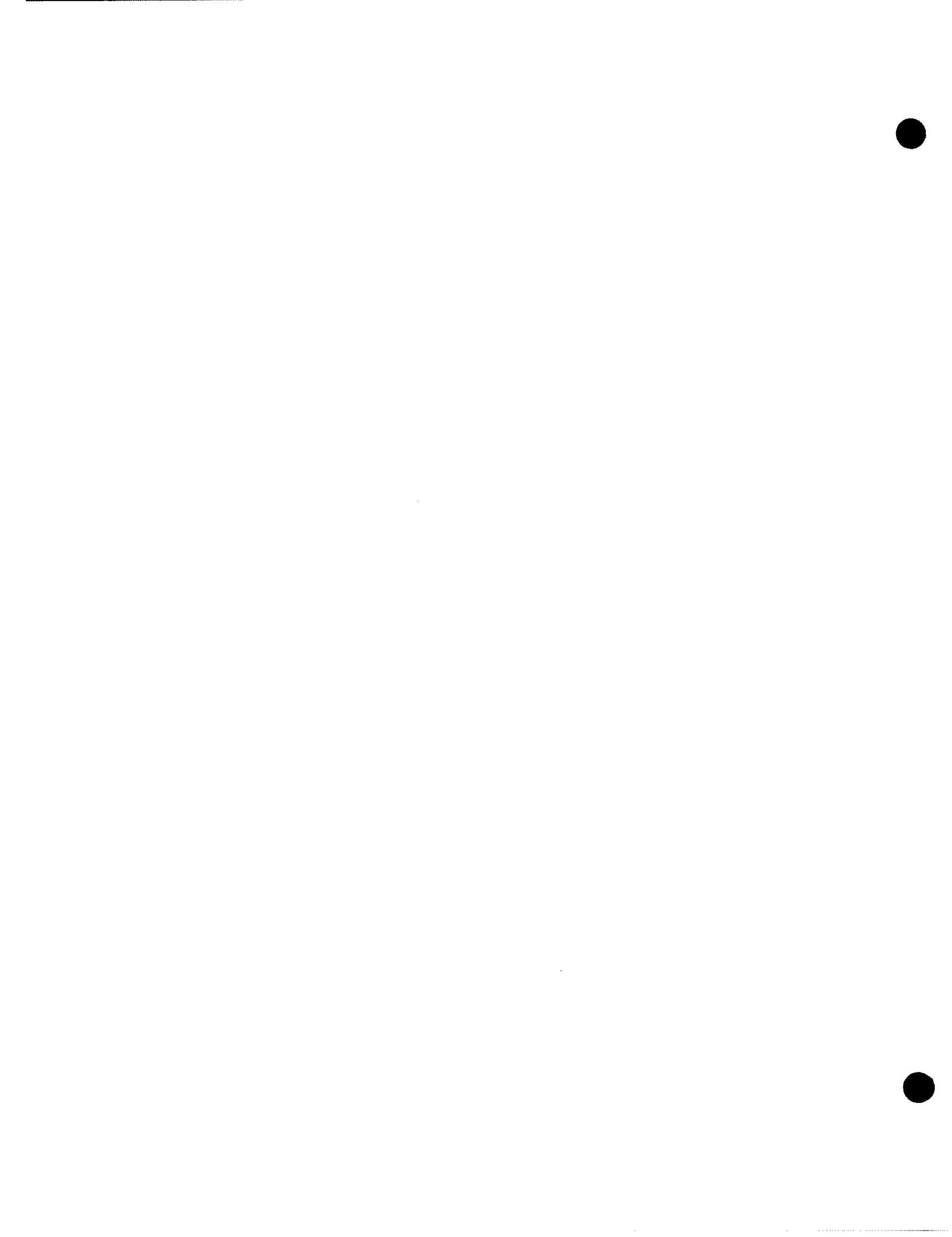


A TALE OF TWO CITIES

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1 BLACK

1

We hear a TYMPANI drum slowly begin to roll out a beat, insistent and deep-bellied, as though it's the very pulse these tumultuous times. The tempo speeds up throughout the following sequence until, by the end, it's rolling like thunder.

2 BALLROOM - NIGHT

2

A massive crystal chandelier FILLS the screen, hundreds of candle flames sparkling through the glass. We PAN DOWN to a river of aristocrats, courtiers and nobles gliding and twirling in unison on the ballroom floor below.

SYDNEY (V.O.)
It was the best of times...

DISSOLVE TO:

3 FLEET CREEK - DAY

3

An actual river - brown, polluted - meandering through city slums. A dead, bloated dog floats past as we PAN to the banks to see a long line of washerwomen scrubbing their rags in the fetid water.

SYDNEY (V.O.)
It was the worst of times...

CUT TO:

4 LABORATORY - DAY

4

A SCIENTIST creating an electric spark in a Leyden jar.

SYDNEY (V.O.)
It was the age of wisdom...

5 WINE SHOP - NIGHT

5

A glozing of TAVERNERS pounding back their drinks. One of them falls to the ground as the others laugh.

SYDNEY (V.O.)
It was the age of foolishness...

6 CATHEDRAL - DAY

6

A BISHOP lifting a communion wafer into the air, a towering crucifix in the background.

SYDNEY (V.O.)
It was the epoch of belief...

7 PEASANT FLAT - NIGHT

7

A shivering PEASANT FAMILY attempts to warm itself at the hearth. The MOTHER takes a simple wooden cross off the wall, looks to the FATHER, who somberly nods. The MOTHER tosses the cross into the fire.

SYDNEY (V.O.)
It was the epoch of incredulity...

8 VERSAILLES - DAY

8

Awed CROWDS watch as an ornately decorated HOT AIR BALLOON lifts into the sky, eclipsing the sun.

SYDNEY (V.O.)
It was the season of Light...

9 GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

9

The BALLOON dissolves into the moon. We PAN DOWN to see GRAVE-ROBBERS lifting a corpse out of a grave.

SYDNEY (V.O.)
It was the season of Darkness...

10 VAUXHALL GARDENS - DAY

10

A YOUNG COUPLE walking arm in arm approaches a bank of flowers. The YOUNG WOMAN reaches out to pluck a bloom.

SYDNEY (V.O.)
It was the spring of hope...

11 NARROW CITY STREET - TWILIGHT

11

An OLD BEGGAR shivers on a snow-covered curb, reaching out to passers-by, all of whom ignore him.

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY (V.O.)
It was the winter of despair...

The screen dissolves to the BRILLIANT WHITE of untouched parchment. Black ink scripts the following words...

SYDNEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
We had everything before us...

The parchment yellows and frays. The following words seep through in blood red...

SYDNEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
We had nothing before us.

The thunderous TYMPANI DRUM abruptly stops. BLACK.

TITLE CARD: A TALE OF TWO CITIES

CREDITS AND MUSIC as...

A horse-drawn wagon rumbles past the OLD BEGGAR we saw just moments before. We can only see the driver's silhouette.

We follow the wagon through the winding cobble-stone streets of Saint Antoine toward the looming towers of the BASTILLE.

The wagon lumbers over the jail's two draw bridges into the central courtyard.

We PAN UP to a narrow window near the top of the North Tower. The camera glides up the stonework and through the window.

Inside the dank cell a HAGGARD MAN sitting in a corner, knees drawn to his chest. He's only 50 but looks much older. His gray beard is long and unkempt, and the rags he wears are mere tatters.

END OF CREDITS AND MUSIC

Keys jangle in the lock of the cell's heavy door. It swings open, revealing a GAOLER and SECOND MAN (who we will later know as DEFARGE). The HAGGARD MAN does not look up.

DEFARGE
Doctor - come - you are now free.

(CONTINUED)

The Haggard Man now looks over to them, squinting at their lantern light.

13

INT. OLD BAILEY - LONDON - DAY

13

SUPERTITLE: LONDON, 1783

A packed courtroom. SYDNEY CARTON - a young barrister - slouches casually beside his older associate, a nervous-looking MR. STRYVER. Sydney is handsome, sharp-witted and burning with intensity. But he also looks a bit slovenly in comparison to Stryver, who is the epitome of proper manners and dress.

The two watch as a MAGISTRATE and JURY file into the courtroom. Sydney pulls a flask from his waistcoat and takes a sip. He holds the flask out to Stryver.

STRYVER
(whispering)
Put that away!

Sydney smirks and slips the flask back into his waistcoat.

STRYVER (CONT'D)
And tie your cravat.

Sydney nods toward a man in the defendant's box.

SYDNEY
I'll tie my cravat when the jury
acquits our client.

STRYVER
If they acquit our client.

SYDNEY
I'd wager our fee on it.

STRYVER
It's not yours to wager.

SYDNEY
I'd wager my wig then.

BAILIFF
All rise!

Everyone stands. Sydney and Stryver assume their proper positions at the bar. The Magistrate takes his seat at the bench. He turns to the FOREMAN of the jury.

(CONTINUED)

MAGISTRATE

What say you?

FOREMAN

On all counts of thievery and
fraud we the jury hereby find the
accused...Not Guilty.

Boos and cheers from the gallery. The defendant is
joyful with relief.

SYDNEY

(to Stryver)
I told you.

He tosses his wig to Stryver.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

You can have the wig. I'm feeling
generous, and I hate wearing the
bloody thing anyhow.

Sydney makes a bee-line for the door, tying his cravat as
he goes.

As Sydney bounds down the steps, Stryver hurries to catch
up with him. Sydney keeps walking as they talk.

STRYVER

You could have at least shaken the
man's hand.

SYDNEY

Why would I want to do that? He's
a thief and a fraud.

STRYVER

Our clients deserve some respect.
We have a reputation to uphold.

SYDNEY

You worry about our reputation.
I'll worry about winning our
cases. Now wish me "Bon voyage".

STRYVER

Bon Voyage...?

SYDNEY

Didn't I tell you last night?

(CONTINUED)

STRYVER

Tell me what?

SYDNEY

I've decided to take a holiday.

STRYVER

(incredulous)

No - you didn't tell me.

SYDNEY

Well I'm telling you now.

STRYVER

But we have business...

SYDNEY

Must I argue every trial for you?
I'm sure you can survive without
me for a month.

STRYVER

A month! Where are you going?

SYDNEY

Where I always go for proper wine,
and more to the point, for proper
whores. I'm going to France.

STRYVER

You're despicable.

SYDNEY

To that the accused hereby pleads
guilty.

(he takes a deep bow)
Au revoir monsieur.

And he darts down a side street.

LUCIE MANETTE - a stunning young woman of twenty-five - stands before her pupils. Her eyes flash with intelligence and charm. She has a clear command of the room, as well as of herself.

LUCIE
Je suis, tu es, il est...

PUPILS
(in unison)
Je suis, tu es, il est...

(CONTINUED)

LUCIE
Nous sommes, vous etes, il sont...

PUPILS
Nous sommes, vous etes, il sont...

