to your wife, with whom I had the pleasure of speaking to while you were out, that they tell me there is - and no wonder - much anger and sympathy in Saint Antoine regarding the fate of poor Gaspard.

DEFARGE

No one has told me so. But you seem to know the quarter well, which is to say, better than I do.

BARSAD

Not at all, but I hope to know it better. The pleasure of talking with you Monsieur Defarge reminds me that I have some interesting memories surrounding your name.

DEFARGE

Is that so?

BARSAD

Yes it is so. When Dr. Manette was released from the Bastille he was delivered to you. Weren't you at one time his . . . domestic?

DEFARGE

Such is the fact.

BARSAD

It was to you that his daughter came, and it was from your care that she took him accompanied by. . . was it a Mr. Lorry?

DEFARGE

It was.

BARSAD

You see I am informed of the circumstances.

DEFARGE

Yes, I see that.

BARSAD

I have known Dr. Manette and his daughter in England.

DEFARGE

Really?

BARSAD

You don't hear much about them now?

DEFARGE

No.

MADAME DEFARGE

In fact, we never hear about them.

BARSAD

Well, she is going to be married.

MADAME DEFARGE

Going to be married. She was pretty enough to be married long ago. You English are cold, it seems to me.

BARSAD

Oh! You know that I am English?

MADAME DEFARGE

Your tongue is, and what the tongue is I suppose the man is as well.

BARSAD

Yes, well, Miss Manette is to be married, but not to an Englishman - to one who is, like herself, French by birth. And speaking of Gaspard, oh poor, poor Gaspard, it seems she is to marry the nephew of Monsieur the Marquis, for whose death, Gaspard was exalted to the height of so many feet. In other words, she'll marry the current Marquis who lives unknown in England, as a Mr. Charles Darnay.

(pause)

Well, I've finished my cognac and I haven't money for another. I guess I'd better go.

(exit BARSAD)

DEFARGE

Can it be true?

MADAME DEFARGE

Since he has said it, probably not. But it may be true.

DEFARGE

If it is--

MADAME DEFARGE

What if it is?

DEFARGE

I hope, for her sake, that destiny will keep her husband out of France.

MADAME DEFARGE

Her husband's destiny will take him where he is to go, and it will lead him to the end that is to end him - that, I know.

DEFARGE

But it's strange, very strange, you must admit, that after all our sympathy for her father, and for her, that her husband's name should be condemned by your hand at this very moment, and writ next to that dog Barsad's.

MADAME DEFARGE

Stranger things than this will happen when it comes. I have no doubt. I have them both here, and they are both here for their merits. That is enough.

(MADAME DEFARGE, DEFARGE and
THE VENGEANCE exit. CARTON enters.)

Scene 11

SETTING: London. Evening, in the Manette's garden.

LUCIE and MANETTE enter and sit together.

NARRATOR/CARTON

Never did the sun go down with a brighter glory than on that quiet corner, one memorable evening as the Doctor and his daughter sat together in the garden. Never did the moon rise with milder radiance over great London than on that night when it found them, still seated under a tree, and shone upon their faces through its leaves. Lucie was to be married tomorrow and she'd reserved this last evening for her father.

(CARTON exits)

LUCIE

Are you happy tonight Father?

MANETTE

I am. But this is an unusual evening.

LUCIE

I am very happy. I am deeply happy in my love for Charles and in his love for me. Yet if I had never seen Charles I would have stayed quite happy with you.

MANETTE

But you did see him. It is Charles, and if it had not been him, then it would have been another. Or if it had been no other then I would have been the cause, and then the dark part of my life would have cast its shadow on you.

(pause)

Do you see the moon? I looked at her from my prison window and I could not bear her light. I looked and I was tortured by her shining upon what I had lost. I beat my head against a prison wall because I looked at her and I thought too much. And never, not even at their wildest, did my thoughts conceive of the happiness that I have known with you, and that we have before us.

(CARTON enters. LUCIE and MANETTE exit.)

NARRATOR/CARTON

The time came for them to say goodnight and they separated. But in the stillness of the morning's third hour Lucie stole into his room. Along his handsome face the bitter waters of captivity had worn, but he covered up their tracks with a determination so strong that he held them off, even in his sleep. She held him for a moment, then went away. And the sunrise came.

(Exit CARTON. Enter JERRY with PROSS, LUCIE and LORRY behind him.)

NARRATOR/JERRY

The marriage day was shining brightly and everyone was ready outside the closed door of the Doctor's room, where he was speaking with Charles Darnay.

(Exit JERRY)

LORRY

And so it was for this, my sweet Lucie, that I brought you across the channel so long ago! How little I knew of what I was doing then.

PROSS

Or now.

LORRY

That may be but you don't have to cry about it.

PROSS

I'm not crying! You are.

LORRY

I? Miss Pross surely--

PROSS

You were, just then. I saw you do it.

LORRY

I admit this is a most wondrous occasion and, being so, I can't help but wonder that after all these years that there might have been a Mrs. Lorry.

PROSS

It's no wonder. None at all!

LORRY

What? You think there never might have been a Mrs. Lorry?

PROSS

You were a bachelor in your cradle.

LORRY

Well, that seems likely too.

PROSS

And you were cut out for a bachelor before you were put in your cradle.

LORRY

Then I think I was very badly dealt with and that I ought to have had a voice in the selection of my own pattern at least.

(DARNAY enters with MANETTE who is deadly pale and visibly disturbed.)

MANETTE

Take her Charles. She is yours.

(CARTON enters as LUCIE exits with DARNAY.)

NARRATOR/CARTON

And then she was gone.

(MANETTE exits.)

LORRY

I think we had better not speak to him just yet.

PROSS

I don't intend to disturb him.

LORRY

I must look in at Tellson's. I'll go now and be back in a couple of hours and then, if you find it agreeable, we should all take a ride into the country for dinner.

PROSS

I think that would be best.

LORRY

Good-bye then.

(exit LORRY. MANETTE enters with his tools and goes to work at his bench. PROSS crosses to MANETTE but fails to distract him.)

Scene 12

SETTING: Two hours later, the Manette house.

LORRY enters and hearing a low knocking sound, goes toward MANETTE's office.

LORRY

Good God! What is that sound?

PROSS

Mr. Lorry! I'm afraid all is lost. He doesn't know me. And he's making shoes!

(LORRY and PROSS cross to MANETTE who is hunched down over his bench working frantically. CARTON enters.)

NARRATOR/CARTON

Their hopes darkened and their hearts grew heavy. The third day came and went, the fourth and the fifth. Six days, seven days, eight lost days the ghost of Manette made shoes. They divided the night into two shifts, stayed always with him, and kept the secret from Lucie.

(PROSS exits. LORRY sits next to MANETTE and eventually falls asleep.)

But the shoemaker, whose hand had been a little out at first, was growing dreadfully skillful. He had never been so intent on his work, and his hands had never been so nimble and expert as in the dusk of the ninth evening.

(CARTON exits. MANETTE, returned to himself, is at the window reading. LORRY wakes up, still in the chair. Several times during their conversation MANETTE looks at his hands, which are discolored from making shoes.)

LORRY

Doctor Manette?

MANETTE

Mr. Lorry, I'm glad you're awake. I can't wait to ask you how you ended up asleep in my chair?

LORRY

My dear Manette . . . we were up late, almost into the morning. We were talking. Do you remember?

MANETTE

Oh, of course, I remember. It was a wonderful discussion.

(pause)

LORRY

Dear friend, I'm anxious to have your opinion on a very curious case in which I'm deeply interested. As I say, it is very curious and very troubling to me. To you, a doctor, so much more informed, it may be less so. Doctor Manette, the case is . . . of a friend of mine. Give me your advice for his sake sir, and for the sake of his daughter.

MANETTE

If I understand, there has been some mental shock.

LORRY

Yes!

MANETTE

Be explicit, spare no detail.

LORRY

It is the case of a shock from which the sufferer recovered, by a process which he himself cannot trace. But he has recovered, as I say, so completely as to be a highly intelligent man capable of great mental and physical exertion. Unfortunately, there has been a slight relapse.

MANETTE

How long in duration?

LORRY

Nine days and nights.

MANETTE

Perhaps your friend resumed an old pursuit connected with the shock?

LORRY

That's it.

MANETTE

You spoke of his daughter. Does she know of his relapse?

LORRY

No. It has been kept from her and I hope will always be kept from her. It is known by myself, and to one other who may be trusted.

MANETTE

That was very kind. Very thoughtful.

LORRY

Sir, I am a man of business. I'm not sure how. . . I'm afraid that I'm unfit to cope with such intricate and difficult matters. I don't have the necessary information. I need your help. How does this relapse come about? Is there danger of another? Could it be prevented, treated?

(MANETTE stops him with a gesture.)

What can I do for my friend?

(pause)

MANETTE

I think it is probable that the relapse was not quite unforeseen by him.

LORRY

Was it dreaded?

MANETTE

Very much. And you, sir, have no idea how difficult it is to speak about it.

LORRY

Would it relieve him to share the pain, when it is on him?

MANETTE

Perhaps.

LORRY

To what would you refer the attack?

