

# Resurrection in a tale of two cities



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Resurrection is a term that is often used to describe the rebirth of someone, not only after death, but often as a new person in their own lifetime. In *A Tale of Two Cities*, a novel written by the famous English author Charles Dickens, the idea that love and devotion lead to resurrection is demonstrated from beginning to end. First and foremost, it is clear that love has an enormous impact on Dr. Manette, who is initially a broken and haunted man. His daughter Lucie devotes her time and love to him, making sure that he is restored back to the man that he once was. In addition to Dr. Manette, Jerry Cruncher finds himself resurrected from his life of grave-robbing because of his love and devotion to the members of the Manette household. Lastly, we see how Sydney Carton's devoted love for Lucie leads him to his sacrifice, after which he is reborn in Lucie's son Sydney Darnay. Each of these men are perfect examples of how love and devotion lead to resurrection. In 1757, Dr. Alexandre Manette is arrested and held as a political prisoner in the Bastille, left to rot, knowing himself only as "One Hundred and Five, North Tower" (46). He is put into solitary confinement where he is driven mad by lack of human contact, love and natural light. When he is finally released from prison, the doctor is a disturbed man who has turned to compulsive shoe-making to calm himself. When he and his daughter Lucie are re-united for the first time, her love for him has an instant physical impact on him, even though he is unaware that this young lady is actually his daughter. Doctor Manette is "Not yet trusting the tones of her voice, [as] she s[its] down on the bench beside him. He recoil[s], but she la[ys] her hand upon his arm. A strange thrill str[ikes] him when she d[oes] so, and visibly passe[s] over his frame" (48). After being imprisoned for so long, Dr. Manette is not used to physical or emotional contact. Within

minutes, Lucie is showing her father that she loves him, and it is already sparking a change in his behavior. At first, he doesn't know how to react to her sitting beside him, and he pulls away from her. Not willing to give up, Lucie makes slight physical contact with him which causes him to shiver involuntarily, demonstrating that Lucie's love is inciting a change in him. Lucie continues to speak with her father, and eventually reveals that she is his daughter. She plans that they will return to England because she knows that staying in France, the country where the doctor was unjustly imprisoned, will do him no good. Lucie promises that she " will be true to [him] with all [her] duty and with all [her] faithful service" (50). Wanting the best for her father, Lucie is devoting her life to the resurrection of her father. She knows that this paranoid, damaged man is not who her father used to be, and is willing to help him return to being the respected, well-known doctor that he once was. Lucie makes a home for the two of them to live in, making sure that as " Simple as the furniture [is], it [is] set off by so many little adornments, of no value but for their taste and fancy, that its effect was delightful (98). The devotion of Lucie's time has created a warm atmosphere for her and her father to live in. After spending so much time in an isolated cell coming home to a lovely little house, such as the one that Lucie has created, is good for the Doctor's spirits. Lucie's commitment to the improvement of her father's health and spirit ultimately leads to his resurrection, which we see has come when " For the first time the Doctor felt, [], that his suffering was strength and power" (280). Doctor Manette has regained his confidence and is once again recognized as respected doctor. He realizes that he may be able to repay Lucie for her unconditional love by saving her husband from the guillotine. He says that " as [his] beloved child

was helpful in restoring [him] to [himself], he will be helpful now in restoring the dearest part of herself to her” (280). This magnificent revelation affirms that Doctor Manette has truly been “recalled to life” (14) by his daughter’s love and devotion. Mr. Jerry Cruncher is introduced as a messenger from Tellson’s bank, who receives the message “recalled to life” (14) from Jarvis Lorry. Almost immediately, Mr. Cruncher is recognized as one to be associated with the idea of resurrection. Mr. Cruncher is involved in the trade of illegally selling bodies to doctors. In this time, there is no legal way to sell cadavers to doctors or surgeons, and therefore he earns the title of being a resurrection man. As Cruncher, Carton, Barsad and Lorry are in Tellson’s bank, they discuss whether or not Roger Cly’s funeral was stage. While John Barsad, a spy, insists that he himself buried Mr. Cly, Jerry Cruncher admits to his past time of grave-digging when he accuses Barsad of “bur[ying] paving-stones and earth in that there coffin” (313). As a result of this, Mr. Lorry becomes rather upset that Jerry has “used the respectable and great house of Tellson’s as a blind” (316) for his criminal behavior. Being a devoted friend to Mr. Lorry, Jerry proposes that he will “go into the line of reg’lar diggin’, and make amends for what he would have un-dug” (317). By offering to quit grave digging and take up being a regular digger from now on, Jerry Cruncher shows that his devotion to his good friend has sparked his will to resurrect himself. His promise to stop illegally grave-digging is an indication that Mr. Cruncher is willing to make a change for the better. He wants a better life for his son, whom he wants to “keep his father’s place, and take care of his mother” (317) indicating that his devotion to his family is another reason for him to stop grave digging. A final example of how love and devotion lead to Mr. Cruncher’s resurrection happens when the Darnays

