

A Tale of Two Cities
Study Guide

Book the Second: The Golden Thread

On the line next to each chapter title, explain why it is an appropriate title for the chapter.

Chapter 1: Five Years Later _____

1. Of what four adjectives describing Tellson's Bank are "the partners in the House" ironically proud? Why?
2. "In this respect the House [Tellson's] was much on par with the Country...." What does this passage suggest about both the bank and England in 1780? How are they alike?
3. What happens to forgers, debtors, letter openers, thieves, etc.?
4. What (metaphorically) happens to young men who are hired by Tellson's?
5. Who is the odd-job man that is never absent from Tellson's front door? Why would an establishment as respectable as Tellson's "tolerate" such a man?
6. Describe Mrs. Cruncher. What does her husband call her? Why?
7. What is "flopping"? Why does Jerry hate it?
8. Regarding his methods of making a living, how does Jerry refer to himself?
9. What details suggest Jerry is engaged in some secret, illegal, or immoral activity to supplement his income?
10. What effect(s) on the reader does Dickens achieve with the scene in the Cruncher home?

Chapter 2: A Sight _____

1. What is Old Bailey?
2. What is the duty assigned to Jerry?
3. What is Jerry Cruncher's opinion of execution by quartering?
4. Quote a sentence that indicates what the audience in the court expects and desires as a verdict.
5. For what crime is Charles Darnay on trial? What exactly did he supposedly do?

Chapter 3: A Disappointment (for whom?) _____

1. Briefly outline the charges Mr. Attorney General (the prosecutor) presents against Charles Darnay.
2. Mr. Attorney General refers to John Barsad as an “unimpeachable patriot” and to Roger Cly his “virtuous servant.” Why? (Tone: How does Dickens view these descriptions?)
3. How does Mr. Solicitor General (defense attorney) discredit the testimony of the “unimpeachable patriot” John Barsad and his “virtuous servant” Roger Cly?
4. When, according to their testimony, did Lucie and Dr. Manette meet Charles Darnay?
5. How is Lucie’s testimony both helpful and damaging to Darnay’s case?
6. Who is the “wiggled gentleman” who has been staring at the ceiling? How does he help Mr. Stryver cast doubt on the testimony of the witness who was in the Dover mail coach with Mr. Lorry five years earlier?
7. What is the “buzzing of the blue flies” that has been occurring throughout the chapter?
8. Compare the way Mr. Carton treats Lucie to the way he treats Darnay? What does that suggest?
9. How does the “Recalled to Life” theme apply to Charles Darnay in this chapter?

Chapter 4: Congratulatory _____

1. Why does Dr. Manette become so gloomy after the trial? Who charms him from such “black brooding”?
2. Describe Mr. Stryver. How is his name a clue to his character? How does he use Carton?
3. Why does Carton annoy Mr. Lorry?
4. Describe Sydney Carton.
5. Why do you think Carton is so rude to Darnay?
6. Carton believes he likes Darnay, but he says (to himself), “You hate the fellow.” Explain how this can be.

Chapter 5: The Jackal

1. What is the secret to Stryver's success as a lawyer?
2. Explain the significance of people saying that Carton is Stryver's jackal?
3. In what ways is Sydney Carton his own worst enemy? (What character traits are revealed in this chapter?)
4. What do we learn about Carton's childhood? What does he blame for his miserable life?
5. For which of the characters in this chapter does Dickens create sympathy? Quote textual evidence that supports your answer.

Chapter 6: Hundreds of People (2 meanings)

1. How long after the trial does this chapter take place?
2. Miss Pross's complaint about "hundreds of people" is an example of what figure of speech?
3. Who is Solomon?
4. What questions does Mr. Lorry ask Miss Pross about the doctor and his shoemaking tools?
5. Why is Dr. Manette afraid to remember the past?
6. How does the reader learn that Dr. Manette, as a prisoner of the Bastille, may have written and hidden something in his cell?
7. Explain Dickens's use of foreshadowing at the end of the chapter when Lucie, Carton, and Darnay discuss the crowds in the streets of London. (Which character challenges the footsteps to come?)

Chapter 7: Monseigneur in Town

1. Describe the episode with the chocolate. What is the tone of this passage?
2. Who is the Farmer General, and what is his relationship to the Monseigneur?
3. What has occurred between Monseigneur and the Marquis?
4. Review this passage: "The water in the fountain ran...all things ran their course." What do you think the water may symbolize?
5. Who is the woman who stands knitting? How does she feel about the Marquis?

Chapter 8: Monseigneur in the Country

1. Why is the Marquis annoyed with the Mender of roads?
2. How did the poor woman's husband die? What does she want from the Marquis?
3. Who is the Monseigneur expecting from England? What family connection is suggested?

Chapter 9: The Gorgon's Head

1. Explain the allusion made by the title of this chapter?
2. Compare and contrast Darnay and his uncle.
3. What do they talk about?
4. What evidence is there to suggest that Darnay suspects the Marquis contributed to the treason charges he faced in England?
5. What were the reasons for Darnay's frequent trips to France that resulted in his charges of treason?
6. Why does Darnay plan to abandon the property of his family when he inherits it from his uncle?
7. What does the redness of the rising sun on the outside of the chalet symbolize and foreshadow?
8. To what mystery is Darnay alerted by his uncle's behavior?

"As he bent his head in his most courtly manner, there was a secrecy in his smiling face, and he conveyed an air of mystery to those words, which struck the eyes and ears of his nephew forcibly."

9. Who is "Jacques"? (Where have you heard this name previously in the novel?)

Chapter 10: Two Promises (What are they?)

1. How long after the last chapter does this one begin? What has happened in the intervening months?
2. How does Darnay earn his living in England?
3. What promise concerning his past (and his true identity) does Darnay make to Dr. Manette?
4. What does Dr. Manette's reaction to Darnay's attempt to reveal his true identity suggest?
5. What further evidence of there that Dr. Manette is disturbed by the prospect of his daughter marrying Charles Darnay?