MANETTE

I believe there may have been a revival of that train of thought that first caused the sickness. Some intense associations were recalled, I think. It's probable that there had been something lurking in his mind - that these things would be remembered, say, under certain circumstances, on a particular occasion. He tried to prepare himself but perhaps that made him less able to bear it.

LORRY

Would he remember what took place in the relapse?

MANETTE

Not at all.

LORRY

Now as to the future . . .

MANETTE

As to the future, I would say that there is great hope. In fact, I almost believe that the circumstances needed to renew it are exhausted.

LORRY

Good, that's good!

MANETTE

Yes, I think so.

(They shake hands and then embrace. PROSS enters.)

NARRATOR/PROSS

When the newly married pair came home, the first person to appear and offer congratulations was Sydney Carton.

(CARTON and DARNAY enter.)

They had not been at home many hours when he presented himself, not much improved in his manner or his looks, nor in his habits, but with a certain air of fidelity about him, which was new to the eye of Charles Darnay.

(PROSS exits.)

CARTON

Mr. Darnay, I hope that we may be friends.

DARNAY(warmly)

We are already friends.

CARTON

You are good enough to say so, as a fashion of speech, but I don't mean any fashion of speech. In fact, when I say I wish that we might be friends, I hardly mean that either.

DARNAY

Well, what do you mean?

CARTON

Do you remember a certain famous occasion when I was more drunk than, than usual?

DARNAY

I remember a certain famous occasion when you forced me to confess that you had been drinking.

CARTON

Yes, well unfortunately I remember it too. The curse of those occasions weighs heavy on me, for I can never seem to forget them. But don't be alarmed, I'm not going to preach.

DARNAY

I am not at all alarmed. Earnestness in you is anything but alarming.

CARTON

Good. On the drunken occasion in question, one of many as you know, I was insufferable about liking you and not liking you. I wish you would forget it.

DARNAY

I forgot it long ago.

CARTON

Fashion of speech again! Mr. Darnay, oblivion is not so easy for me as it seems to be with you. I have by no means forgotten it and a light answer does not help me.

DARNAY (Strongly)

I assure you friend, it was not a light answer. I only meant to turn aside a slight thing which, to my surprise, seems to trouble you more than it should. Good God, have I nothing more important to remember, especially in light of the great service which you rendered me that day?

CARTON

I was speaking, sir, of our being friends. Now you know me, and you know I'll never amount to much, if you doubt it there are many--

DARNAY

I have my own opinion.

CARTON

If you could stand having a worthless fellow like myself coming and going at odd times – I know that I have a difficult reputation. I only ask that I be permitted to visit occasionally, and that I might be thought of as a useless piece of furniture, tolerated for it's odd service but otherwise going unnoticed. I doubt that I would abuse the privilege. It's a hundred to one that I would use it more than four times a year. It would satisfy me sir, only to know that I had it.

DARNAY

You have it.

CARTON

Then I thank you Darnay. I trust I may freely call you that.

DARNAY

By this time, Carton, I hope so.

(CARTON exits. LUCIE enters.)

DARNAY

You're thoughtful tonight Lucie.

LUCIE

Yes. I am. I have something on my mind.

DARNAY

What is it?

LUCIE

Will you promise not to press the issue?

(DARNAY nods.)

I think, Charles, that Mr. Carton deserves more consideration, more respect, than you expressed for him tonight.

DARNAY

Why do you think that?

LUCIE

That is what you may not ask. Yet I think, I know, that he does.

DARNAY

Then that is enough for me. But what should I do that I haven't done? I haven't been unkind to him.

LUCIE

No, Charles, you haven't. But I ask that you be generous with him always, and very lenient of his faults, and in your opinion of him when he is not around. He has a heart with deep wounds in it, a heart he seldom reveals.

DARNAY

I'm truly sorry if I have ever done him wrong. I admit, I never thought much of him.

LUCIE

I am sure that he is capable of good things, gentle things even. I know it. Remember how strong we are in our happiness and how weak he is in his misery.

DARNAY

I will, as long as I live.

(NARRATOR enters. DARNAY and LUCIE exit.)

NARRATOR

The corner where they lived, it has been said, was a wonderful corner for echoes. Almost always you could hear something coming.

(LORRY enters.)

NARRATOR/LORRY

Indeed, there was something coming, something dreadful and eerie. It rumbled from a distance, menacingly, all throughout space and time. Now, about little Lucie's sixth birthday, it took on an awful sound, a sound like a great storm. And in France, a living sea was rising.

(LORRY exits. CARTON enters.)

NARRATOR/CARTON

Easily, the rustling of that Dark Angel's wings got blended with all the other echoes. And the rhythm was not wholly of the Earth, but had in it the health of Heaven and the breath of Hell.

(Crowd enters, led by DEFARGE. Enter DARNAY)

NARRATOR/DARNAY

Saint Antoine had, by then, become a great mass of scarecrows, vast and heaving to and fro, with frequent gleams of light above their heads, where steel blades and bayonets shone in the sun.

NARRATOR/CARTON

And from the throat of Saint Antoine rose a tremendous roar, while a forest of naked arms struggled in the air like shriveled branches in a winter wind.

(CARTON, DARNAY and LORRY exit.)

NARRATOR

All this raging circled around Defarge's wine-shop like a whirlpool of boiling water. Every human drop in the cauldron was drawn toward the vortex where Defarge himself, already stained with gunpowder and sweat, issued orders and arms and strove in the thickest of the struggle.

(NARRATOR exits.)

DEFARGE

Keep near me Jacques 3. Jacques 1, and 2 separate and put yourselves in the lead of as many patriots as you can. Where is my wife?

MADAME DEFARGE

Look left and you'll see her.

DEFARGE

Where are you going?

MADAME DEFARGE

With you. You'll see me with my band of women very soon. We can kill as well as the men!

DEFARGE

Come then patriots and friends, we are ready! The Bastille!

(A huge roar erupts as the attack begins.)

NARRATOR/THE VENGEANCE

Deep ditches, double drawbridge, massive stone walls, eight great towers, cannon, muskets, fire and smoke. Two fierce hours.

NARRATOR/JACQUES 2

Deep ditch, single drawbridge, massive stone wall, eight great towers, musket-fire, and smoke.

DEFARGE

One drawbridge down! Work comrades, work! Jacques one thousand and Jacques two thousand, Jacques five and twenty thousand, in the name of all the Angels or the Devils, whichever you prefer, work!

NARRATOR/HAGGARD WOMAN

Defarge of the wine shop was still at his gun, which had long grown hot.

NARRATOR/JACQUES 1

Cannons, musket-fire and smoke. But still the deep ditch, the single drawbridge, the massive stone walls, and eight great towers.

NARRATOR/STARVING MAN

Slight displacements in the raging sea made by the falling wounded.

NARRATOR/RAGGED CRIPPLE

Flashing weapons, blazing torches, smoking wagon loads of wet straw and always shrieks and bravery in the smash and rattle.

NARRATOR/JACQUES 2

But still a deep ditch, a single drawbridge and a massive stone wall.

NARRATOR/HAGGARD WOMAN

And still Defarge at his gun, grown doubly hot by the service of four fierce hours.

NARRATOR/ DEFARGE

Then, from within the fortress, a white flag, dimly perceptible through the raging storm, nothing audible in it.

(NARRATOR enters.)

NARRATOR

And Defarge of the wine-shop was swept by the sea, over the drawbridge, past the massive stone walls and into the eight great towers, all surrendered.

ALL

The Prisoners! - The Records! - The secret cells!- The instruments of torture! - The Prisoners!

NARRATOR

The prisoners - as if there were more than a handful! Saint Antoine was adamant that its wine-shop keeper guard the governor who had defended the Bastille and shot the people.

NARRATOR/STARVING MAN

Otherwise the governor would not have been marched to the Hotel de Ville for judgment.

NARRATOR/HAGGARD WOMAN

Otherwise the governor would escape and the people's blood be unavenged.

NARRATOR/THE VENGEANCE

She stood immovable, close to the grim old officer, and remained that way all through the streets, as Defarge and the rest bore him along.

NARRATOR/JACQUES 1

She was near him when he reached his destination and was struck at from behind.

NARRATOR/JACQUES 2

She was close by when the long gathering rain of stabs and blows fell heavy.

NARRATOR

So close that when he dropped dead under their weight, she, suddenly animated, put her foot upon his neck and with her cruel knife, hewed off his head. An hour later Saint Antoine hatched the plan of hanging men from lampposts, to show what he could do.

JACQUES 2

Lower the lamp! Here's a soldier to be put on guard!

NARRATOR/JACQUES 3

Saint Antoine's blood was up and the blood of tyranny and domination was down, down on the steps of the Hotel de Ville, where the governor's body lay.

NARRATOR/JACQUES 2

Down on the sole of the shoe of Madame Defarge where she'd stood on the body to steady it for mutilation.

NARRATOR/JACQUES 1

The swinging sentinel was posted, and the sea rushed on.

(ALL exit)

INTERMISSION

ACT II

Scene 1

SETTING: Tellson's bank in London.

(Enter NARRATOR)

NARRATOR

In the risings of fire and the ragings of sea, the firm earth was shaken by the rushes of an angry ocean that now had no ebb but was always on the flow. Higher and higher, to the terror and wonder of the watchers on the shore - three years were consumed in the tempest. And three more birthdays of Little Lucie had been woven by the golden thread into the peaceful tissue of life.