LUCIE
J'etais, tu etais -

MS. PROSS - a sturdy, no-nonsense woman of middle age -
bustles into the room.

MS. PROSS
I'm sorry to interrupt...

LUCIE
What is it Ms. Pross?

MS. PROSS
There's a gentleman here to see
you.

LUCIE
I'm in the middle of my lesson.

MS. PROSS
He says it's urgent.

16 INT. FRONT PARLOR - DAY

16

MR. JARVIS LORRY sits stiffly by the window. He has the
serious countenance of businessman. His dress is
sensible and impeccable. He rises when Lucie enters,
then bows to her.

LORRY
Ms. Manette...

LUCIE
Can I help you Mister...?

LORRY
Lorry. Mr. Jarvis Lorry.
(they shake hands)
I've come on a matter of business.

LUCIE
If you have a daughter you'd like
to enroll in my school Mr. Lorry,
the fee is six shillings per
month, or three pounds for the
year paid in advance.

(CONTINUED)

LORRY

No no - it's not that. I haven't
a daughter I'm afraid, or any
children for that matter.

Lucie looks at him, a bit puzzled. Lorry gestures to a
chair.

LORRY (CONT'D)

May I...?

LUCIE

Please.

Lorry sits down. Lucie takes a seat opposite him. A
pause as Lorry collects his thoughts.

LORRY
It is very difficult to begin.

LUCIE
Are you quite a stranger to me,
sir?

LORRY
(he smiles)
Am I not?
(serious again)
I work for Tellson's Bank.

LUCIE
Tellson's...the bank which
administered my father's will.

LORRY
The same indeed. And with your
leave, miss, I will relate to you
the story of one of our customers -
a French gentleman; a scientific
gentleman - a Doctor.

LUCIE
Not of Beauvais?

LORRY
Why yes, of Beauvais - like your
father. And like your father, the
gentleman was of repute in Paris.
I had the honor of knowing him
there.

LUCIE
At that time - I may ask, at what
time, sir?

(CONTINUED)

LORRY

I speak, miss, of twenty years ago. He married an English lady, and I was one of the trustees. His affairs were entirely in Tellson's hands. And upon this customer's death, followed closely by that of his wife, the welfare of their only daughter was entrusted to me.

LUCIE

But this is my father's story, sir, and it was you who brought me to England. I am almost sure it was you.

LORRY

(softly)
So we are not strangers after all.

LUCIE

(spellbound)
I entreat you to tell me more.

LORRY

You know that your parents had no great possession, and what they had was secured to you. There has been no new discovery of money, or of any other property, but -

He pauses. Lucie leans forward slightly.

LORRY (CONT'D)

But your father has been - been found. He is alive. Greatly changed, almost a wreck, and yet...he is recalled - recalled to life.

Lucie is dumbfounded, nearly paralyzed by Lorry's words.

LUCIE

(almost inaudibly)
Where...?

A narrow winding street, full of offense and stench. Peasants and common-laborers are milling to and fro. TWO MEN are unloading large casks of wine from a cart.

(CONTINUED)

Overseeing their work is ERNEST DEFARGE (whom we saw at the Bastille during the credit sequence). He is a bull-necked, martial-looking man of thirty, his rolled up sleeves bearing sturdy forearms browned by the sun.

SUPERTITLE: PARIS

The two men lose grip on one of the casks. It falls to the ground, shattering like a walnut shell.

All the people within reach suspend their business, or idleness, to run and drink the wine. Some people kneel down and scoop the wine to their mouths. Some lie on their bellies to sip the wine directly. Others dip mugs or earthenware into the pools that have collected between the cobble stones. All of these people wear hunger and hard times on their faces.

Defarge sees a swarthy looking man - MARAT - scrawling on a wall with his finger dipped in muddy wine. Marat writes:

SANG
(Blood)

Defarge goes over to Marat and knocks his hand away from the wall.

DEFARGE
Imbecile! You find this amusing?

MARAT
I don't make jokes Monsieur
Defarge, I make prophesies.

DEFARGE
Go home Marat - before you get
yourself arrested.

Marat sulks off. Mr. Defarge turns his attention to the two men at the cart.

DEFARGE (CONT'D)
I expect the cask to be replaced
by this afternoon, and at half the
price.

Mr. Defarge's wife - MADAME DEFARGE - a stout woman with a watchful eye, steady face and strong features - sits behind the counter as her husband enters.

(CONTINUED)

She lifts a needle from her knitting and raises it to her eyebrow, as if to make a sign to Mr. Defarge. He warily casts a glance about the room, whereupon he sees Lucie and Mr. Lorry sitting patiently at a table. As he locks eyes with Mr. Lorry...

LORRY
(standing up)
Monsieur Defarge...?

Mr. Defarge leads Lucie and Mr. Lorry up a narrow set of stairs. The trio arrives at the highest landing. Mr. Defarge takes them to a door. Pulls out a set of keys, searches for the right one.

LORRY
The door is locked then?

DEFARGE
Ay, yes.

LUCIE
But why?

DEFARGE
Why? Because he has lived so long locked up that he would be frightened - tear himself to pieces - come to I know not what harm if his door was left open.

Lucie shoots Mr. Lorry a concerned look. Mr. Defarge has found his key. He unlocks the door and swings it open.

At the far end of the dim garret sits the Haggard Man whom we saw in the Bastille cell. His beard had been cut short now, but is still quite scraggly. His rags have been replaced with proper clothing, but the attire is plain and modest at best. He hunches over a work bench, constructing a shoe.

Lucie and Mr. Lorry are visibly moved at seeing this shell of a man.

DEFARGE (CONT'D)
(to the Haggard Man)
Good morning.

But the Haggard Man does not look up from his work.

DEFARGE (CONT'D)
Are you going to finish that pair
of shoes today?

The Haggard Man looks over.

HAGGARD MAN
(almost inaudibly)
I don't know...

And he returns to his work.

DEFARGE
You have a visitor, you see.

The Haggard Man does not acknowledge this. Mr. Lorry
takes a step closer.

LORRY
What is your name sir?

HAGGARD MAN
Did you ask me my name?

LORRY
I did.

HAGGARD MAN
One Hundred and Five, North Tower.

LORRY
Excuse me?

HAGGARD MAN
One Hundred and Five, North Tower.

LORRY
(tentatively)
Are you not Doctor Manette?

The HAGGARD MAN (now Dr. Manette) suddenly cradles his
head in his hands.

SMASH CUT TO:

The following images should feel expressionistic and
disjointed. They flood by at the speed of light, the
entirety of them lasting no more than ten seconds.

The camera flies down a dark passageway of the Bastille
as we hear a woman's screams, overlaid by...

(CONTINUED)

A MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Docteur Manette...

We CUT TO a gnarled hand scripting the following words onto a frayed parchment in blood-red ink:

Je, Alexandre Manette, medecin malchanceux...

CUT TO a younger Dr. Manette walking along a quay of the Seine, a carriage stopping beside him, the door opening, a CLOAKED MAN calling to him...

CLOAKED MAN
Docteur Manette...

CUT TO a WOMAN of great beauty - no more than twenty, her hair torn and ragged - lying on a bed. She is feverish and screaming.

CUT BACK TO:

Dr. Manette still has his head in hands, and is rocking back and forth. Lucie is kneeling beside him.

HAGGARD MAN
No no no no no no no....

LUCIE
Shhhhh...Give me your hands.

He begins to calm down.

DR. MANETTE
Who are you?

LUCIE
Do you not remember me?

DR. MANETTE
You are not the gaoler's daughter?

LUCIE
No Papa. I am your daughter.

He looks at her wondrously. Her eyes fill with tears. His lips tremble, his brow furrows, and his eyes follow suit with tears of their own.

22

INT. BROTHEL - UPSTAIRS - DAWN

22

A voluptuous PROSTITUTE looks out a window at the street below, her hair tussled, her breasts casually falling out of her open corset.

We CUT to her POV and see a long queue of peasants gathered in front of a baker's shop.

CUT BACK to the Prostitute.

PROSTITUTE
It's not even dawn and already
they line up for their bread, like
dogs at the dinner table hoping
their master throws them a bone.

We CUT TO Sydney, half-dressed, languishing on a divan. He smokes from an opium pipe.

SYDNEY
You'll be one of them one day -
when your looks give out, or your
twat does, whichever goes first.

She turns and shoots him a biting look. Then quickly replaces it with a smile.

PROSTITUTE
You have such a way with words.

SYDNEY
If I didn't, I'd never be able to
afford you.

She walks over to him seductively. Straddles his lap.

PROSTITUTE
Shall we go again? I'm still a
few years away from the bread-
line.

SYDNEY
No my dear...

He puts down the pipe. Eases himself from beneath her.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
I need to head to Calais. I have
a boat to catch.

23

INT. BROTHEL PARLOR - MORNING

23

Several garrulous prostitutes are either waiting for customers to arrive or are entertaining those who are there. Sydney, now fully dressed, descends from the stairs. He is met by the Brothel's Madame - MADAME BOULET - an elderly woman pancaked with make-up, a large mole painted on her jaw.

SYDNEY

Is my carriage here?

MADAME BOULET

Out front.

SYDNEY

Merci Madame.

MADAME BOULET

You leave us so soon Monsieur
Carton. Your visit was too brief.

SYDNEY

You mean my purse was too thin.

MADAME BOULET

When it fattens up again - you
know you are always welcome.(she gives him a peck
on either cheek)

Please come back soon.

Sydney and Madame make their way to the door. She opens it for him. Bright sunlight floods in, causing Sydney to squint. In the glare, we see how sallow Sydney's complexion is, how dark the circles beneath his eyes - the toll of his uninhibited debauchery in Paris.

24

EXT. CHANNEL BOAT - MAIN DECK - DAY

24

CHARLES DARNAY - a handsome young man of thirty, noble in appearance and character - leans over the side of the gunwale, retching as the vessel sways back and forth.

He stands upright, dabbing his mouth with a dirty handkerchief. An arm enters the frame, offering a fresh one. Charles turns to the samaritan - it's Mr. Lorry.

CHARLES

(with french accent)
Thank you sir, but I wouldn't
sully yours when I have my own.

(CONTINUED)

LORRY

Toss that one into the sea. It
looks sullied enough.

Charles smiles, then lets the wind carry his handkerchief away. He takes Lorry's handkerchief and finishes dabbing his mouth.

CHARLES

Many thanks.

LORRY

My pleasure.

CHARLES

(bowing)
Charles Darnay...

Lucie, Dr. Manette, Lorry and Charles sip tea, steadyng themselves against the boat's incessant rocking. Dr. Manette is properly dressed, but remains distant and lost in his manner. As for Lucie, it's clear from her attention to Charles that she's smitten with him.

CHARLES

So far as I can judge the war was folly. America's independence was inevitable.

