

# Tale of two cities

Literature



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The theme of imprisonment in A tale of two cities Imprisonment is a major theme in A tale of two cities. The of the novel describes the sorry state of the prison and the level of solitude some of the characters endure while in prison helps portray the inhumane nature of imprisonment during the tumultuous times. Charles Dickens portrays the way in which both the French revolutionaries and the French nobilities both used imprisonment to their advantage. Chapter 17, “ One night” and Chapter 18, “ Nine days” help develop the theme of imprisonment. The two chapters give the varied experiences of the various characters in prison thereby portraying the effects of imprisonment in the novel.

The imprisonment of Dr. Manette is among the key portrayals of the theme of imprisonment in the novel. In One Night, Dr. Manette opens up to his daughter, Lucie as he begins narrating to her his experiences in prison. Such is a vita chapter in the novel since it introduces the theme of imprisonment. Through the chapter, the author of the novel describes the horrendous experiences of arbitrary imprisonment and the effects of such experiences. Dr. Manette lived in solitude and away from his family. He stayed in prison for eighteen years. The tie in prison is so long that the doctor forgets about her daughter. It took her a while before she could recognize her daughter. In fact, the doctor recognizes her daughter by pointing out a number of similarities between her and his mother. This portrays the level of solitude and the prolonged prison term.

While in prison, Dr. Manette often wondered about his daughter and the fact that she would be born and raised in his absence. His prolonged absence from Lucie’s life since her birth is responsible for the difficulty he had in recognizing her when they first met. The imprisonment influences Dr.

Manette's mind while it remains unclear the role the Evremondes played in his imprisonment; Dr. Manette becomes increasingly prejudicial about the group. Late in the night, Lucie goes downstairs to check on his father. Dr. Manette is asleep, but Lucie could see his worn face (Dickens 271). This portrays the permanence of the effects of his imprisonment. The chapter proves that just as the doctor's imprisonment lasted years, so would it take equally long to eliminate the effects of the imprisonment.

In "Nine days", Charles reveals to Lucie that he is an Evremonde. When Dr. Manette learns of this, he becomes withdrawn and distressed. When Lucie and Charles leave for their honeymoon, Dr. Manette retires to a corner in his room where he becomes incoherent and begins making shoes again (Dickens 280). Making shoes was a habit he developed in prison. He stayed in a corner and made shoes in order to pass time. The realization that his daughter had married an Evremonde brought back the horrific experiences he had in prison thereby driving him to solitude once again. The chapter portrays the extent of the pain he underwent while in prison a feature that informed his prejudice and fear of the ethnic group.

Work cited

Dickens, Charles. *A Tale Of Two Cities*. New York: Kessinger Publishing, 2004. Print.