(LORRY enters followed by DARNAY. MONSEIGNEUR 2,3,4 enter and speak quietly to one another.)

NARRATOR/LORRY

Monseigneur, as a class, had disassociated himself from the phenomenon of his not being appreciated. He was like that fabled rustic who, with infinite pains, managed to raise the Devil, but was struck dumb and terrified at the sight of him. So Monseigneur, after reading the Lord's Prayer backward for many years, finally beheld the Beast - and then took to his noble heels and fled.

(Enter GHOST OF MONSEIGNEUR)

NARRATOR/GHOST OF MONSEIGNEUR

August of the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-two found Monseigneur scattered far and wide. Their headquarters and great gathering place, in London, was Tellson's bank.

(GHOST OF MONSEIGNEUR exits.)

DARNAY

Although you are younger than many, I must still suggest to you--

LORRY

You think I am too old?

DARNAY

It would be a long journey to a disorganized country, in uncertain weather, and ultimately, to a city that, well, might not be so safe for you.

LORRY

My dear Charles, you've confirmed my very reason for going. If things there weren't disorganized, there'd be no reason to send me. Besides, it's safe enough I think. No one will interfere with an old man like me when there are so many other people there worth interfering with.

DARNAY

I wish I were going with you.

LORRY (incredulously)

You're one to talk. I should be advising you, not the other way around. You, a Frenchman born, wish you were going with me. You are indeed a wise councilor!

DARNAY

Only last night, after you had left and I was talking to Lucie-

LORRY

You should be ashamed to mention her name! Wishing you were going to France at this time of day . . .

DARNAY

I am not wishing to go. And I'm not going.

LORRY

Good.

(pause)

DARNAY

Must you go tonight?

LORRY

I go tonight. The situation is far too pressing to delay.

DARNAY

And you take no one with you?

LORRY

I intend to take Jerry. He's accompanied me often and I'm used to him. Nobody will suspect him of being anything but an English bulldog, or of having a single idea in his head but to fly at the man who would touch his master.

(MESSENGER enters.)

MESSENGER

Sir! Pardon me sir? I'm sent with this letter, and to ask if you've yet uncovered any traces of the one to whom it is addressed.

LORRY

To whom is it addressed?

MESSENGER

To Monseigneur hereforeto the Marquis St. Evremonde, of France.

LORRY

The answer then is no. I have referred it to everybody here and no one can tell me where the gentleman is.

MONSEIGNEUR 2

Nephew of a gentleman you mean - a degenerate successor of the polished Marquis who was murdered. Happy to say I never knew him.

MONSEIGNEUR 3

A craven soul who abandoned his post some years ago.

MONSEIGNEUR 4

Infected with the new philosophies. Opposed the last Marquis and abandoned his estates when he inherited them. Left them to the ruffian herd. Now they'll pay him back as he deserves, I hope.

DARNAY

I know the man.

LORRY

Really?

MONSEIGNEUR 2

I'm sorry for it.

DARNAY

Why?

MONSEIGNEUR 2

Perhaps you didn't hear. I'll say it again: here is a man infected by the most pestilent and blasphemous form of Devilry that was ever known. He abandoned his property to the vilest scum of the earth, and you ask me why I am sorry that a man who instructs youth knows him? I'm sorry because I believe there is contamination in such a scoundrel.

DARNAY

You may not understand the gentleman.

MONSEIGNEUR 2

I understand something of human nature, and I think it is a wonder that after abandoning his goods and his position to that butcherly mob that he's not at the head of them.

MONSEIGNEUR 3

You'll never find a man like that trusting himself to the mercy of such precious protegees. No, he'll show them a clean pair of heels early in the scuffle as he sneaks away.

(Exit MONSEIGNEUR 2,3,4)

LORRY

Charles, will you deliver the letter? Will you explain that we have had it for some time and the reason why?

DARNAY

Of course. You leave for Paris from here?

LORRY

At eight.

DARNAY

Very well then. I'll be back to see you off.

(DARNAY crosses down stage reading the letter aloud.

LORRY exits. MESSENGER exits.)

Dear Monsieur the Marquis, I've been seized and my house is destroyed - burnt to the ground. The crime for which I am about to lose my life is treason. They tell me I have acted against the people on behalf of an emigrant. In vain, I argue that I have acted for them, and not against, according to your commands. In vain, I remind them that, before they seized the emigrant property, I had collected no rent and forgiven all their debts. The only response is that I have acted for an emigrant, and where is that emigrant? I send my voice across the sea, hoping it may reach your ears. I beg you Monsieur, secure and release me. My only fault is that I have been true to you. From this prison here, where every hour I tend nearer and nearer to destruction, I pray that you be true to me. Gabelle

(LORRY enters. DARNAY exits.)

NARRATOR/LORRY

He knew well that he had acted imperfectly. He knew very well that in his love for Lucie, his renunciation of his social place, though by no means new to his own mind, had been hurried and incomplete. He knew that he ought to have systematically worked it out and supervised it, and that he meant to do it, and that it had never been done. Still, he had oppressed no man, and he had imprisoned no one. What then?

(Enter NARRATOR. Exit LORRY.)

NARRATOR

He sat up late that night and wrote two letters: one to Lucie, explaining his obligation to go to Paris and the other to the Doctor, confiding Lucie and their dear child to his care.

(Exit NARRATOR. Enter BARSAD.)

Scene 2

SETTING:

A small inn on the road to Paris.
Middle of the night.

DARNAY enters and begins undressing.
Exhausted and dispirited, he goes to sleep
still in his clothes

NARRATOR/BARSAD

He who fared toward Paris from England in that summer of ninety-two fared slowly on his way. Every town gate had its band of citizen patriots with their national muskets in a most explosive state of readiness. They stopped all comers and goers, questioned them while inspecting their possessions, and looked for their names on the lists. Then they turned them back, locked them up, or sent them on down the road.

(NARRATOR enters. BARSAD exits.)

NARRATOR

A very short distance was accomplished when Charles Darnay began to perceive that for him, along these country roads, there was no hope of return until he should have been declared a good citizen in Paris. Every village that vanished into the distance was another iron door in a series that was barred between him and England. A universal watchfulness so encompassed him that if he had been taken in a cage he would not have felt his freedom more completely gone.

(A timid local FUNCTIONARY and an armed patriot
in a ROUGH RED CAP enter waking DARNAY.
NARRATOR exits)

FUNCTIONARY

Emigrant, I am going to send you on to Paris under an escort.

DARNAY (wearily)

Citizen, I desire nothing more than to get to Paris. I could do without the escort.

ROUGH RED CAP

Silence! Peace, aristocrat!

FUNCTIONARY

It is as the good patriot says; you are an aristocrat and must have an escort, and must pay for it.

DARNAY

I have no choice?

ROUGH RED CAP

Choice? Listen to him! As if it was not a favor to protect him from the lamppost!

FUNCTIONARY

Again it is as the good patriot says. Rise and dress yourself, emigrant.

(FUNCTIONARY and ROUGH RED CAP cross down stage with DARNAY as LUCIE enters.)

NARRATOR/LUCIE

Two mounted patriots armed with sabers and muskets rode on either side of him, the sharp, driving rain spitting at their faces. When finally they reached the wall of Paris they came upon a crowd of people. Charles governed his horse well but could not conceal from himself, or many others, that aspects of their affairs were alarming, and that he was afraid.

(Crowd enters. LUCIE exits.)

HAGGARD WOMAN

Down with the emigrant!

STARVING MAN

Bring him down!

DARNAY

Emigrant? My friends, do you not see me here in France of my own free will?

RAGGED CRIPPLE

You are a cursed emigrant! And you're an aristocrat!

THE SMITH

Let him be. Let him be! He will be judged in Paris.

RAGGED CRIPPLE

That's right! Judged! And condemned as a traitor.

(ALL yell affirmations.)

DARNAY

Friends, you deceive yourselves. I am not a traitor.

(Enter DEFARGE)

HAGGARD WOMAN

He lies! He's a traitor since the decree. His life is forfeited to the people. His cursed life is not his own!

DEFARGE

Where are the papers of this prisoner?

DARNAY

Sir, I request that you notice I am a free traveler. I am a French citizen, in charge of this escort which the disturbed state of the country has imposed upon me, and which I have paid for.

DEFARGE (forcefully)

Where are the papers for this prisoner?

ROUGH RED CAP

Here.

(DEFARGE takes the papers and after reading them speaks quietly, only to DARNAY.)

DEFARGE

Is it you? You, who married Manette's daughter?

DARNAY

You know me?

DEFARGE

My name is Defarge. I keep a wine-shop in Saint Antoine.

DARNAY

My wife came to you to reclaim her father.

DEFARGE

In the name of La Guillotine, why would you come to France?

DARNAY

You read my papers; you think it's not the truth?

DEFARGE

A bad truth for you.

DARNAY

Indeed. I am lost here. Everything is so sudden and so changed - so unfair. I am absolutely lost.

DEFARGE

You'll await trial in the prison of La Force.

DARNAY

Will you give me a little help?