(with a smile)
I think that perhaps George Washington might gain almost as great a name in history as George the Third.

Lorry and Lucie chuckle.

LUCIE

Said like a true Frenchman.

CHARLES

A Frenchman by birth, yes, but not in sentiment. If America is progressive in its thinking, France is its opposite.

LUCIE

And yet France gave birth to Voltaire and Rousseau.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES

Unfortunately the words of our great philosophers are no match for the barbarism of our nobility.

LORRY

Your English is impeccable. I dare say its better than mine.

CHARLES

I've put great study into learning your language. I plan on starting anew in London.

LUCIE

How so?

CHARLES

A new country - a new life.

LORRY

Employed by what profession, may I ask?

CHARLES

I don't know as yet.

DR. MANETTE

I believe we are all starting anew.

Charles looks slightly puzzled by the sudden and oblique statement.

LUCIE

(covering for her father)

My father has never been to England before. He's coming to live with me.

CHARLES

(to Dr. Manette)

You are a lucky man indeed, sir, to be starting anew with such a beautiful and learned daughter at your side.

He then looks directly at Lucie, who cannot hide the blush washing over her face.

LUCIE

It looks as though we're out of tea. I'll go fetch another pot.

(CONTINUED)

She lifts the service tray, and heads for the door.

A gruff SAILOR fills Lucie's tea pot from a steaming kettle in the mess. She starts to make her way back to the cabin, passing through the steerage compartment as she does. We can hear somebody whistling a tune.

As she passes by one of the hammocks, a hand stretches out and grabs one of the tea cups. Lucie stops and turns to the offender. It's Sydney.

SYDNEY

(sitting up)

Excellent. Just what I needed.

He grabs the pot from the tray and fills his cup. Lucie is shocked by his forwardness.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

(taking a sip)

Yes - much better. It's cold down here in steerage.

LUCIE

Sir...this tea isn't yours.

SYDNEY

You can sue me for theft if you like. It just so happens I'm a barrister. I'll prosecute and defend myself at the same time. But don't worry, I'll make sure the prosecution wins.

LUCIE

(taking him on)

You don't look like a barrister. Or act like one.

SYDNEY

Don't be fooled by appearances, miss. Sydney Carton - attorney at law.

(reaching into his
waistcoat)

My calling card - in case anyone should ever wrong you...as I've just done for instance.

(CONTINUED)

LUCIE

(growing impatient)
I don't want your card. I just
want my tea cup back.

SYDNEY

Take both.

He gulps down the rest of his tea. Places both the cup
and the card on the tray.

Lucie hurriedly continues to the cabin. But before
leaving the steerage, she turns to look at Sydney, who
has eased into his hammock and resumed whistling. He
stares intently back at her. She lowers her eyes and
continues on.

Lucie, Dr. Manette, Lorry and Charles make their way down
the gangplank. Charles is carrying Lucie's baggage for
her. A SHADY CHARACTER leans against a wall at the
entrance to an alleyway, watching as the ship empties.

On the pier, the party prepares to part ways. Charles
hands Lucie her bags.

LORRY

(to Charles)
Should you find yourself in need
of work - perhaps I can arrange a
position for you at Tellson's.
Your talents could be of some use.

CHARLES

I'm deeply grateful for the offer,
sir.

LUCIE

And please - don't make yourself a
stranger to us. It's always
helpful to have friends when one
is starting anew. Feel free to
visit us whenever you like.

CHARLES

(to Lorry)
I'd never have imagined your
handkerchief would prove so lucky.

(CONTINUED)

LORRY

A man makes his own luck, Mr. Darnay. I suspect you'll fare well in London.

CHARLES

(bowing deeply)
Safe travels.

THE REST

Good night.

Lucie, Dr. Manette and Lorry get into an awaiting carriage. Charles waves good-bye as the carriage pulls off. Lucie waves back through the window, smiling.

Charles begins to make his way down the wharf. The Shady Character watches him as he goes, then begins to follow him.

Simultaneous to this, Sydney makes his way down the gangplank, whistling his tune.

SUPERTITLE: LONDON, TWO YEARS LATER

Mr. Stryver is stoking the coals of a stove. Through the window we can see howling wind and snow. Lucie comes through the door in a heavy cloak. A strong draft sends papers flying. Stryver leaps forth to gather them.

STRYVER

The door!

Lucie shuts the door, strangling the draft.

LUCIE

I apologize...

STRYVER

No matter, no matter.
(putting on his best business smile)
How may I help you miss?

Lucie takes a dog-eared calling card out from her cloak. Looks at it.

LUCIE

I'm looking for Mr. Sydney Carton.

(CONTINUED)

STRYVER

My name is Mr. Stryver. Mr. Carton works for me. Perhaps I can be of some assistance.

Just then, Sydney comes out from the back room, a towel draped over his head. He looks the worse for wear.

SYDNEY

I heard my name...

Upon seeing Lucie he whips the towel off.

STRYVER

This young lady was asking for you.

LUCIE

(to Sydney)

I don't know if you recall, but you gave me your card on the -

SYDNEY

Of course I remember. The channel crossing. You were gracious enough to share your tea.

LUCIE

You said if I was ever wronged...

SYDNEY

(alarmed)

Did someone do you offense?

LUCIE

Not me directly. A dear friend of mine. He's been arrested as a spy from France.

SYDNEY

And he needs a lawyer.

LUCIE

Yes. He's quite desperate.

(beat)

I've been to other barristers, but their fees were so exorbitant - more than my father and I can afford...

STRYVER

Your friend has no means?

(CONTINUED)

LUCIE

Not enough, even coupled with our
own.

SYDNEY

Espionage you say?

LUCIE

Punishable by death.

STRYVER

What can you offer us?

LUCIE

Twenty pounds.

STRYVER

I sympathize with your situation,
miss, but for a case of this scale
our fee would normally be twice as
much.

LUCIE

Sir, I beg of you...

SYDNEY

We'll happily take your case - at
whatever figure you can manage.

Stryver glares at Sydney angrily. Sydney raises a hand
to calm him.

LUCIE

Thank you. Truly. I can't
express my -

SYDNEY

No need for thanks. Come and have
a seat Miss...

LUCIE

Manette.

He pulls out a chair for her. She sits. He takes a seat
opposite. Sydney shoots a reproachful look at Stryver.
Stryver reluctantly joins them.

SYDNEY

(to Lucie)

Now Miss Manette...Tell us
everything.

29

INT. OLD BAILEY COURT ROOM - DAY

29

Charles stands in the prisoner's box, his wrists and ankles bound by shackles. A large and lively crowd has gathered for the proceedings. Among them, seated close to the bar, are Lucie, Lorry, Dr. Manette and Ms. Pross. Sydney and Stryver stand for the accused.

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL is questioning a rough-looking man - whom we recognize as the Shady Characters from the wharf.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
Please state your name, sir.

BARSAD
My name is John Barsad

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
Your occupation Mr. Barsad?

BARSAD
I am a day-laborer, sir. But more often than not I find work on the wharves.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
So you are often present when ships are coming to and fro the docks.

BARSAD
I am.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
And you have witnessed the accused not just once, but on numerous occasions, board and disembark from packet-ships from France.

BARSAD
Yes sir, on many occasions.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
Would you identify the man whom you saw?

Barsad points to Charles.

BASRAD
Over there.

(CONTINUED)

We see Charles stiffen with frustration. He looks over to Stryver and Sydney. Stryver wrings his hands nervously. Sydney stares calmly at the ceiling.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

(to the jury)
Let it be known that Mr. Barsad has identified the accused, Mr. Charles Darnay.

(back to Barsad)
And on these numerous occasions, did you witness anything peculiar about the accused?

BASRAD

I often saw him carrying papers.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

What sort of papers?

BASRAD

They looked like lists of some sort.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Lists of names?

BARSAD

I'd assume so, sir. Yes - lists of names.

The Solicitor-General holds up several sheaves of papers.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Lists of names such as these?

BASRAD

Ay - just like those.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

(to the jury)
I submit for evidence these documents - lists of British officers and ships in the His Majesty's Navy - lists apprehended from known enemies to the Crown. Lists which the prosecution argues were supplied by none other than Mr. Charles Darnay himself.

A murmuring from the gallery. The Bailiff takes the lists for evidence.

(CONTINUED)

SOLICITOR-GENERAL (CONT'D)

(back to Mr. Barsad)

Did you ever witness Mr. Darnay
associating with suspicious
characters, sir?

BARSAD

I did.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Would you elaborate?

BARSAD

Often I saw him exit the ship with
one or several men, or be greeted
by one or more when he arrived.
Sometimes the papers I just
mentioned would pass between them.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Is that all?

BARSAD

No sir. I noticed something else.
On each occasion these men were
speaking French.

More murmurs from the gallery.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

So is it fair to say that these
lists were being passed among men
of French origin.

BARSAD

That would be my understanding,
sir.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Thank you Mr. Barsad.

Barsad sits.

JUDGE

(to Stryver)

Mr. Stryver?

Stryver looks over to Sydney. Sydney shakes his head.

STRYVER

No questions at this time, my
lord.

(CONTINUED)

JUDGE
(to the Solicitor
General)
Proceed.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
I call upon Mr. Jarvis Lorry.

Lorry stands behind the bar.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL (CONT'D)
Mr. Lorry - on the evening of
November 10th, Seventeen hundred
and Eighty-three, were you present
on a packet-ship bound to England
from Calais.

LORRY
Yes sir, I was.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
Did you make the acquaintance of
the accused on this voyage?

LORRY
Yes sir, I did.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
Can you please state the nature of
your acquaintance.

LORRY
I lent Mr. Darnay a handkerchief.
He then joined my companions and
myself for tea in our cabin.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
Who were your companions?

LORRY
Dr. Alexander Manette and his
daughter, Miss Lucie Manette.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
Are they present in this
courtroom?

LORRY
They are - right beside me, sir.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
And did the accused arouse any
suspicion in your mind?

(CONTINUED)

LORRY

On the contrary. I was struck by his charm and intelligence. So much so, in fact, that I offered him employment, an offer he later accepted.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

At Tellson's Bank, correct?

LORRY

Indeed. I hired Mr. Darnay as a liaison between our London and Paris offices. He made several trips to Paris on my behalf.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Is it not possible that Mr. Darnay used these trips as a convenient guise for other purposes, namely those of espionage?

LORRY

To my knowledge his trips were solely to conduct the business of our Bank - business he conducted with skill and efficiency I might add.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

But my question is whether it's possible that the true aim of these trips was to ferry military secrets back to France.

LORRY

I don't dabble in speculation, sir.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

(pressing)
Possible or not?!

LORRY

(irritated)
I suppose anything is possible.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

So it is possible you say.

LORRY

No - what I'm saying is -

(CONTINUED)

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
(cutting him off - to
the jury)
Please note that by his own
admission, Mr. Darnay's employer
states it's possible the accused
had more malicious intentions than
the business of Tellson's Bank.