have escaped from France, and he approaches Miss Pross. He asks her if she would do him a favor, and “ take notice o’ two promises and wows wot it is my wishes fur to record in this here crisis” (373). The “ first... [is] them poor things well out o’ this. Never no more will I do it, never no more!” (374). Here, Mr. Cruncher is promising to Miss Pross that he will no longer dig graves, although she doesn’t know what he is promising her that he won’t do. The second promise that he makes to her is “ never no more will [he] interfere with Mrs. Cruncher’s flopping, never no more!” (374). Both of Mr. Cruncher’s promises indicate that his love and devotion to the members of the Manette household, and his love for his wife convince him to be a better man. Before, Cruncher would curse and scream at his wife for flopping; accusing her of praying against and their child. He now realizes that the way he reacted to his wife’s flopping was wrong, and promises to not treat her like that anymore. Mr. Cruncher’s primary association to resurrection by being titled “ the resurrection man”, and his own resurrection in his lifetime, sparked by his love and devotion to his own family and the Manette family prove that love leads to resurrection. While resurrection often occurs in a metaphorical sense, such as the idea of Dr. Manette being recalled to life after being figuratively buried alive, or Jerry Cruncher being resurrected into a new man out of love and devotion for his family, resurrection can also happen in a physical sense. Charles Dickens was a strong believer in the resurrection of Christ, which is reflected into Sydney Carton’s self- sacrifice out of pure love for Lucie Manette. Before Lucie and Charles are ever engaged or married, Carton admits his love for Lucie directly to her. The conversation is a pitiful one, where Carton is feeling rather sorry for himself, and in turn he is making Lucie feel quite upset. He tells her that since he has

known her, “[he] ha[s] been troubled by a remorse that [he] thought would never reproach [him] again” (156). He then proceeds to tell Lucie that he has had “ ideas of striving afresh, beginning anew, shaking off sloth and sensuality, and fighting out the abandoned fight. A dream, all a dream, that ends in nothing, and leaves the sleeper where he lay down, but [he] wishes [her] to know that [she] inspired it.” (156-157). The fact that Lucie has made such an impact on Carton’s life by bringing up past feelings of remorse, and sparking the idea that he wants to start all over indicates just how much Carton loves Lucie. She really gets into his brain, and makes him think. The idea of starting new and having a dream that ends in nothing, but that is inspired by Lucie foreshadows his sacrifice for her. When he sacrifices himself, he is inspired by his love for Lucie and his desire to make her happy. This sacrifice leads to his resurrection in Lucie’s son, Sydney Darnay. In this conversation, Carton also says that “ For [her], and any dear to [her], [he] would do anything” (158). This is another indication of Carton’s love for Lucie. He truly loves and cares about her, and is willing to do whatever is necessary to make her happy. Ultimately, that is to take her husband’s place at the guillotine and die in his place. He does this because he loves Lucie enough that he wants her to be happy with her family, even if he is not a part of it. Sydney’s sacrifice and rebirth in the Darnay’s son conclusively does make him a part of their family, only in a resurrected form. Finally, we see that Carton’s love and devotion to Lucie’s happiness leads to his resurrection in his final description before he dies. As he looks towards Lucie and her family, Carton says “ 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 which once was mine” (386). Here, Carton is envisioning himself in Lucie’s son. Lucie

names her son after Carton, making his image of being resurrected in the young boy even more legitimate. Sydney is making the ultimate sacrifice for Lucie, all to make her happy. He truly loves her, and is sacrificing his life to allow her to keep her family together, proving that his and devotion to her will lead to his resurrection. Throughout the entirety of A Tale of Two Cities, it is evident that resurrection is a main idea in the novel. Dickens, being extremely Christian, believed that righteous behavior ultimately leads to one's resurrection. This was demonstrated in Doctor Manette, when we see that he has been recalled to life by his daughter's undying love and devotion to the improvement of his health. We see it again in Jerry Cruncher, as we see him evolve from being a grave-robbing 'resurrection man' to being a man resurrected by his devotion to the people close to him. Finally, we see the idea that love and devotion lead to resurrection in Sydney Carton's heart breaking self-sacrifice. He loves Lucie so much that he is willing to devote his entire life to making her happy. He knows that Charles Darnay means the world to her, and that she is hysterical about his death sentence, and therefore he is willing to take his place so that she can be happy again with her husband. Through each of these examples, it is proven that true love and devotion to someone or something leads to resurrection, whether metaphorically or physically.