DEFARGE

None.

DARNAY

Will you answer a question then?

DEFARGE

(silence)

DARNAY

In this prison that I am going to so unjustly, will I be allowed some communication with the outside world.

DEFARGE

You'll see.

DARNAY

I'll see? Am I to be buried there, prejudged and without a chance of presenting my case?

DEFARGE

Other people have been buried similarly, in worse prisons, before now.

DARNAY

But never by me, Citizen. Not by me.

(pause)

DEFARGE

I will do nothing for you. My duty is to my country and the People. I am the sworn servant of both, against you. I repeat, I will do nothing for you.

(DEFARGE exits. NARRATOR enters. DARNAY is led away. Crowd exits.)

NARRATOR

The prison of La Force was a gloomy prison, dark and filthy with a horrible smell of foul sleep in it. Extraordinary how soon the dreams of the imprisoned manifest themselves in places so badly cared for. It was the crowning unreality of his long unreal ride, and it struck him motionless.

(NARRATOR exits. LORRY enters.)

Scene 3

SETTING: The Paris quarters of Mr. Lorry

LUCIE and MANETTE enter.

MANETTE

Lorry--

LORRY

What is this! What's the matter? Lucie. . . Manette. . . what happened?

LUCIE

Mr. Lorry, it's Charles.

LORRY

What happened to him?

LUCIE

He's here.

LORRY

In Paris? God help us.

LUCIE

God help him.

MANETTE

He's been here three or four days - I'm not certain. He came, unknown to us, on an errand of generosity. He was stopped at the barrier and sent to prison.

LUCIE

What's that noise?

LORRY

Don't look.

(MANETTE goes to the window.)

Stand back Manette!

MANETTE

My friend, I have a charmed life in this city; I've been a Bastille prisoner. There's no patriot in Paris - in all of France - who would touch me, except to overwhelm me with embraces, or to carry me in triumph. My old pain has granted me a new power, a power that carried us through the barrier and gained us news of Charles there. It delivered us here as well. Now what is that noise!?

LORRY

Don't! What prison is he in?

LUCIE

La Force.

LORRY

They're murdering the prisoners. If you are certain you have the power that you think you have, and I believe that you do, then make yourself known to these . . .

(LORRY gestures toward the window.)

and get to La Force! If it is not already too late don't let it grow one minute later.

(MANETTE exits as a crowd begins to gather.)

LORRY

Lucie be brave, as you have always been. More depends on it now than you know.

(LORRY and LUCIE go to the window.)

NARRATOR/JACQUES 2

The grindstone had a double handle and turning at it, madly, were two men. Their hideous faces all bloody and sweaty, and crooked with howling. Their eyes staring, glaring with beastly excitement and want of sleep. Women held wine to their mouths that they might drink, and what with dropping blood and dripping wine and the stream of sparks struck out from the stone, their wicked atmosphere was all gore and fire.

(MANETTE enters the courtyard, where he is instantly recognized. He relates his story, silently, while a group gathers around him. They reach out to him and their sound builds until the line "save him!" when they all start toward La Force.)

HAGGARD WOMAN

Long live the Bastille prisoner!

RAGGED CRIPPLE

Help for the prisoner's son. Save him!

STARVING MAN

Save the prisoner Evremonde at La Force!

ALL

Save him! Save him! Save him!

(ALL exit as NARRATOR enters. LORRY and DEFARGE enter separately during the speech.)

NARRATOR

That great grindstone, the Earth, had turned when Mr. Lorry next looked out the window, and the sun was red and clear on the courtyard. But the smaller grindstone stood alone there, in the calm morning air, with a red upon it that the sun had never given and would never take away.

DEFARGE

Monsieur Lorry?

LORRY

At your service.

DEFARGE

Do you recognize me?

LORRY

I have seen you somewhere.

DEFARGE

Perhaps at my wine-shop?

LORRY

Yes. You come from Doctor Manette?

DEFARGE

As you say.

LORRY

And what says he?

(DEFARGE hands LORRY a letter that he reads aloud.)

Charles is safe, but I cannot yet safely leave this place. The bearer of this note has been kind enough to carry a short letter from Charles to his wife. Let him see her.

(MADAME DEFARGE and THE VENGEANCE enter.)

Madame Defarge surely!

LORRY

Yes.

DEFARGE

And accompanying her?

LORRY

Call her The Vengeance.

MADAME DEFARGE (coldly)

Does Madame remain with us?

LORRY

Yes, so that she may be able to recognize her face, and know her person. It's for her safety.

DEFARGE

(LUCIE, who has been looking on, enters.)

My dear, there are frequent uprisings in the streets and though it is likely that they will never trouble you, Madame Defarge here wishes to see those she has the power to protect so that she may identify them, know them. True, Citizen Defarge?

LORRY

True.

DEFARGE

Good. Then let's bring the child in here, and Miss Pross.

LORRY

(PROSS and LITTLE LUCIE enter.)

Is that his child?

MADAME DEFARGE

Yes Madame, this is the poor prisoner's daughter and only child.

LORRY

That's enough. I've seen them, we can go.

MADAME DEFARGE

You will be good to my husband, you'll not do him harm. You'll help me see him if you can?

LUCIE

MADAME DEFARGE

Your husband is not my business here.

LUCIE

Then for my sake, be merciful. And if not for mine then for the sake of my child!

(pause)

Sister, I am a wife and a mother, have pity.

MADAME DEFARGE

The wives and mother's I'm used to seeing, they've not been greatly considered have they? I've known their husbands - and their fathers - who were thrown in prison and kept from them. All our lives we see our sister women suffer. We see their children in misery and hunger and sick with neglect . . . don't we?

THE VENGEANCE

We've seen nothing else.

MADAME DEFARGE

We've born this a long time. Do you think it's likely that the trouble of one wife and mother would be much to us now?

(MADAME DEFARGE resumes her knitting with several determined stitches, then exits, followed by THE VENGEANCE and DEFARGE. PROSS exits with LITTLE LUCIE and LUCIE, who has held herself together so far, begins to weaken.)

LORRY

Courage Lucie, courage. So far things have not gone that badly; not nearly as badly as they've gone for others.

LUCIE

I am not thankless. But that woman throws a shadow over all my hopes.

LORRY

Let it be only a shadow then - a mere shadow with no substance at all.

(LORRY and LUCIE exit. GHOST OF MONSEIGNEUR enters.)

NARRATOR/GHOST OF MONSEIGNEUR

Yet out of the shadow grew one hideous figure, intimate and familiar, as if from the foundation of the world: the sharp female figure called La Guillotine. It signaled the regeneration of the human race. It superseded the cross. Models of it were worn on breasts from which the cross was discarded, and it was bowed down to and believed in where the cross was denied.

(PROSS enters. GHOST OF MONSEIGNEUR exits.
LUCIE and MANETTE enter. They stop to greet
another couple passing in the opposite direction.)

NARRATOR/PROSS

So much more wicked and distracted had the revolution grown in those December months that rivers of the south were polluted with the bodies of the violently drowned by night, and prisoners were shot in columns and rows under the southern wintry sun. Still, the Doctor went among the terrors with a steady head, and no man was better known than he. Silent, humane and indispensable, he was a man apart - using his art equally among assassins and victims. He was a spirit moving among mortals.

(PROSS exits.)

MANETTE

Lucie, nothing can happen to him without me knowing, and I know that I can save him. Listen to me, there is a window in the prison to which Charles can sometimes gain access. It depends on many uncertainties, but he thinks that he might see you in the street, if you stood in a certain place.

LUCIE

And I could see him?

MANETTE

No dear child, you wouldn't be able to see him.

LUCIE

Show me the place father, and I'll go there. And I'll wait at whatever time and for however long I must for him to see me.

(MANETTE exits. CARTON enters.)

NARRATOR/CARTON

It was a dark and dirty corner of a small and winding street where she waited. When it was not too wet or too cold she and the child went together. Otherwise, she went alone. She never missed a day.

(Exit CARTON. Enter WOODCUTTER)

WOODCUTTER

Good day, Citizeness.

LUCIE

Good day, Citizen.

WOODCUTTER

Walking here again?

LUCIE

You see me, Citizen.

WOODCUTTER

Ah well, it's not my business.

(LUCIE and WOODCUTTER exit. NARRATOR enters.)

NARRATOR

The next day he was looking out for her and met her the moment she appeared.

(LUCIE enters with LITTLE LUCIE. WOODCUTTER enters. NARRATOR exits.)

WOODCUTTER

What, walking here again?

LUCIE

Yes.

WOODCUTTER

And a child too! Your mother, is it not, my little Citizeness?

LITTLE LUCIE

Do I say yes mama?

LUCIE

Yes, dearest.

LITTLE LUCIE

Yes, Citizen.

WOODCUTTER

Yes, yes, yes, but again, it is not my business, my work is my business. See the saw? I call her my little Guillotine. La la la la la la and off comes his head! See here again. Loo loo loo loo loo loo and like that! Off comes her head! And now, look, look, a child. Tickle pickle tickle pickle! And off its head comes! A whole headless family!

(Enter MANETTE. Exit WOODCUTTER quickly.)

MANETTE

Give me your arm, love. Let's leave here with an air of cheerfulness, for his sake, Charles is summoned for tomorrow.