LORRY
You twist my words!

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
That is all Mr. Lorry. Thank you.

LORRY
But I didn't -

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
Please sir!

JUDGE
Mr. Stryver?

Once again Stryver looks to Sydney, who shakes his head.

STRYVER
No questions.

The Judge nods to the Solicitor-General.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
Dr. Alexander Manette.

Dr. Manette stands.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL (CONT'D)
Sir, do you recall meeting the
accused on the aforementioned
evening?

DR. MANETTE
I remember nothing of that night.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
Nothing at all?

DR. MANETTE
No. Not of that night, or any
part of my journey to England...

(CONTINUED)

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
Has it been your misfortune to undergo a long imprisonment, without trial, or even accusation, in your native country?

DR. MANETTE
(with difficulty)
A long imprisonment...yes.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
Were you newly released on the occasion in question?

DR. MANETTE
They tell me so.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
And you have no remembrance of it.

DR. MANETTE
My memory of that time is blank.
I must rely on my daughter's recollection to inform me.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
Thank you Doctor.

The judge looks to Stryver and Sydney.

STRYVER
No questions.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
(pressing on)
Ms. Manette - please rise.

She does so.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL (CONT'D)
Can you confirm Mr. Lorry's account of the voyage?

LUCIE
Yes - we drank tea with Mr. Darnay and engaged in conversation.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
What sort of conversation?

LUCIE
We spoke of many things.

(CONTINUED)

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
Did the accused make any remarks
of a political nature?

LUCIE
We talked of the Revolution in
America, but that is all.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
And did not the accused make
disparaging comments about our
King?

LUCIE
Only in jest.

A murmuring from the gallery.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
Would you relate his jest to us?

LUCIE
I can't fathom what that has to do
with -

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
Please answer the question miss.

LUCIE
Mr. Darnay said that...perhaps
history will esteem George
Washington more kindly than George
the Third.

The gallery erupts with shouts of: "Traitor!" and "Hang
him!" The judge motions to the Bailiff. The Bailiff
pounds his staff against the ground.

BAILIFF
Order! Order!

The buzz dies down.

LUCIE
I repeat to you, sir, that Mr.
Darnay's comments were not said in
earnest, but only to amuse us.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
That is for the jury to decide.
Thank you Ms. Manette.

(CONTINUED)

LUCIE

I have gotten to know Mr. Darnay quite well since we first met. He has called upon my father and I many times over the past two years...

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

.. Miss Manette...

LUCIE

He has exhibited nothing but kindness, respect and strength of character.

JUDGE

That is all Miss Manette.

Please...

(to the Judge)

The prosecution rests, your honor.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

Mr. Stryver - Surely you must have some questions.

Stryver leans over to Sydney. They confer for a moment in confidence. Stryver stands.

STRYVER

Due to the lateness of the day, the defense humbly requests a recess before we present our case, your honor.

JUDGE

Very well. This court shall recess until two o'clock, tomorrow afternoon.

BAILIFF

All rise!

Everyone in the courtroom stands as the Judge begins to exit from the bench.

The room is lit dimly by candlelight. Stryver paces back and forth, a defeated look on his face. Sydney sits in a chair, watching him. Sydney's demeanor is calm and collected.

(CONTINUED)

STRYVER

I fear there is no hope for the man.

SYDNEY

The evidence was circumstantial.

STRYVER

And yet sufficient enough to sway the jury.

SYDNEY

The key is Barsad. His testimony was most damning.

STRYVER

But how do we refute him?

SYDNEY

(attempting to pour a drink from an empty bottle)

We're out of rum.

STRYVER

(scolding)
A fine time for boozing...

SYDNEY

Fetch me another bottle from the cupboard, will you?

STRYVER

Let me remind you Mr. Carton, that it is you who works for me, not the other way 'round. I'm your employer, not your errand boy.

SYDNEY

(eyes narrowing)
If you want to free the noose from Mr. Darnay's neck - you'll fetch me my rum.

Stryver is incensed, but he knows that he accommodates Sydney's vice in order to exploit his mind. He shuffles off to the pantry.

Sydney places his fingers on his temples, closes his eyes.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

(quietly, to himself)
Think you bastard, think...

(CONTINUED)

He sees a loose thread on his vest. Tugs at it. Looks at the thread ponderously in the candlelight. We see an idea striking him.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
(excited, calling
out)

Stryver - I shall need a tailor!

Entering with the bottle...

STRYVER
At this hour?

SYDNEY
(standing)
Yes.

STRYVER
We have to work on our case.

SYDNEY
(putting on his
overcoat)
Our case depends upon it. Come -
first to a tailor, then to the
docks. And bring the bottle.

A large crowd has already formed, awaiting admission to the courtroom. Sydney and Stryver fight their way through the people. Lucie - accompanied by Lorry, Dr. Manette and Ms. Pross - spots them. Her face is wracked with concern.

LUCIE
Mr. Stryver! Mr. Carton!

Sydney and Stryver turn to her.

LUCIE (CONT'D)
Why did you ask no questions
yesterday?

SYDNEY
Because we've saved them for
today.

LUCIE
You mustn't lose this case.

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY
We have no intention of doing so
Miss Manette.

LUCIE
Are you confident, then?

SYDNEY
Confident? No. Hopeful? Yes.

LUCIE
But Charles will hang should you
fail.

SYDNEY
Of that we can be confident. So
let us hope otherwise. Excuse us,
miss.

Sydney and Stryver continue to push their way to the door.

JUDGE
Mr. Stryver, are you ready sir?

STRYVER
Yes, your honor. Presenting for
the defense will be my associate,
Mr. Sydney Carton.

Sydney stands.

JUDGE
Very well Mr. Carton. Call your
first witness.

SYDNEY
We have no witnesses, your honor.

Murmurs from the gallery.

JUDGE
Am I to presume the accused has
changed his plea?

SYDNEY
On the contrary, my lord. While
we have no witnesses of our own,
we should like to cross-examine
one who stood for the prosecution.

(CONTINUED)

JUDGE
Please proceed.

SYDNEY
Thank you, your honor. The defense calls upon Mr. John Barsad.

Barsad stands, looking a bit nervous.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
Mr. Barsad, you testified yesterday that you are day laborer.

BARSAD
Yes sir.

SYDNEY
And that you more often than not find work along the wharves.

BARSAD
Yes sir, that's what I said.

SYDNEY
What sort of work does that entail exactly?

BARSAD
Well...work having to do with the ships coming in and out.
Unloading them of goods and such.

SYDNEY
Helping secure the ships to the docks?

BARSAD
Yes, from time to time.

Sydney holds out his hand to Stryver. Stryver gives him a short length of rope. Sydney walks over to Barsad, holds out the rope.

SYDNEY
If you will.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL
Your honor, what's the meaning of this nonsense?

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY
(to the Judge)
I ask your patience. All will be clear.

JUDGE
It had better be, Mr. Carton.

SYDNEY
(to Barsad)
Mr. Barsad. Would you be so kind as to recreate a slip-shank.

BARSAD
A slip-shank...?

SYDNEY
Do you not know what a slip-shank is?

BARSAD
I'm afraid I don't.

SYDNEY
Perhaps you know it by another name. A slip-shank is the knot that is used to secure ships to the pier. Would you tie one for us?

Barsad stares down at the rope.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
Is there a problem Mr. Barsad?

BARSAD
(sheepishly)
I can't recall how to tie one at the moment.

SYDNEY
Are you to tell me that you make your living on the wharves and you can't recall how to tie a simple slip-shank?

BARSAD
Not at the moment, sir...I'm afraid not...

SYDNEY
I quite understand. You are under a great deal of scrutiny just now.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
We wouldn't expect you to remember
even the simplest task under such
circumstances.

(retrieving the rope)
So let us move on to another
topic. Does that suit you Mr.
Barsad?

BARSAD
Whatever you please, sir.

SYDNEY
Excellent. *Que langue esque je
parle, si vous plait?*

BARSAD
Excuse me...?

SYDNEY
(slow, deliberately)
*Que langue esque je parle, si vous
plait?*

BARSAD
I don't understand...

SYDNEY
But yesterday you said you
overheard the accused conversing
with suspicious characters in
French.

BARSAD
Yes, that's true.

SYDNEY
And yet you did not comprehend
me.

BARSAD
I must admit I don't speak French
sir, but I recognize it when I
hear it.

SYDNEY
Ahh - of course. So when you
overheard these conversations, did
it sound something like...*Aqui
estan su papelis.*

BARSAD
Very much, exactly like that.

SYDNEY

But I just spoke in Spanish. Are we to believe these suspicious characters were from Spain now?

BARSAD

No sir, they were most definitely French.

SYDNEY

Yes, perhaps they were Frenchmen speaking Spanish, or Spaniards speaking French, or Italians speaking Portuguese for that matter.

BARSAD

They were French!

SYDNEY

So you say, so you say. But tell me this Mr. Barsad. Why are you here this afternoon?

BARSAD

Why...?

SYDNEY

You approached the authorities of your own free will to report against the accused.

BARSAD

Absolutely I did.

SYDNEY

Why go to the trouble? Why spend two days in court - two days you could have been earning wages down on the wharf?

BARSAD

I felt it was my patriotic duty.

SYDNEY

What an honorable subject to the Crown you are Mr. Barsad.

BARSAD

I strive to be honorable when I can, sir.

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY

Were you striving for honor when
you found yourself in debtor's
prison?

BARSAD

(angrily)
I have never been to debtor's
prison!

SYDNEY

Not once?

BARSAD

Never.

SYDNEY

Are you sure?

BARSAD

Quite.

SYDNEY

How many times?

BARSAD

(flustered)
Well maybe once.

SYDNEY

Not five or six?

BARSAD

Two or three at most.

SYDNEY

Shall we say four?

BARSAD

Yes - four times - but not five.

SYDNEY

Is debtor's prison awful?

BARSAD

Ay, it's terrible, sir - terrible.

SYDNEY

And would you do anything to avoid
being sent there again?

BARSAD

I would, if it were in my power.

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY

Such as falsely accusing a man of treason in the hopes of collecting a bounty? A bounty that would free you of your debts?

BARSAD

You try to trick me, sir...

SYDNEY

Did you or did you not collect a bounty for accusing Mr. Darnay?

BARSAD

I might have, but I assure you, I did so out of loyalty to my King!

SYDNEY

Fine, fine. Let us assume that everything you say is true. Let us assume you work daily on the docks even though you can't tie a slip-shank. Let us assume you can recognize French even when it's spoken in Spanish. Let us assume your duty is to your country rather than your pocket-book. Assuming all this - I have one final matter to explore...

We can see that Barsad is in a state of confusion now. Sydney moves in for the kill.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

On these numerous occasions you claim to have witnessed Mr. Darnay boarding or exiting ships, associating with suspicious characters, you watched him from afar?

