

In her as they travel
to paris to



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In the novel "A Tale of Two Cities" Charles Dickens describes "the best of times and the worst of times" (1) of the characters. France and England struggle through political confusion, which is one of the most disturbing periods of history. On the other hand, for the characters of the novel, these are the times of rebirth and revival. The author conveys the dual nature of this epoch by contrasting representations of light and dark, chaos and stability, doom and hope with the use of setting, characterization, foreshadowing, symbolism, and plot set up. The novel opens in the troubled year of 1775, with a comparison of England and pre-Revolutionary France. It conveys the sense of doom and chaos.

Both countries go through extreme social turmoil. With sarcasm, Dickens condemns the nobles as responsible for the disorder. "Under the guidance of France's Christian pastors, she entertained herself, besides with such humane achievements as sentencing a youth to have his hands cut off because he had not kneeled down to a dirty procession of monks" (2) France has mostly political difficulties while in England the issues are largely social. France "rolled with exceeding smoothness down hill, making paper money and spending it." (2) In England, "there was scarcely an amount of order and protection to justify much national boasting.

Daring burglaries by armed men, and highway robberies, took place in the capital itself every night." (2) The portrayal of the countries' state conveys the atmosphere of doom and chaos. On the other hand, the plot set up and characterization in the novel imply a sense of hope, a light in the darkness. The central characters in the first book are all likeable people. Jarvis Lorry, the banker, is very reliable and responsive. He takes on a role of Lucie's

friend and guardian. He is there to help and support her as they travel to Paris to find Mr. Manette, Lucie's father.

" Rendered in a manner desperate, by Lucie's state, Mr. Lorry drew over his neck the arm that shook upon his shoulder, lifted her a little, and hurried her into the room. He set her down just within the door, and held her, clinging to him." (31) Lucie is a classical Victorian heroine.

She is delicate and softhearted. She acknowledges her father at once as if she had known him all her life and expresses her feelings for him. " I pray to you to touch me and to bless me. Kiss me, kiss me! O my dear, my dear!"

(40) The plot of the novel up to the end of Book 1 revolves around the revival of Mr.

Manette, his being " recalled to life." (6) After eighteen years of imprisonment, he finds his daughter, and Lucie Manette finds her father who has been dead for her. Lucie Manette promises to him that they will " go to England to be at peace and at rest" (40). Despite the social and political disorder, these are the times of hope for Lucie Manette and her father. The twofold nature of the novel, both light and dark, hope and doom, is reflected in foreshadowing and symbolism. The spilling of red wine is a premonition of blood to be shed in the Revolution.

" All the people within reach had suspended their business, or their idleness, to run to the spot and drink the wine." (24) There will be people in the Revolution who will, figuratively, drink the blood like the wine. Another foreboding of the long and hard road of the Revolution is the image of the mail that goes up the hill along the difficult and dangerous Dover road. No

travelers who venture on it are secure. " If any one of the passengers had the hardihood to propose another walk in the mist and darkness, he would have put himself in a fair way of getting shot instantly by a highwayman.

" (5) In the mist of the night road, there is the air of distrust and separateness. " The guard suspected the passengers, the passengers suspected one another and the guard, they all suspected everybody else, and the coachman was sure of nothing but the horses." (5) Every person