(BAILIFF enters as MANETTE exits with LUCIE and LITTLE LUCIE.)

Scene 4

SETTING:

A make-shift courtroom in Paris, presided over by a Tribunal which includes DEFARGE.

The crowd, armed in various ways, gathers. They eat and drink while observing the proceedings. Several are knitting.

BAILIFF

Charles Evremonde, called Darnay!

(JERRY enters.)

NARRATOR/JERRY

There were twenty-three names called out just like that. But only twenty prisoners responded. One of them see, had died in jail and was forgotten. Two others already met the guillotine, and they were forgotten too.

BAILIFF

Charles Evremonde, called Darnay!

(LORRY enters.)

NARRATOR/LORRY

Fifteen prisoners were put to the bar before Charles. All fifteen were condemned and the trials of the whole occupied an hour and a half.

HOSTILE TRIBUNAL

Charles Evremonde, called Darnay, you are accused by the people as an emigrant! As such, your life belongs to the republic under the decree which banishes all emigrants on pain of Death.

HAGGARD WOMAN

Take off his head!

DARNAY

Monsieur, the decree bears a date following my return to France. I was already here when--

UGLY CITIZEN

Take off his head!

HOSTILE TRIBUNAL

Evremonde, here you are, and here is the decree. You were taken in France and your head is demanded.

STARVING MAN

Take it, take it! Off with his head!

PRUDENT TRIBUNAL

Is it true that you have lived many years in England?

DARNAY

Yes, that is true.

HOSTILE TRIBUNAL

Are you not an emigrant then? Monsieur, what do you call yourself?

DARNAY

Not an emigrant, I hope.

PRUDENT TRIBUNAL

Why would you not be an emigrant?

DARNAY

Because Monsieur, I . . . I relinquished a title that I found distasteful, and a station as well. I left my country, that's true. But I left to live by my own labor in England rather than rest on the overburdened backs of the people of France.

DEFARGE

You have proof of this?

DARNAY

Yes, I have two witnesses: Monsieur Gabelle, and Alexandre Manette.

(A murmur arises at the mention of MANETTE.)

HOSTILE TRIBUNAL

But you married in England did you not?

DARNAY

Yes, but not an English woman.

PRUDENT TRIBUNAL

A citizen of France?

DARNAY

Yes, by birth.

HOSTILE TRIBUNAL

Her name?

DARNAY

Lucie Manette, the only daughter of the good physician there.

(The onlookers react, surprised.)

PRUDENT TRIBUNAL

Why have you returned to France now? Why not sooner?

DARNAY

I had no means of living in France other than those that I had resigned, whereas in England, I lived by teaching the French language and French literature. I returned when I did at the urgent request of a French Citizen. I returned to save that Citizen's life and bear his testimony, and, at whatever personal hazard, to tell the truth. Is that criminal in the eyes of the Republic?

RAGGED CRIPPLE

No! No! No!

STARVING MAN

No! No! No!

JURY 1

We've heard enough! We're ready with our votes if the Tribunal is ready to receive them.

DEFARGE

We're ready. How do you find him, Charles Evremonde, called Darnay?

JURY 1

Innocent!

RAGGED CRIPPLE

Innocent, he's innocent!

JURY 2

Innocent!

STARVING MAN

Yes! Yes! Let him go!

JURY 3

Innocent!

JURY 4

Innocent!

JURY 5

Innocent!

DIRTY MAN

Set the prisoner free! Long live Evremonde!

UGLY CITIZEN

Long live Darnay!

DEFARGE

Prisoner you are free.

(Onlookers rush to embrace and congratulate DARNAY.
ALL exit. Enter NARRATOR.)

NARRATOR

Tears were then shed as freely as blood, and so many embraces were bestowed upon the prisoner that he was in danger of fainting from exhaustion and also because he knew well that the very same people, carried by another current, would have rushed him with the same intensity to tear him into pieces and strew him all over the street.

(LUCIE and MANETTE enter.)

In a wild dreamlike procession, they carried him on, winding and tramping and reddening the snowy streets into the courtyard of the building where she lived.

(NARRATOR exits. DARNAY enters and embraces LUCIE.)

LUCIE

Oh dear man, I thank God for your return.

DARNAY

Thank God, and thank your father as well. No other man in all of France could've done what he has done for me.

LUCIE

(to MANETTE)

I don't know what to say.

MANETTE

You don't have to say anything. In the past you saved me so completely that you are my life. You don't need to thank me, and you don't need to tremble. It's over.

LUCIE

What's that!

MANETTE

Lucie, it's nothing.

LUCIE

I thought that I heard strange feet upon the stairs.

MANETTE

My love, the staircase is as still as Death.

(A loud knock on the door)

LUCIE

Oh God no. Hide, Charles!

MANETTE

Child, be still! I've saved him.

(MANETTE crosses to the door. Enter JACQUES 1,2,3.)

JACQUES 2

The Citizen Evremonde, called Darnay.

DARNAY

Who seeks him?

JACQUES 2

I seek him. We seek him. I know you Evremonde; I saw you before the Tribunal today. You are again the prisoner of the Republic.

DARNAY

What? Tell me why!

JACQUES 2

It is enough that I tell you to go with us now. You are summoned for tomorrow.

MANETTE

Wait! You know him, you have said. Do you know me?

JACQUES 2

Yes, I know you Citizen.

JACQUES 1

We all know you.

MANETTE

Will you answer his question to me then? How does this happen?

JACQUES 2

Citizen, he has been accused by the Section, Saint Antoine.

MANETTE

Accused of what?

JACQUES 1

Doctor, please, ask no more. If the Republic demands sacrifices from you, without a doubt you, as a good patriot, will be happy to make them. The Republic comes first! Evremonde, we are pressed.

MANETTE

One word Citizens! Will you tell me who denounced him?

(pause)

Tell me!

JACQUES 1

He is denounced, and gravely, by the Citizen and Citizeness Defarge. And by one other.

DARNAY

What other!?

JACQUES 1

Do you ask Doctor?

MANETTE

Yes.

JACQUES 2

Then you shall be answered tomorrow. As for now, we must go.

(JACQUES 1,2,3 exit with DARNAY. NARRATOR enters as MANETTE and LUCIE exit. PROSS and JERRY enter.)

NARRATOR

Happily unconscious of the calamity at home, Miss Pross threaded her way through the narrow streets, reckoning in her mind the exact number of indispensable purchases she had to make. Jerry Cruncher was at her side, carrying her packages.

(enter BARSAD)

PROSS

Oh my lord!

JERRY

What? What is it?

BARSAD

Be quiet! What's the matter with you?

PROSS

Oh Solomon, dear Solomon, after not setting eyes on you for so long I can't believe I've found you here.

BARSAD

Be quiet you! And don't call me Solomon. Do you want me killed?

PROSS

Oh my sweet brother--

BARSAD

Hold your tongue! And you there, do you think I'm a Ghost?

JERRY

Well, I'm not sure.

PROSS

Solomon, what kind of greeting is this?

BARSAD

Don't expect me to be surprised; I knew you were here. I know most of the people here. I'm an official.

PROSS

Oh dear brother I knew you had the makings of one of the best and greatest men and that someday you would rise to greatness but--

JERRY

Say you, might I ask whether your name be John Solomon or Solomon John?

BARSAD and PROSS

What?

JERRY

Your name, man, what is it? She calls ya' Solomon, and she ought to know being your sister. But I know you're John. Which of the two goes first? As for Pross, I know that warn't your name over the water.

PROSS

What do you mean?

JERRY

Well I don't know what I mean exactly. I just can't recall what his name was.

(CARTON enters, unnoticed.)

BARSAD

No?

JERRY

No, but I swear it was two syllables.

BARSAD

Oh really?

JERRY

No doubt! You was a spy witness at the Courthouse back in England. But what in the world were you called back there?

CARTON

Barsad.

JERRY

Yes! Yes! That's the name! Barsad! John Barsad!

PROSS

No, no. This is Solomon, my brother Solomon.

CARTON

Miss Pross, this man may once have answered to that name but he now answers to several others as well. And the man I'm interested in is John Barsad, spy for the jailer.

BARSAD

A spy? How dare you! You have no right, and no reason--

CARTON

I saw you coming out of the prison - I was contemplating the walls an hour or so ago. I remember faces well and you have a face to be remembered, bad luck for a spy I'd say. I was curious after seeing you there and I had nothing else to do really, so I followed you to a wine-shop. And having good reason to associate you with the misfortunes of a friend now very unfortunate, I sat down right next to you. And gradually what I had done at random seemed to shape itself into a purpose.

BARSAD

And what purpose is that?

CARTON

Monsieur, treat me to a few minutes of your company, in confidence. Perhaps at Tellson's bank?

BARSAD

Under threat?

CARTON

Oh, did I say that?

BARSAD

Then why should I go?

CARTON

Really Mr. Barsad, I can't say if you can't.

BARSAD

Do you mean that you won't say, sir?

CARTON

You understand me perfectly.

BARSAD

(to PROSS)

I'll tell you now, if any trouble comes of this, it'll be blood on your hands.