BARSAD

Not too far. Close enough to see him well.

SYDNEY

How close?

BARSAD

Thirty paces I'd say.

SYDNEY

Thirty paces...

(CONTINUED)

Sydney walks to the far side of the courtroom, counting off the paces.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
...Twenty-eight, twenty-nine,
thirty. About this distance Mr.
Barsad?

BARSAD
Ay, that seems right.

SYDNEY
Please take a good look at the accused. Are you very certain it was him you saw on these numerous occasions?

BARSAD
Quite certain.

SYDNEY
I see...

With flare, Sydney whips off his barrister's robe and wig. He is wearing the exact same clothing as Charles. The resemblance between the two is striking.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
Would you not say that there is a resemblance between Mr. Darnay and myself?

BARSAD
Well I...

SYDNEY
Is there or is there not?

BARSAD
I must admit you look quite similar.

SYDNEY
Similar enough that were you to see me on the wharf you might mistake me for him?

BARSAD
No - it was him I saw...

SYDNEY
But is it possible?

(CONTINUED)

BARSAD

I suppose...

SYDNEY

So it might not have been Mr.
Darnay you saw. It might have
been me...

BARSAD

As I said -

SYDNEY

It might have been anyone - isn't
that true?

BARSAD

(utterly shaken)
I don't know...I don't know...

Very loud murmurs from the gallery.

SYDNEY

(to the judge)
My Lord, given the paucity of
reliable evidence against the
accused, the defense requests a
dismissal.The Judge looks over at a defeated Basrad, then back to
Sydney.

JUDGE

Considering the present testimony,
your request is granted Mr.
Carton. Case dismissed! This
court is adjourned!The gallery erupts with hundreds of chattering mouths.
Sydney looks over to Stryver, who nods to him, relieved.
Charles is freed of his shackles by the Bailiff. Lucie,
Lorry and Dr. Manette are ecstatic.Charles is surrounded by a congratulatory circle of
Lucie, Lorry, Dr. Manette and Stryver. Sydney passes by,
wig and robe in hand.

CHARLES

(calling after him)
Mr. Carton!

Sydney turns. Charles approaches him, followed by the rest.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
(clasping his hand)
I owe my life to you, sir.

SYDNEY
You owe your life to the idiocy of Mr. Barsad. I only helped shine a light on his foolishness.

CHARLES
But such an extraordinary light. I can't express how deeply grateful I am.

SYDNEY
Twenty pounds made payable to Mr. Stryver is expression enough.

LUCIE
Could we amend that payment with dinner at our home? I believe a celebration is in order.

We can tell that Sydney is reluctant to accept. Stryver chimes in before Sydney can refuse.

STRYVER
That's very generous of you Miss Manette. We'd be delighted to join you.

Everyone is seated around the table, engaged in an animated post-meal discussion. Ms. Pross has just finished clearing the plates, and takes a seat at the table. Sydney leans back in his chair, somewhat removed, clearly drinking more than the others.

CHARLES
What I said about Washington and King George may have been in jest, but there is truth to it. The United States represents the boldest experiment in governance since the republic of Rome. Bolder even, since they free from the yolk of oligarchs and tyrants.

(CONTINUED)

DR. MANETTE

Give them time, Mr. Darnay - their country is young. We have yet to see if tyrants come to the fore.

LUCIE

And are they not simply a loose confederation of states with no authority to guide them? That seems more a recipe for chaos than governance.

CHARLES

The American congress is in the midst of drafting a Constitution which will strengthen their alliance.

LORRY

Which will strengthen taxes more likely.

CHARLES

But taxes levied by representatives democratically elected, as opposed to those unilaterally imposed by a monarch.

LORRY

I am no friend of taxes by whomever levies them. The Lord knows we have too many here in England. Taxes on gloves, taxes on hair-powder, on perfume, on wallpaper, even a tax on sunlight - whatever scant amount we have.

MS. PROSS

On sunlight?

STRYVER

The window tax.

LORRY

And yet - I'd prefer to be taxed to the moon and beyond than throw my fate to a mob, even if that mob should wield ballots instead of muskets.

LUCIE

What are your thoughts Mr. Carton?

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY

My thoughts? I have none.

CHARLES

Surely you must.

SYDNEY

I was raised in an orphanage, and the nuns who whipped me into manhood always said that politics was not a topic for dinner conversation.

LUCIE

Dinner is finished Mr. Carton. We have moved onto wine.

SYDNEY

And I am thankful for that.

CHARLES

So what is your opinion of America?

SYDNEY

I find America amusing.

CHARLES

(ruffled)
Amusing how?

SYDNEY

That a band of ruffians with coon-skin caps could spark so many mouths in Europe to endless chattering.

Charles is a bit offended, but retorts with a casual smile.

CHARLES

I think you make a mockery of America's achievement.

SYDNEY

And I think that if you adore America so much, perhaps you should consider living there instead of here.

A slight pause. Stryver is clearly embarrassed by his companion's remark. But we can see that Lucie is intrigued and exhilarated by Sydney's frankness.

(CONTINUED)

STRYVER
I apologize, sir, on my
colleague's behalf...

CHARLES
No no no - I find Mr. Carton as
amusing as he finds America.

SYDNEY
(raising his glass)
At your service, Mr. Darnay.

In an attempt to quell the tension...

LUCIE
Shall we retire to the parlor?

Lucie and Charles are playing chess on one side of the room as all the others look on. Sydney sits alone in the corner, watching from a distance.

LUCIE
Check-mate!

CHARLES
(to Stryver)
I've never beaten her.

LUCIE
(laughing)
You mean you've always let me win.

CHARLES
I wish I were skilled enough to
make such a claim.

LORRY
Up up! It's my turn now.

Charles rises and Lorry takes his seat as Lucie begins to refigure the board. Charles makes his way over to Sydney, sits beside him.

CHARLES
You have no interest in chess?

SYDNEY
I'm surprised that you do - given
your abhorrence for kings and
queens.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES

(smiling)
Well said, Mr. Carton. Well said.

SYDNEY

A long day for you. I'm impressed
by your resilience.

CHARLES

A long day, yes. All during the
trial I felt as though I had one
foot in the grave.

SYDNEY

Do you feel, yet, that you belong
to this terrestrial scheme again,
Mr. Darnay?

CHARLES

I do, and in good spirits no less.

SYDNEY

As to me, the greatest desire I
have, is to forget that I belong
to it. It has no good in it for
me - except wine like this - nor I
for it. So we are not much alike
in that particular. Indeed I begin
to think we are not alike in any
particular, you and I.

A slight pause. Charles is a bit uncomfortable.

CHARLES

You certainly speak your mind, Mr.
Carton, when you choose to speak
it.

SYDNEY

Why don't you call a health, Mr.
Darnay; why don't you give a
toast?

CHARLES

(puzzled)
What health?

SYDNEY

Why, it's on the tip of your
tongue. It ought to be, it must
be. I'll swear it's there.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES
(raising his glass)
To Miss Manette, then.

SYDNEY
(loudly)
To Miss Manette, then!

The others look over at hearing Miss Manette's name. She smiles to them both. Sydney downs the rest of his wine. The others turn back to the game of chess.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
That's a fair young lady to be pitied by. How does it feel? Is it worth being tried for one's life? To be the object of such sympathy and compassion, Mr. Darnay?

Charles does not respond.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
Do you still find me amusing, sir?

CHARLES
No. I do not.

SYDNEY
You think I am drunk?

CHARLES
I think you have been drinking,
Mr. Carton.

SYDNEY
Think? You know I have been drinking.

CHARLES
Since I must say so, I know it.

SYDNEY
Then you shall likewise know why.
I am a disappointed drudge, sir.
I care for no man on earth, and no man on earth cares for me.

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

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY

(his voice rising)

May be so, Mr. Darnay; may be not.
Don't let your sober face elate
you, however; you don't know what
it may come to.

And with that, Sydney downs the present glass of wine,
abruptly stands, and begins to exit. As he goes he takes
a quick glance at the chess board. Reaches out and moves
a bishop across the board.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

That is the superior move, Miss
Manette. Good night.

And he leaves. We hear the front door opening and
closing a moment later. Everyone looks to one another
with an air of surprise.

LORRY

What an eccentric man...

Stryver is hard at work, a stack of documents on his
desk. Sydney enters through the door, looking awful,
shaking the snow off his overcoat.

STRYVER

It's nearly noon.

SYDNEY

Is it?

STRYVER

I take it your debauchery did not
stop at the Manette residence.

SYDNEY

If it did not, I can scarcely
recall. The last thing I remember
is waking up next to a rather
large rat that chose to share the
stoop I found myself sleeping
upon.

STRYVER

I have tolerated your behavior for
much too long Sydney. Your
performance last night was a
disgrace.

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY

It's my performance in the courtroom you pay me for, not my performance at dinner parties.

STRYVER

Even so, my patience grows thin.

SYDNEY

Am I receiving the sack?

STRYVER

No - you are receiving a sincere plea. I beg that you reform your ways.

SYDNEY

You and I both know I'm too far gone for that. But as long as you tolerate my vices, I shall deliver you my mind. That is the most I can promise.

STRYVER

In my opinion you should find yourself a wife.

Sydney laughs.

STRYVER (CONT'D)

Am I funny?

SYDNEY

You are.

STRYVER

A proper wife would set you straight.

SYDNEY

No proper wife would have me - unless she were supremely stupid. In which case she wouldn't make so proper a wife - for I can't stomach stupidity - your company excepted, of course.

Even Stryver finds this amusing and shares a laugh with Sydney.

STRYVER

Touche Sydney, as always.

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY

Now, please, enough talk of wives
and reform. Set me to work before
I sober up.

37

INT. MANETTE HOME - PARLOR - DAY

37

SUPERTITLE: THREE MONTHS LATER

Lucie is teaching her pupils. She holds a flower,
freshly cut from the garden. A young girl stands,
addressing her.

LUCIE

Qu'est-ce?

PUPIL

Une fleur.

LUCIE

Quelle sorte de fleur?

PUPIL

Un rose.

LUCIE

Une...

PUPIL

Une rose.

LUCIE

*Oui. Et de quelle couleur est
cette rose?*

PUPIL

La rose est jaune.

LUCIE

*Tres bien. Now we shall move onto
mathematics...*

38

INT. MANETTE HOME - FRONT STAIRS - DAY

38.

Miss Pross is on her hands and knees, scrubbing the
stairs clean. We can hear Lucie's lesson in the other
room. A knock at the door. Miss Pross looks up, quickly
dries her hands with a rag. Another knock.

MS. PROSS

A moment!

(CONTINUED)

She hurries to the door, opens it, revealing Charles.

CHARLES
Good afternoon Ms. Pross.

MS. PROSS
Good afternoon. I'm afraid Ms. Lucie is in the middle of a lesson...

CHARLES
I've actually come to see her father.