CARTON

Come on now, Barsad, don't be ungrateful. Were it not for your sister, whom I greatly admire, I might not have been so pleasant about my little proposal. Do you go with me to the bank - or not?

BARSAD

I'll hear what you have to say.

CARTON

Then let's see this good woman safely to her corner. Cruncher, you'll to Mr. Lorry's with us, won't you? I thought you would.

(LORRY enters upstage. CARTON, BARSAD and JERRY cross to him. PROSS exits.)

Scene 5

SETTING: Tellson's bank in Paris.

LORRY at his desk working.

CARTON

Sir, this is the brother of our dear Miss Pross, the affectionate one we've heard so much about. Call him Barsad.

LORRY

Barsad. I have an association with the name . . . and with the face.

CARTON

I told you that you had a remarkable face. Sit down.

LORRY

Witness at the trial.

CARTON

But on to worse news, Darnay has been arrested again.

LORRY

What?! I left him just two hours ago. When was it done Mr. Barsad?

BARSAD

Just now, if at all.

CARTON

Mr. Barsad is the best possible authority, sir. And I have it straight from his mouth that the arrest has taken place. There's no earthly doubt that the man is retaken.

LORRY

(to BARSAD)

I trust that the name of Doctor Manette may do him some good should he come again before the Tribunal?

BARSAD

Yes, I believe so.

CARTON

I, myself, am shaken by the Doctor not having had the power to prevent the arrest.

LORRY

He may not have known about it beforehand.

CARTON

But that would be unusual wouldn't it? Given how identified he is with his son-in-law.

LORRY

True.

CARTON

This is a desperate time, when desperate games are played for desperate stakes. Let the Doctor play the winning game; I will play the losing one. The stake that I will play for is a friend at the prison, and the one I want to beat is you, Mr. Barsad.

BARSAD

You'd better have good cards sir.

CARTON

I'll go through them and see what I hold. Mr. Lorry, you know what a brute I am, I wish you'd give me a little brandy.

(LORRY sets a bottle and a glass in front of him. CARTON drinks two glassfuls and pushes the bottle away.)

Mr. Barsad, sheep of the prisons, always spy and secret informer, now the jailer and all the more valuable for being English, represents himself to his employers under a false name. That's a very good card. Mr. Barsad, now an employee of the Republican French government, was formerly an employee of the aristocratic English government, the enemy of France and of Freedom. That, I think, is an excellent card. And this inference, might I add, is clear as day: Mr. Barsad is still paid by the aristocratic English government. That's a card not to be beaten. Have you followed my hand Mr. Barsad?

BARSAD

Yes, but I don't understand your play.

CARTON

My play? I play my ace then: Denunciation of Mr. Barsad to the nearest Section Committee.

(They stare at one another.)

Look over your own hand; see what you hold. Don't hurry. Take your time, look carefully.

(pause)

You don't seem to like your hand. Do you play?

BARSAD

(to LORRY)

Sir, a man of your years and benevolence could put it to this other man whether he could live with himself were he to play the ace he has spoken of. I admit that I am a spy, and that it is considered a dishonorable position - though it must be filled by somebody, but this man, he is no spy, and why should he demean himself acting like one?

CARTON

I play my ace, Mr. Barsad, without any hesitation, in a very few minutes.

BARSAD

I should have hoped, sir, that your respect for my sister--

CARTON

I could not better testify my respect for your sister than by finally relieving her of her brother.

BARSAD

You really think so sir?

CARTON

I have thoroughly made up my mind about it. And now that I can think again . . . I have the strong impression that I have another good card here that I've not told you about, a strong card Barsad - a Guillotine card! Do you play?

BARSAD

No! I don't play. And your hand is a wonder of wonders to me.

JERRY

Don't trouble your head about it. Ya' might just worry about how to keep it on. I know I'd catch ahold of your throat and choke ya' for half a guinea, and I don't hardly even know ya'.

BARSAD

I go on duty soon and I can't be late. You have a proposal? Tell me what it is, but it's no use asking too much of me. If you ask me to put my head in extra danger I'd as soon take my chances with refusal than with consent. You talk of desperation, remember that we are all desperate here, and that I can swear my way through stone walls. Now, what do you want of me?

CARTON

Not very much. You are the turn-key at La Force?

BARSAD

I tell you once and for all that there is no possible escape.

CARTON

Why tell me what I haven't asked? Are you the turn-key or not?

BARSAD

I am sometimes.

CARTON

You can be when you choose?

BARSAD

I can pass in and out when I choose.

CARTON

Good. So far we have spoken before these two because it was better that the cards not rest only between us. Let's have the final word alone.

(Exit CARTON and BARSAD. Enter
NARRATOR. Exit JERRY and LORRY.)

NARRATOR

Long ago when he had been famous as a youth of great promise, Sydney Carton had, with his father, gone to visit his mother's grave. Upon her headstone were these words which now arose in his mind as he went down the dark streets, among the heavy shadows, with the moon and the clouds sailing high above him.

(CARTON enters)

CARTON

I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live.

NARRATOR

The words were in the air and drifting in the echoes of his feet. Perfectly calm and steady, he sometimes repeated them to himself as he walked - but he heard them always. Finally, the night wore itself out, and as he stood upon the bridge listening to the water that splashed over the river walls the day came coldly, bright in the light of the moon, like a dead face out of the sky. Then the night, with the moon and the stars, turned pale and died. And it seemed, for a little while, that death and creation were not so different. Indeed, it seemed that then and there, they were one and the same.

(JERRY enters. NARRATOR exits. Crowd enters,
court room assembles.)

NARRATOR/JERRY

The court was all a-buzz when Carton slunk in and pressed himself into an obscure corner amongst the crowd.

HOSTILE TRIBUNAL

Charles Evremonde, called Darnay. Released yesterday. Reaccused and retaken yesterday. Indictment delivered to him last night. Suspected and denounced enemy of the Republic - Aristocrat - one of a family of Tyrants, one of a race proscribed for they had used their privileges to oppress the people. Charles Evremonde, called Darnay, in light of such proscription, absolutely Dead in Law.

JURY 1

Was the accused openly denounced or secretly?

PRUDENT TRIBUNAL

He was denounced openly.

JURY 1

By whom?

PRUDENT TRIBUNAL

Three voices. Ernest Defarge, wine-vendor of Saint Antoine.

JURY 1

Good.

PRUDENT TRIBUNAL

Therese Defarge. His wife.

JURY 1

Good.

PRUDENT TRIBUNAL

And Alexandre Manette. Physician.

(There is a murmur of disbelief in the crowd.)

MANETTE

Sir, I indignantly protest to you that this is a forgery - you know yourself that the accused is the husband of my daughter. My daughter and those dear to her are far dearer to me than my own life. Who and where is the man who claims that I denounce the husband of my child?

HOSTILE TRIBUNAL

Citizen Manette, sit down! And listen.

PRUDENT TRIBUNAL

Citizen Defarge, you were there at the taking of the Bastille.

DEFARGE

Yes I was.

HAGGARD WOMAN

You were one of the best Patriots there, why not say so? You were the cannoneer and the first to enter the accursed fortress when it fell! Patriots I speak the truth.

DEFARGE

(Occasionally looking toward MANETTE.)

I knew that the Doctor had been confined to a cell known as One Hundred and Five North Tower. Upon his release, he knew himself by no other name. I promised at the start of that day that if the place should fall that I would examine the cell: One Hundred and Five North Tower. It did fall and I kept my promise. And in the cell, with the company of the jailer and a fellow Citizen there on the jury, I found this.

(DEFARGE raises a folded stack of dusty and decaying papers and gestures toward JACQUES 1,2,3 and MADAME DEFARGE.)

We have examined the letter, and the writing of Doctor Manette, and this, it is certain, was written by him.

RAGGED CRIPPLE

Let it be read!

PRUDENT TRIBUNAL

Read it Citizen.

DEFARGE (reading)

"I, Alexandre Manette, unfortunate physician of Beauvais, write this melancholy paper in my doleful cell in the Bastille during . . .

MANETTE

(overlapping DEFARGE)

. . . in the Bastille during the last month of the year 1767."

(pause)

I wrote at stolen moments, under every imaginable difficulty.

DEFARGE

"I plan to secrete this in the wall of the chimney where I have slowly and laboriously made a place of concealment for it. Some pitying hand may someday find it there when I and my sorrows are dust."

MANETTE

I formed the words with a rusty iron point dipped in the scrapings of soot from the chimney mixed with blood. It was the tenth year of my captivity.

DEFARGE

"I have noted in myself that my reason may not long remain unimpaired, but I solemnly declare that I am, at this time, in the possession of my right mind, that my memory is exact and circumstantial, and that I write the truth."

JACQUES 3

"It began in a carriage where I was summoned by two men, both wrapped in cloaks and greatly alike in stature and voice."

JACQUES 1

"They were armed. I was not."

DEFARGE

"The carriage left the streets behind and emerged upon a country road, and eventually stopped at a solitary house. The door was not opened immediately, but when it was one of my two conductors struck the man who opened it. "

JACQUES 2

Struck him across the face with a heavy riding glove.

MANETTE

His action didn't surprise me; I had seen common people struck more often than dogs.

JACQUES 1

The other man also swung at the doorman, in the same manner, but with the back of his arm.

MANETTE

The struck man fell.

DEFARGE

(Still reading)

"I heard cries proceeding from an upper chamber. I was taken to the chamber straight; the cries growing louder as we ascended. I found a patient there in a fever of the brain, lying on a bed."

MANETTE

The patient was a woman of great beauty, and young, not past twenty.

MADAME DEFARGE

Her hair was torn and ragged and her arms were bound to her sides with sashes and handkerchiefs. One of them bore the initial, E.

DEFARGE

(Reading still, but with more difficulty)

"Her eyes were dilated and wild. She had been beaten, and raped, and constantly cried out and repeated the words, My Husband--

MADAME DEFARGE

My father and my brother, 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12

DEFARGE

Hush!"

MANETTE

My other patient lay in a back room across a second staircase, in a loft over the stable.

DEFARGE

"On some hay on the ground with a cushion thrown under his head a handsome peasant boy, a boy of not more than seventeen at the most, lay on his back, with his teeth set, his right hand clenched on his breast, and his glaring eyes looking straight upward."

MANETTE

I could not see where his wound was--

MADAME DEFARGE

It was under his hand.

JACQUES 3

"The wound was a sword thrust. And there, the elder brother looking down at this handsome boy whose life was ebbing out, as if he were a wounded bird or rabbit and not at all like a fellow human creature."

JACQUES 1

"How has this been done Monsieur? How has this been done?"

JACQUES 2

"The crazed, young dog there forced my brother to draw upon him, and now has fallen like a gentleman by my brother's sword."

MANETTE

There was no touch of pity, sorrow or humanity in his answer. The speaker seemed to acknowledge that it was inconvenient to have the creature dying there but he was not compassionate. The boy's eyes moved to me, slowly, and he spoke:

MADAME DEFARGE

(To herself, remembering the letter.)

"Doctor, they are very proud, these Nobles, but we common dogs are proud too sometimes. My sister was proud - have you seen her, Doctor?"

MANETTE

I said that I had seen her.

DEFARGE

"These Nobles, they have their shameful rights in the modesty and virtue of our sisters. She was a good girl. She was married to a good man and she was pregnant with his child. They were his tenants. We are all tenants of his - that man who stands there - the worst of a bad race."

MANETTE

I looked again for some reaction from the elder brother who was still in the room with us. There came nothing but a hard cold stare. It was Charles' father who stared at me.

DEFARGE

"By then nothing human could have held life in the boy but his determination to tell all his wrong. He forced back the gathering shadows of death as he forced his clenched right hand to remain clenched, and to cover his wound."

MADAME DEFARGE

(Turned toward DARNAY)

"Marquis, said the boy, in the days when all these things are to be answered for I summon you and yours, to the last of your bad race, to answer for them. I mark this cross of blood upon you, as a sign that I do it."

DEFARGE

"Twice he put his hand to the wound in his breast, and with his forefinger drew a cross in the air. Then he stood for an instant, the finger yet raised, and as it dropped, he dropped with it, and I laid him down dead."

MADAME DEFARGE

My husband, my father, my brother, 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12, Hush!

MANETTE

She lingered for a week. In vain, I asked her name. She faintly shook her head upon the pillow, and kept her secret, as the boy had done.

DEFARGE

"And she died two hours before midnight."

MANETTE

A month later, on the last night of the year, towards nine o' clock, a man in black dress rang at my gate and demanded to see me. Softly, he followed my servant, a youth named Ernest Defarge, upstairs into my study to where I sat with my wife.

DEFARGE

"An urgent case at the Rue St. Honore', he said, 'it will not detain you.' He had a coach waiting. It brought me here -

MANETTE

To the Bastille -

DEFARGE

- to my grave."

MANETTE

If only they had granted me, in all those years, news of my wife, whether alive or dead, at least, I would have thought that God had not abandoned them. But now I believe--

DEFARGE

(overlapping MANETTE)

"But now I believe that the mark of that cross is fatal to them and to their descendants, to the last of their race. I, Alexandre Manette, unhappy prisoner, do this last night of the year 1767, in my unbearable agony, look to the times when all these things shall be answered for and I denounce them to Heaven and Earth!"

HOSTILE TRIBUNAL

Citizens, what say you!?

ALL

Guilty! Guilty! Guilty!

(The courtroom erupts into chaos. LUCIE pushes through the crowd and makes her way toward DARNAY.)

LUCIE

Good-bye Charles.

(DARNAY stops to look at her a moment then exits with THE GUARD.)

CARTON

(to LUCIE)

A life you love.

(LUCIE and MANETTE exit.)

LORRY

I have no hope.

CARTON

Nor have I.

LORRY

He will perish; there is no real hope.

CARTON

Yes. He will perish. There is no real hope.

(Exit LORRY. Enter NARRATOR. Enter JACQUES
1,2,3, DEFARGE, MADAME DEFARGE and THE
VENGEANCE.)

Scene 6

SETTING:

The wine-shop, populated
with it's usual few customers.

NARRATOR

It was nearly seven o' clock when he awoke refreshed and went out into the streets again. As he walked alone, towards Saint Antoine, he stopped and stared into a shop window. Slightly, he altered his disordered arrangement, and proceeded directly to Defarge's.

(CARTON crosses to the bar.)

CARTON

May I have a glass of wine?

MADAME DEFARGE

Sorry, what did you say?

CARTON

A glass of wine.

MADAME DEFARGE

English?

CARTON

Yes, Madame. I am English.

(CARTON takes a glass of wine from MADAME
DEFARGE and goes to a table.)

MADAME DEFARGE

(to DEFARGE)

I swear to you, like Evremonde!

DEFARGE

(to CARTON)

Good evening.

CARTON

Yes. Good evening Citizen! And good wine. I drink to the Republic!

DEFARGE

(to MADAME DEFARGE)

Certainly a little like.

MADAME DEFARGE

A lot like!

JACQUES 3

He is so much in your mind Madame.

THE VENGEANCE

Yes, and we are so looking forward to seeing him one last time tomorrow.

MADAME DEFARGE

True.

DEFARGE

The question though is where to stop.

MADAME DEFARGE

At extermination.

DEFARGE

Extermination is a good doctrine. In general I say nothing against it, but the Doctor has suffered too much. You saw him today; you saw his face.

MADAME DEFARGE

I've seen his face many times.

DEFARGE

Imagine what it would do to him - to lose her and the child.

MADAME DEFARGE

Extermination! It's what we--

DEFARGE

No, listen to me! He's endured enough. Eighteen years in the Bastille is enough - and tomorrow Darnay dies for that. But to take her from him, nothing we could do would hurt him as deeply. Nothing. It would be worse than his imprisonment. Then what would we be?

MADAME DEFARGE

(silence)

DEFARGE

Answer me!

MADAME DEFARGE

I was brought up among the fishermen on the seashore. That peasant family so wronged by the Evremonde brothers is my family. That sister of the wounded boy bleeding on the ground was my sister! That husband was my sister's husband, and that unborn child was their child. That brother was my brother and their father was my father! Those dead are my dead!

DEFARGE

I'm sorry.

MADAME DEFARGE

So tell the Fire and the Wind where to stop, but don't tell me.

DEFARGE

You can't--

MADAME DEFARGE

Tell the Fire and the Wind where to stop! Don't tell me.

(Exit MADAME DEFARGE. Enter BARSAD.
Exit ALL in the wine-shop.)

NARRATOR/BARSAD

The English customer paid for what he had and went on his way and was soon swallowed up in the shadow of the prison wall. At the appointed hour he presented himself again to Mr. Lorry and Doctor Manette.

(Enter MANETTE and LORRY.)

MANETTE (desperately)

I can't find it. I can't find it and I must have it! Where is my bench? What have they done with my bench? My work! Time passes so quickly and I must finish those shoes! Come on now . . . let me get to work. What shall become of us if those shoes are not finished tonight?

(CARTON goes to MANETTE and helps him into a chair.)

LORRY

Lost, utterly lost.

CARTON

If you will sir, take him to her and ease his suffering as you can. But before you go, listen to me for just a moment and don't ask me why I make the stipulations I am going to make, just follow them - I have a reason.

LORRY

Go on.

CARTON

These are the papers that allow me to pass out of the city. Look, you see, Sydney Carton -an Englishman. Keep them. And this, a similar certificate enabling Doctor Manette, her and Little Lucie, at any time, to pass the barrier, you see?

LORRY

Yes.

CARTON

It is good until recalled, but I have reason to believe it soon may be.

LORRY

They're not in danger.

CARTON

They're in great danger. They're in danger of denunciation by Madame Defarge.

LORRY

What?

CARTON

I overheard the woman's words tonight.

(pause)

Don't worry. You'll save them all.

LORRY

I hope so Carton, but I have no idea how.

CARTON

I'm going to tell you. This new accusation will probably not take place until after tomorrow, probably not until two or three days after. It's a capital crime to mourn for a victim of the Guillotine, a crime of which she and her father would unquestionably be guilty. The woman Defarge would wait to add that strength to her case. Follow me?

LORRY

Yes, I follow you.

CARTON

You have money?

LORRY

Of course I have money, I'm a banker!

CARTON

Right. Sorry.