39

EXT. MANETTE RESIDENCE - BACK GARDEN - DAY

39

Dr. Manette is busy trimming the rose bushes as Charles looks on.

DR. MANETTE
And how is Tellson's treating you?

CHARLES
Very well. I was recently promoted to Chief Clerk of French Affairs.

DR. MANETTE
Congratulations. Much deserved, I'm sure.

CHARLES
Thank you. But I'm taking a brief leave of absence actually.

DR. MANETTE
For what reason, may I ask?

CHARLES
That's what I've come to discuss.

Dr. Manette stops and turns to him.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
I hope this doesn't come as a surprise to you sir, but I...well I...

He looks over at the house. We can see Lucie teaching her class through the window. She looks over to them and smiles, then continues teaching.

(CONTINUED)

DR. MANETTE
(standing)
I see.

CHARLES
You know what I am about to ask?

DR. MANETTE
It comes as no surprise at all.
You and my daughter have courted
for quite some time.

CHARLES
Dr. Manette - I love your
daughter. I know how important
she is to you, and you to her. I
have no intention of diluting that
bond. I hope only that I might
join it.

DR. MANETTE
Have you spoken to Lucie?

CHARLES
I have not, nor know what her
reply would be. But should she
say yes, I ask for your blessing.

Dr. Manette takes this in. We can see that he is torn.
He says the next few words with difficulty.

DR. MANETTE
Lucie's happiness is my own. You
have my blessing if she consents.

CHARLES
(elated)
Oh thank you Dr. Manette! Thank
you!

DR. MANETTE
When do you plan on...?

CHARLES
After I return from France. I
must attend to some family
business there. Which is the
second matter I must discuss with
you...

DR. MANETTE
Yes...?

CHARLES

(carefully)

You know me as Charles Darnay. I assumed that name when I decided to start anew in England. I did so to distance myself from the noble line from which I was born, a noble line which has proved itself ignoble in practice. My true name is Charles Everemonde.

DR. MANETTE

(retreating into himself)

Everemonde...

The gaunt, menacing face of a NOBLEMAN.

CUT BACK TO:

CHARLES

Yes Everemonde But in name only. And my trip to France is to sever myself from that name once and for all. When I return, I shall ask Lucie to be my wife.

A YOUNG WOMAN in bed, feverish and screaming.

CUT BACK TO:

CHARLES

Are you alright, Dr. Manette?

DR. MANETTE

(recovering)

Yes...I'm fine.

CHARLES

Please - do not think less of me for keeping this secret from you until now. I did because I sought a new life, and with you and Lucie I have found it.

DR. MANETTE

Yes Charles, I understand completely. Go to France.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

DR. MANETTE (CONT'D)
 Do what you must. You still have
 my blessing.

42 INT. MANETTE RESIDENCE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 42

Lucie is setting the table. Ms. Pross enters with a tray
 of food.

MS. PROSS
 Dr. Manette?! Dinner is served!

LUCIE
 I'll get him.

CUT TO:

43 THE STAIRS 43

Lucie makes her way up the stairs with a candle.

LUCIE
 Father...?

As she gets higher, she can hear her father's voice and
 strange sounds coming from the bedroom?

LUCIE (CONT'D)
 (more concerned)
 Father?

The sounds grow more intense. She begins to hurry up the
 steps.

CUT TO:

44 DR. MANETTE'S BEDROOM 44

Lucie flings open the door to see a disheveled Dr.
 Manette on the ground, pounding his fist against the
 floor.

DR. MANETTE
 Everemonde!....Everemonde!...

She rushes to his side, trying to sit him up. He's
 sobbing uncontrollably.

LUCIE
 MISS PROSS!!!

45

EXT. OLD BAILEY STEPS - MORNING

45

From a distance we see Sydney and Stryver conversing with a GENTLEMAN. The Gentleman hands Stryver a folded piece of paper. He then shakes hands with Stryver and Sydney respectively.

46

EXT. LONDON STREET - A LITTLE LATER

46

Sydney and Stryver make their way down a bustling street.

STRYVER

If you keep winning like this Sydney, I may be tempted to make you partner.

SYDNEY

And would that entail a greater share of the income?

STRYVER

Greater income, yes. But with it - greater responsibility.

SYDNEY

I like the first half of that equation. The second half is far less appealing.

STRYVER

Speaking of income, would you take this cheque to Tellson's and deposit it in our account?

(hands him the folded piece of paper)

I'll meet you at the office.

Stryver parts ways with him.

STRYVER (CONT'D)

(as he goes, teasing)
And Sydney, try not to gamble all our earnings away before you get to the bank.

47

INT. TELLSON'S BANK

47

A drab, serious hall of finance populated by equally drab and serious clerks. Sydney approaches a TELLER.

(CONTINUED)

TELLER
May I help you sir?

SYDNEY
I'd like to make a deposit.

VOICE (O.S.)
Mr. Carton...

Sydney turns to see Mr. Lorry approaching him.

SYDNEY
Mr. Lorry.

LORRY
(as they shake)
A pleasure to see you here.
Business is well I presume?

SYDNEY
Indeed.
(holding up the
cheque)
The spoils of victory.

LORRY
Very good, very good.

SYDNEY
And how are you?

LORRY
In glum spirits I'm afraid. Have
you heard about Doctor Manette?

Sydney perks up, suddenly interested.

SYDNEY
No - pray tell.

LORRY
He's had a terrible attack of the
nerves.

STRYVER
An attack...?

LORRY
For over a week now he's been
afflicted, and it shows no signs
of relenting. I try to stop by
when I can, but work at the Bank
has made my visits difficult.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

47

CONTINUED: (2)

58.

47

LORRY (CONT'D)
Poor Miss Manette has had to
suspend her teaching in order to
care for him, and with Mr. Darnay
now in France, there is little
relief for her.

SYDNEY
(abruptly)
Excuse me - I must go.

TELLER
Sir - your deposit...

But Sydney is already halfway to the door.

48

EXT. TELLSON'S BANK - DAY

48

Sydney bursts through the door onto the street. It has
begun to rain. He walks briskly down the street, and
soon his walk turns into a run.

49

INT. FOYER - AFTERNOON

49

TIGHT on the door. We hear a knock.

LUCIE (V.O.)
I'll get it Ms. Pross.

A moment later Lucie enters the frame and opens the door,
revealing Sydney, dripping wet from the rain. We can see
how tired and distraught she is.

LUCIE (CONT'D)
(very surprised)
Mr. Carton...

SYDNEY
May I?

LUCIE
Yes - yes, of course.

And he enters.

50

INT. PARLOR - A LITTLE LATER

50

Sydney and Lucie are seated across from one another.

LUCIE
It happened shortly after Charles
left. I don't know what brought
it on.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LUCIE (CONT'D)
He keeps repeating the same word
over and over - a name I
think...Everemonde.

SYDNEY
And you don't know the meaning of
this name?

LUCIE
When I inquire he starts to shake
and sob. The only thing that
appears to calm him is...

SYDNEY
Yes...?

LUCIE
Is making shoes.

A pause. Lucie seems on the verge of tears herself.

SYDNEY
(gently)
I am not a physician like your
father Ms. Manette, and have no
knowledge of medical matters. But
I do have a talent for getting to
the root of matters. Would you
allow me to speak with him?

The blinds are drawn and the room is dim. Dr. Manette,
his back to us, labors over a work bench - the exact same
one we saw in the garret in Paris. We hear a door creak
open.

SYDNEY (V.O.)
Dr. Manette...?

But Dr. Manette does not turn. Sydney approaches him.
Pulls up a chair and sits.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
That is a fine shoe. It looks
like a lady's slipper.

DR. MANETTE
Yes. It is...

SYDNEY
Do you make it for anyone in
particular?

(CONTINUED)

DR. MANETTE
For my daughter perhaps...

A slight pause. Sydney proceeds with caution.

SYDNEY
Doctor Manette, I am anxious to have your professional opinion, in confidence, on a very serious case.

DR. MANETTE
(turning to him)
It's been a very long time since I practised medicine.

SYDNEY
But your expertise is surely greater than mine.

DR. MANETTE
This is a client of yours?

SYDNEY
You could say that, a very dear client of mine. Pray give me your mind to it, and advise me well for his sake - and above all - his daughter's sake.

DR. MANETTE
(subdued)
If I understand...some mental shock...

SYDNEY
Precisely.

DR. MANETTE
Be explicit. Spare no detail.

SYDNEY
It is the case of an old and a prolonged shock, of great acuteness and severity, to the affections, the feelings, the - as you express it - the mind. It is the case of a shock from which he has long since recovered. But unfortunately, there has been...a slight relapse.

DR. MANETTE
Of how long duration?

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY
Nine days and nights.

DR. MANETTE
How did it show itself?
(looking at his
hands)
In the resumption of some old
pursuit connected with the shock?

SYDNEY
Correct.

DR. MANETTE
I think it probable that the
relapse you have described was not
unforeseen by its subject.

SYDNEY
Might a certain name have sparked
its recurrence?

DR. MANETTE
I think so.

SYDNEY
(very carefully)
And might that name be -
Everemonde?

Dr. Manette retreats into silence.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
(quietly)
Tell me Doctor. What is the
meaning of Everemonde?

A pause. Dr. Manette looks searchingly at Sydney. Then
he speaks.

DR. MANETTE
Many years ago - when I was a
young man such as yourself - I was
walking home to my wife and infant
daughter...

A young Dr. Manette strolls along the banks of the Seine. A carriage comes along from behind at high speed. Dr. Manette steps aside to let it pass. As he does, a head sticks out from the window and calls upon the driver to stop.

(CONTINUED)

The carriage halts as quickly as the driver can rein in the horses. A CLOAKED MAN exit from the carriage and approach.

CLOAKED MAN

You are Doctor Manette?

DR. MANETTE

I am.

CLOAKED MAN

We are told you are the finest surgeon in Paris.

DR. MANETTE

I aspire to be.

CLOAKED MAN

Would you please get in the carriage?

DR. MANETTE

May I ask what for?

CLOAKED MAN

A patient needs your urgent attention.

The carriage speeds through the barrier gate into the countryside beyond.

Dr. Manette sits inside with the two Cloaked Men as the carriage rumbles along.

DR. MANETTE

(looking out the window)

We are leaving the city.

The two men do not respond.

DR. MANETTE (CONT'D)

Where are we going?

The two men remain silent.

55 EXT. LARGE ESTATE - NIGHT 55

The carriage lumbers up a steep hill toward a large manor house which looms over a small village below.

56 EXT. MANOR HOUSE - NIGHT 56

The carriage pulls up to the front steps. The Cloaked Man gets out, followed by Dr. Manette. Faintly we can hear cries from an upstairs room. Dr. Manette looks up a single lit window as they enter the house.

57 INT. THE MANOR HOUSE - FRONT HALL 57

As the Cloaked man leads Dr. Manette up a grand staircase we can hear the cries growing louder.