LORRY

I can buy the means of traveling back to England as quickly as the journey can be made.

CARTON

Good, then do it! Tomorrow at two o' clock you'll depart. Tell her what you know of her danger, but particularly how it applies to her father and especially her child. Press upon her the necessity of leaving Paris, with them and you, at that hour. Tell her it was her husband's last arrangement, and that more depends on it than she knows. Do you think she will . . .

LORRY

She'll go with me.

CARTON

And the Doctor?

LORRY

Even in this state, he'll submit to her. I'm sure of it.

CARTON

Good. Now listen, you must quietly and steadily make all these arrangements, even to the taking of your own seat in the carriage. And then, wait in the courtyard here and the moment I arrive, take me in and drive away.

LORRY

I understand that I am to wait for you in all circumstances?

CARTON

You have my papers in your hand, along with the others, and you will reserve my place. Wait for nothing but to have my place occupied, and then leave for England.

LORRY

Then it does not depend on one old man. I shall have a young and ardent man at my side.

CARTON

Sir, I hope you shall. Heaven help us and you will. Promise me that nothing will influence you to alter the course on which we now stand pledged to one another.

LORRY

Nothing Carton. I promise.

CARTON

Remember, to change the course or delay it, for any reason, means that no life will be saved and many will be sacrificed.

LORRY

I'll remember, and I'll do my part faithfully.

(CARTON stares for a moment at LORRY.)

Is there something more?

CARTON

No. Nothing more. Goodnight.

(CARTON exits. LORRY and MANETTE exit.
NARRATOR enters. DARNAY enters.)

Scene 7

SETTING:

A French prison

DARNAY sleeps fitfully in the corner of a small cell. CARTON enters, watches him for a moment, takes off his jacket, and then places a pen and ink, from the jacket pocket, on a rough table near DARNAY.

NARRATOR

In the black prison of the Concierge, the doomed of the day awaited their fate. They were in number as the weeks of the year and the cards of the deck. Fifty-two were to roll that day on the life tide of the city to the boundless everlasting sea.

NARRATOR/CARTON

He had never seen the instrument that would terminate him. How high it was from the ground, how many steps it had, where he would be stood, whether he would be the first or the last, he wondered. Yet the questions arose, not out of fear, rather out of a strange desire to know what to do when the time came.

NARRATOR

Yet for all the longing, and in the wondering, he never once thought of Carton. His mind was so full of other things that it never occurred him there was another human spirit on the Earth whose head held the very same questions - some of them answered.

(NARRATOR exits. CARTON sits and removes his boots. DARNAY wakes, startled.)

CARTON

Of all the people on Earth you least expected to see me?

DARNAY

I could not believe it was you. I can barely believe it now. You're not . . .

CARTON

No. I'm not a prisoner. I am accidentally possessed of a power over one of your keepers, and in virtue of it, I stand before you. I come from your wife. I bring you a request from her.

DARNAY

What is it?

CARTON

Take off your jacket. Give it to me, and there, put mine on.

DARNAY

What? What request is this--

CARTON

Man you have no time to ask what it means or why I bring it. Put the jacket on!

DARNAY

Carton, there is no escaping this place, it can't be done. You'll only die with me.

CARTON

Did I ask you to escape?

DARNAY

This is madness.

CARTON

When I ask you to pass out of that door - tell me it is madness and then stay here. But until then, take off your coat and exchange it for mine. And take that ribbon from your hair and shake it out, loose, like mine.

DARNAY

Carton, friend, it can't be done. I beg you, don't add your death to the bitterness of mine.

CARTON

Do I ask you to pass the door? When I do, refuse.

(DARNAY removes his own jacket and replaces
it with CARTON's)

There's a pen and ink on the table. Is your hand steady enough to write?

DARNAY

It was before you appeared.

CARTON

Well steady it again, and write exactly what I tell you. Quick, friend, quick!

(DARNAY goes to the table, sits and begins to write.)

DARNAY

To whom do I address it?

CARTON

No one.

DARNAY

Do I date it?

CARTON

No. Now begin, 'If you remember the words that passed between us, long ago, you will readily comprehend this when you see it. You do remember them, I know. It is not in your nature to forget them.'

(CARTON reaches into his boot. DARNAY stops.)

DARNAY

You have a weapon?

CARTON

No.

DARNAY

What is it then?

CARTON

You'll know soon enough. Now write . . . 'I am thankful that the time has come when I can prove my worth. That I do so is no cause for regret or grief.'

(CARTON approaches DARNAY.)

DARNAY

What's that smell?

CARTON

I don't smell anything. Now take the pen and . . . hurry!

(CARTON holds a rag to DARNAY's face. DARNAY struggles for a moment and then collapses. CARTON ties his hair back and picks up DARNAY's jacket.)

Jailer, come in here.

(BARSAD enters.)

You see, your danger is not much. The man was weak when he came to visit me and now he's fainted. Take him yourself to the courtyard and put him in the carriage beside Lorry. And remind the gentleman of our agreement.

(BARSAD exits with DARNAY. CARTON sits alone, listening. Finally the clock strikes. GUARD enters.)

GUARD

Follow me Evremonde.

(GUARD and CARTON cross downstage to where SEAMSTRESS sits alone. GUARD exits.)

SEAMSTRESS

Citizen Evremonde. I am the seamstress - I was with you in La Force.

CARTON

Yes, I've forgotten, what were you accused of?

SEAMSTRESS

Plots. How likely is that?

(Silence, as CARTON avoids her gaze.)

I am not afraid to die Citizen, but I've done nothing wrong. They say the Republic will do good for those of us who are poor and I'm willing to die if the Republic will profit from it. But I don't know how that can be.

(pause)

I heard you were released. I hoped that it was true.

CARTON

I was. But I was retaken, and condemned.

SEAMSTRESS

If I may ride with you Citizen - I'm not afraid but . . .

(She looks him in the face and recognizes that he is not DARNAY. He motions for her to keep quiet.)

You're dying for him?

CARTON

And his wife and child, yes. Now please . . .

(Enter NARRATOR. SEAMSTRESS and CARTON cross to upstage platform.)

Scene 8

SETTING:

The Guillotine

DARNAY and SEAMSTRESS wait to ascend the platform.

NARRATOR

Along the Paris streets the death carts rumble, hollow and harsh. Six tumbrels carry the day's wine to La Guillotine. And there is not, in all of France, a blade of grass, a leaf, or even a root, which will grow to maturity under conditions more certain than those that produced this horror. Crush humanity out of shape once more, under similar hammers, and it will twist itself into the same tortured forms. Six carts roll clumsily through the streets. Six carts that will never be changed back to what they were. The two, condemned, stand in the fast thinning throng of victims, but they speak as if they were alone. Eye to eye, voice to voice, hand to hand and heart to heart, these two children of the Universal Mother, otherwise so far apart and differing, have come together on the dark highway, to go home, and to rest in her bosom.

(Crowd enters.)

DIRTY MAN

Which one is Evremonde?

UGLY CITIZEN

There. At the back there.

DIRTY MAN

With his hand in the girl's?

UGLY CITIZEN

Yes.

DIRTY MAN

Down Evremonde! To the Guillotine with all aristocrats! Down Evremonde!

BARSAD

Quiet, man!

DIRTY MAN

Why should I, Citizen?

BARSAD

He is going to pay, give him five minutes more. But let him be at peace.

DIRTY MAN

Down Evremonde!

SEAMSTRESS

Dear stranger, were it not for you I wouldn't be so composed. Nor would I be able to raise my thoughts to He that was put to death so that we might have hope and comfort after today. I think you were sent to me from Heaven.

CARTON

Or you to me. Keep your eyes on me now - mind nothing else.

SEAMSTRESS

I mind nothing while I hold your hand, and if they are quick I will mind nothing when I let it go.

CARTON

They'll be quick.

SEAMSTRESS

O God . . .

CARTON

There is no time - and no trouble there.

SEAMSTRESS

Bless you.

(SEAMSTRESS is led away by GUARD. CARTON remains, alone on the platform. Others enter, when mentioned. NARRATOR is the last to enter.)

CARTON

I see Barsad, Defarge, a Judge and Juryman. I see long ranks of new oppressors who have risen from this beautiful city, and the brilliant people rising from the abyss in their struggle to be free. I see the lives for which I lay down my own, peaceful, prosperous, useful and happy, in England which I will never see again. I see her with a child upon her bosom that bears my name. I see her father aged and bent but otherwise restored, and faithful to all in his healing office. I see the good old man, so long their friend, in ten years time, enriching them with all he has and passing tranquilly to his reward. I see her now an old woman, weeping for me on the anniversary of this day and together with her husband, their living done, lying side by side in their last earthly bed. And I know that each was not more sacred in the other's soul than I was in the souls of both. I see that child who lay upon her bosom and who bore my name, a man, winning his way up in that path of life that once was mine. I see him winning it so well that my name is made illustrious by the light of his. I see the blots I threw upon it faded away. I see him, foremost among judges and honored men, bringing a child of my name to this place - then fair to look upon, with not a trace of this day's disfigurement - and I hear him tell the child my story with a tender and faltering voice . . . It is a far far better thing that I do than I have ever done; it is a far far better rest that I go to than I have ever known.

The End