58 INT. UPPER CHAMBER 58

Upon entering the room, Dr. Manette sees a young woman of great beauty, no older than twenty, feverish and screaming on a bed. Her hair is torn and ragged, and her arms are bound to her sides by handkerchiefs and sashes. Dr. Manette inspects her.

DR. MANETTE
How long has this lasted?

CLOAKED MAN
Since about this hour last night.

DR. MANETTE
I have no provisions.

CLOAKED MAN
There is a case of medicines here.

The Cloaked Man retrieves a case from the closet and presents it to Dr. Manette. Dr. Manette opens the case, rifles through the vials and bottles. Sniffs a few until he finds what he's after. Holds the bottle to the young woman's lips, coaxing her to swallow the dose. But her screams continue.

CLOAKED MAN (CONT'D)
Will it work?

DR. MANETTE
I don't know. I will need to keep an eye on her for a while yet.

(CONTINUED)

CLOAKED MAN
There is another patient.

DR. MANETTE
Is it a pressing case?

CLOAKED MAN
You had better see.

59 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

59

The Cloaked Man leads Dr. Manette through a dim hallway, lit only by his lantern. A BOY of five peaks out from behind a door as they pass, staring at Manette. A NOBLE WOMAN appears behind the Boy, clasping him on the shoulder.

NOBLE WOMAN
Come Charles.

The Woman and Boy disappear into their room, the door closing behind them.

60 INT. STAIRCASE

60

Dr. Manette and the Cloaked Man make their way up a rickety spiral staircase.

61 INT. LOFT

61

The two men enter a low-ceilinged loft. On the far side is a YOUNG MAN - seventeen - lying on a bed of hay and straw. Blood covers his chest. He's dying of a stab wound. Dr. Manette rushes to his side. The young man recoils, covering his wound with his hand.

DR. MANETTE
I am a doctor. Let me examine it.

The boy's hand slides away. Dr. Manette looks at the wound. He turns to Cloaked Man #1.

DR. MANETTE (CONT'D)
Leave us, please. Attend to the
girl.

The Cloaked Man leaves without a word. As his footsteps trail down the stairs, Dr. Manette takes the Young Man's hand.

(CONTINUED)

DR. MANETTE (CONT'D)
The wound is too deep, and you
have lost too much blood...

YOUNG MAN
I will die?

Dr. Manette cannot bring himself to confirm this.

DR. MANETTE
How did this happen?

YOUNG MAN
He did it. The Marquis.

DR. MANETTE
The gentleman who was just here?

YOUNG MAN
Yes.

DR. MANETTE
But why?

YOUNG MAN
Doctor - they are very proud these
Nobles; but we common dogs are
proud too sometimes. We plow
their fields, reap their harvests.
In return they plunder us, outrage
us, beat us, kills us; but we
have a little pride left when we
must. She - have you seen her
Doctor?

DR. MANETTE
I have.

YOUNG MAN
She is my sister. They have had
their shameful ways with our
women, these Nobles, but we have
had good girls among us. She was a
good girl - my sister. Betrothed
to a good young man, a tenant of
his. We were all tenants of
his...

The Young man nearly breaks down, then collects himself,
his eyes filling with rage.

But that does not give him the
right!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: (2)

61

YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)

When I heard he took my sister,
 took her against her will, I could
 not stand for it. I found him, I
 confronted him...

DR. MANETTE

And he drew on you.

YOUNG MAN

With his sword.

DR. MANETTE

(eyes welling with
 tears)

My dear boy...

The Young Man reaches up and grabs Dr. Manette's lapel.

YOUNG MAN

I would have died a thousand times
 over to avenge my sister. Please
 sir, do not let me die in vain.
 Let the Marquis's deed be known.

DR. MANETTE

What is his name?

YOUNG MAN

He is the Marquis...du
 Everemonde...

The Young Man's grip loosens. His hand falls to his
 chest and his eyes draw closed. He is dead.

62 INT. UPPER CHAMBER - MORNING

62

Bright morning light pours in through the window. A
 weary Dr. Manette pulls a sheet over the pale corpse of
 the Young Woman.

63 EXT. MANOR HOUSE - DAY

63

A carriage waits. Dr. Manette exits the house with the
 Cloaked Man.

CLOAKED MAN

The carriage will return you to
 the city.

He opens the door to the carriage. Dr. Manette steps
 inside.

(CONTINUED)

CLOAKED MAN (CONT'D)

Doctor - your reputation is high,
and, as a young man with your
fortune to make, you are probably
mindful of your interest. The
things you have seen here are to
be seen, and not spoken of.

(holding out a
rouleau of gold)

For your troubles.

DR. MANETTE

I cannot accept.

CLOAKED MAN

You must.

He puts the rouleau in Dr. Manette's hand, shuts the door to the carriage and motions to the driver. The carriage pulls away before Dr. Manette can return the rouleau.

The carriage comes to a halt on a busy street. Dr. Manette steps out, goes up to the driver. Hands the rouleau to him.

DR. MANETTE

Please see that this is returned
to the Marquis.

Dr. Manette approaches a clerk at the desk.

DR. MANETTE

(to the clerk)
My name is Dr. Alexandre Manette.
May I please speak to the
minister?

CLERK

Concerning what business?

DR. MANETTE

I have an grave injustice to
report.

66

INT. MINISTER'S OFFICE - LATER

66

Dr. Manette is seated across from a severe looking
MINISTER.

MINISTER

The Marquis du Everemonde is a man
of much influence Dr. Manette.
You understand the enormity of
your allegations...

DR. MANETTE

They are more than allegations
Monsieur Minister. What I say to
you is the truth, witnessed with
my own eyes.

The Minister takes him in for a second. Take a breath.

MINISTER

I greatly appreciate your
frankness Doctor. I shall see
that the matter is investigated
promptly.

67

INT. MANETTE'S LABORATORY - NIGHT

67

Dr. Manette is attending to an elderly patient. A young
boy of ten or eleven barges in.

BOY

There are two gentleman here to
see you Doctor.

DR. MANETTE

Can it wait Ernest?

BOY

I don't think so.

68

INT. RECEPTION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

68

Dr. Manette enters, drying his hands with a towel,
followed by the boy. Two LARGE MEN are waiting for him.

LARGE MAN # 1

Doctor Manette...

DR. MANETTE

Yes...?

(CONTINUED)

68

CONTINUED:

69.

68

The two men dart forward, throwing a hood over Dr. Manette's head and pull him out of the room as he struggles and cries out. The Boy watches helplessly.

69

INT. BASTILLE - NIGHT

69

Dr. Manette is physically thrown into a dank, dark cell by the two men. The heavy door slams heavily behind him.

DR. MANETTE (V.O.)

Over twenty years I spent in that cell - One-hundred Five, North Tower. Not a single visitor, not a single book to occupy my mind. Nothing but the memory of my wife and daughter...

The image of the young Dr. Manette in fine clothes dissolves into the old Dr. Manette, bearded and dressed in rags.

DR. MANETTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But even those memories began to fade over time. When I was finally freed, by my young servant Ernest, who was by then a grown man...

We now see the door swinging open - a reprise of the image from the credit sequence.

DR. MANETTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I was but the shell of a man...

CUT TO:

70

INT. DEFARGE'S WINE SHOP - GARRET

70

Dr. Manette is hunched over a work bench making shoes.

DR. MANETTE (V.O.)

He provided me a work bench, and set me to making shoes. It was all my mind could manage...

CUT BACK TO:

71

INT. MANETTE'S BEDROOM - DUSK - THE PRESENT

71

Dr. Manette sits hunched over the work bench in exactly the same posture as he did in the garret, Sydney seated across from him. The rain has stopped and the daylight seeping through the blinds has reddened to dusk.

DR. MANETTE

It was the only thing that gave me solace, after all those years of solitude. It is the only thing that gives me solace now.

Dr. Manette looks up to Sydney. A moment of silence.

SYDNEY

Does your daughter know all this?

DR. MANETTE

She does not. And she must never know. My past is mine to bear, and it must remain in the past.

SYDNEY

Then let us discuss the future.

DR. MANETTE

Yes - the future.

SYDNEY

(taking the shoe from the work bench)

Might I suggest that by freeing yourself of this work, you will free yourself to enjoy the years to come instead of dwelling in the years you've left behind? There is far more solace to be found in your daughter and your friends than in this work which isolates you from them.

DR. MANETTE

(smiling)

You are a wise man, Mr. Carton.

SYDNEY

Not wise sir. But as a man without family and friends of his own, perhaps I am more inclined to appreciate their value.

72

INT. PARLOR - EVENING

72

Lucie and Ms. Pross sit playing chess. Lucie stares vacantly at the board.

MS. PROSS
It's your move, Ms. Manette.

LUCIE
I can't play - my mind is elsewhere...

They here footfalls coming down the stairs. Lucie stands in anticipation. When her father appears in the doorway, she rushes forward and embraces him.

LUCIE (CONT'D)
Papa!

As they embrace. She sees Sydney making his way down the stairs with the work bench and tools. Ms. Pross enters the foyer and sees too. She rushes up the stairs.

MS. PROSS
Let me help you.

73

EXT. GARDEN - EVENING

73

Ms. Pross holds a lantern as Sydney digs a deep hole in the ground with a shovel.

SYDNEY
There we are. I think that should do it.

Ms. Pross sets down the lantern and helps Sydney lower the work bench and the tools down into the hole. Sydney begins shovel dirt back into the hole.

MS. PROSS
It's a very kind thing you've done for Dr. Manette.

SYDNEY
I didn't do it for his sake.

A slight pause.

MS. PROSS
You know she has been courting with Mr. Darnay, do you not?

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY
So I've heard.

MS. PROSS
And he is only one of many
suitors.

SYDNEY
That doesn't surprise me.

MS. PROSS
I say this not to dismay you Mr.
Carton, only to...to prevent a
broken heart.

SYDNEY
One must have a heart in order for
it to be broken, Ms. Pross.

MS. PROSS
(seeing straight
through him)
What was it that brought you here
today if not your heart? I
believe you have a heart Mr.
Carton. You are simply too proud
to let others hear it beating.

Sydney stops digging and looks up at her. The comment
has struck him to the core. He then lowers his eyes and
resumes digging.

Sydney, jacket and waist-coat slung over his shoulder,
enters the house with the shovel. His shirt is soiled
with dirt. Lucie is waiting for him.

SYDNEY
It's done.

LUCIE
I can't express my thanks.

SYDNEY
None are necessary.
(setting the shovel
down)
I'll be off now.

LUCIE
But your shirt is soiled.

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY
No matter. I have others.

LUCIE
I'm sure my father won't object if
you take one of his.

SYDNEY
Truly...

LUCIE
I insist. It's the least we can
do.

75 INT. MANETTE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

75

Lucie searches through a wardrobe as Sydney waits patiently. She finds a shirt, hands it to Sydney. They lock eyes for a moment. We can see the attraction they have for each other. Lucie - a bit embarrassed by the moment - realizes she's lingering...

LUCIE
I'll let you change.

We follow her out of the room into the hallway. Before she heads down the stairs, she glances back toward the bedroom just as Sydney is closing the door. She averts her eyes then hurries down the stairs.

76 INT. MANETTE HOME - FOYER - NIGHT

76

Fully dressed, Sydney now bids fare well to Lucie at the door.

LUCIE
Will we see you again soon?

SYDNEY
As soon as you like.

LUCIE
(venturing)
Perhaps on Saturday...you could
visit for tea.

SYDNEY
Saturday then.

He bows slightly, then lets himself out. Lucie heads into the front parlor and peaks through the curtain, watching Sydney go as he makes his way down the street.

77

EXT. VERSAILLES GARDENS - MID-DAY

77

Light floods in through the soaring windows, its brightness doubled by the mirrored walls. NOBLES and COURTIERS mingle.

SUPERTITLE: VERSAILLES, FRANCE

Among the Nobles is the MARQUIS D'EVEREMONDE (whom we recognize as an older version the Cloaked Man from Dr. Manette's flashback). He talks to another noble, FOULON, who points out various guests to him.

FOULON

That is Madame De Rivaud...

TIGHT on a middle-aged woman, her face caked with powder, her hair done up in a towering monstrosity. She laughs garrulously before in a group of courtiers, including a plainly dressed man of austere countenance.

FOULON (CONT'D)

She is one of the largest land-owners in the North.

MARQUIS

And who is that she speaks to?

FOULON

Which one?

MARQUIS

The gentleman dressed as though he were a peasant.

FOULON

That man is no peasant. His name is Jefferson I believe - the new ambassador from America.

MARQUIS

So he is a peasant then.

The Marquis and Foulon laugh. They are interrupted by the sound of HORNS.

We CUT TO a pair of TRUMPETERS on either side of a grand door at the end of the hall.

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and Gentlemen! The King and Queen!

(CONTINUED)

All eyes turn to the door as two BUTLERS swing it open, revealing the somewhat plump visage of king LOUIS XVI and his queen, MARIE ANTOINETTE. The guests reverently bow in unison as Louis and Marie take several steps forward, the Butlers closing the door behind them.

LOUIS

We offer our sincerest welcome to all of you - the Farmers-General, assembled notables and other dignitaries. Please join us in the garden for some food and refreshment. Our kitchen has prepared a modest meal to quench your appetite.

Louis gestures to his right. An attendant opens a side door, out of which walks a procession of butlers carrying a dozen roasted pigs hanging from spits.

Gasps of delight and applause from all the guests.

In a cavernous, windowless kitchen billowing with steam, scores of cooks sweat over their work. A butcher and his assistants pin down a squealing hog on a table.

BUTCHER

You would have thought twelve was enough. Their bellies are bottomless I tell you.

And the Butcher slits the hog's throat, silencing it. Blood gushes onto the table and floor.

The notables eat at table over a hundred feet long, chattering away, devouring their heaps of pork. An idyll of manicured greenery surrounds them. In the background two servers bring the newly roasted pig to the table.

An attendant approaches the Marquis, who is seated between Foulon and Madame De Rivaud.

ATTENDANT

Monsieur de Marquis?

The Marquis turns. The attendant hands him a note.

80

EXT. SAINT ANTOINE - AFTERNOON

80

In stark contrast to the finery and exuberance of Versailles, the filthy, narrow street in front of Defarge's Wine Shop teems with peasants and common laborers.

Gaspard, a carpenter - his hands and shirt covered with sawdust - crosses the street with his son JACQUE, a boy of six or seven.

SUPERTITLE: SAINT ANTOINE, PARIS

81

INT. PARIS - DEFARGE'S WINE SHOP - AFTERNOON

81

Mr. Defarge is polishing the bar. Mme. Defarge sits at a table nearby, methodically knitting. Gaspard enters with his son.

GASPARD

A pint of red.

MR. DEFARGE

(to the Boy)

And for you, sir?

The Boy giggles, hides his face.

GASPARD

A glass of water, please.

MR. DEFARGE

Certainly.

Mr. Defarge goes to fetch the drinks, sets them down on the bar. During which, the BOY looks over to Mme. Defarge and her quilt. He approaches her.

BOY

What are you knitting Madame?

MME. DEFARGE

A puzzle.

BOY

A puzzle?

She holds the quilt out to him.

MME. DEFARGE

You see these symbols? Each one stands for a letter.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MME. DEFARGE (CONT'D)
Put all the letters together and
they spell a name.

BOY
There must be many names here.

MME. DEFARGE
There are.

BOY
Whose names?

MME. DEFARGE
Can I tell you a secret?

BOY
Yes.

MME. DEFARGE
But you must promise never to tell
a soul.

BOY
I promise.

MME. DEFARGE
(leaning into him)
People like you and me - like your
father and like my husband - we
have a great many enemies. We
must keep a record of these
enemies so that one day - justice
will be brought to them. But
until that day comes, we must
never speak of it, for these
enemies are very evil - more evil
than the most frightening monster
you can possibly imagine - and if
they hear you speak of their
evilness...they will gobble you
up!

She reaches out and tickles the boy. He writhes with
laughter. In the background, we see the Gaspard finish
the last of his drink.

GASPARD
(to the Boy)
Come Jacque, drink your water.

MME. DEFARGE
Go.

The Boy runs up to his father, who hands him a glass. He
guzzles it down. The Carpenter lays a coin on the bar.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED: (2)

GASPARD

Merci.

And taking his son by the hand, they exit onto the street.

82 EXT. WINE SHOP - MOMENTS LATER

As Gaspard leads his son across the narrow street, The Boy sees an OLD MAN feeding a dog a small piece of meat.

BOY

Can I go pet him father?

GASPARD

Be quick. We have to get back to work.

The Boy rushes back across the street toward the dog. As he does, a carriage comes speeding from around the bend. The BOY looks over to the stampeding sound of hooves, frozen in his tracks as the carriage descends upon him.

TIGHT on the carriage DRIVER as he yanks on the reins with all his might. We hear the horses neighing loudly.

CUT TO:

83 INT. THE WINE SHOP

Screams from outside. Everyone looks up, including Mr. and Mme. Defarge. They run outside, followed by the others.

CUT BACK TO:

84 THE STREET

The mangled corpse of the BOY lays in a pool of blood beneath one of the carriage wheels. Gaspard kneels beside his dead son, wailing...

GASPARD

No no no no no no....!

Shocked bystanders form a circle around the carriage, including Mr. And Mme. Defarge. As Gaspard lifts his son from the ground, cradling him in his arms, a head pops out from the window of the carriage...

(CONTINUED)

It is an older version of the Cloaked Man we saw during Mr. Manette's flashback - the MARQUIS D'EVEREMONDE.

MARQUIS

What has gone wrong?

A submissive BYSTANDER speaks up...

BYSTANDER

Pardon, Monsieur the Marquis...it is a child.

MARQUIS

(looking to the Carpenter)

Why does he make that abominable noise? Is the child his?

BYSTANDER

It is Monsieur.

Gaspard turns to the Marquis with a great deal of fury, holding out his son.

GASPARD

He is killed! He is dead!

The crowd closes in. TIGHT on the hatred in Mr. Defarge and Mme. Defarge's eyes. Calmly the Marquis takes out his purse.

MARQUIS

It is extraordinary to me that you cannot take care of yourselves and your children. One or the other of you is always in the way. How do I know what injury you have done to my horses? Here - take this.

He tosses a gold coin at Gaspard. It falls with a jangle on the cobblestones.

MARQUIS (CONT'D)

(to the driver)

Go on!

And within an instant, the carriage begins to take off, the crowd parting to make way for it. Gaspard watches the carriage go, his face a landscape of despair and rage.

(CONTINUED)

MR. DEFARGE
(to the Bystander)
Who was that man?

BYSTANDER
A Noble of great repute.

MR. DEFARGE
His name?

BYSTANDER
Monsieur the Marquis du Everemonde

85 INT. WINE SHOP - NIGHT

85

Mme. Defarge is at her table, once again knitting, now by candlelight. As she pulls a thread taut she whispers herself...

MME. DEFARGE
Monsieur the Marquis d'Everemonde.

86 EXT. MANETTE RESIDENCE - BACK GARDEN - DAY

86

Sydney, Lucie and Dr. Manette are having tea in the garden. Dr. Manette looks in good health, is even chipper.

DR. MANETTE
It's taken me quite a while to get used to tea. But I must say, I quite enjoy the ritual of it.

SYDNEY
Tea and Commerce - the only two rituals we English understand.

LUCIE
And law, of course.

SYDNEY
A distant third.

LUCIE
Well without it we'd all be savages, wouldn't we - even with our tea and commerce.

SYDNEY
The law emboldens savagery Miss Manette, not the other way around.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

The only difference between us and savages is that we clobber men with quills instead of clubs.

LUCIE

A strange perspective coming from a barrister.

SYDNEY

Not at all. There is much profit to be made in men's savagery.

Ms. Pross approaches to clear the tea service.

DR. MANETTE

Let me help you Miss Pross.

MS. PROSS

Rest yourself. I can manage.

DR. MANETTE

Nonsense. These bones aren't so old they can't lift a simple tray.

Dr. Manette and Ms. Pross exit into the house, leaving Sydney and Lucie alone.

LUCIE

You are quite the contrarian Mr. Carton.

SYDNEY

You think?

LUCIE

I sense you rather enjoy shocking people.

SYDNEY

Would it be a shock if I were to ask you to join me this evening at the theatre?

LUCIE

The theatre...?

SYDNEY

So it is a shock.

LUCIE

No - I just...I didn't take you as a patron of the arts.

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY

Perhaps "patron" and "arts" are not the best words. I have a different sort of theatre in mind - a sort you may be unfamiliar with, a sort you may find, well, more shocking than even me.

Lucie smiles, intrigued. We can see that she's aroused by the notion.

A Curtain rises to much applause and hooting. Act One of *The Beggar's Opera* begins. PEACHUM sits at a table with a large stack of accounts before him. An OLD WOMAN clothed in gray begins to sing.

OLD WOMAN

(sings)
 THROUGH ALL THE EMPLOYMENT IN
 LIFE,
 EACH NEIGHBOR ABUSES HIS BROTHER,
 WHORE AND ROGUE THEY CALL HUSBAND
 AND WIFE;
 ALL PROFESSIONS BE-ROGUE ONE
 ANOTHER;
 THE PRIEST CALLS A LAWYER A CHEAT,
 THE LAWYER BE-KNAVES THE DIVINE,
 AND THE STATESMAN, BECAUSE HE'S SO
 GREAT,
 THINKS HIS TRADE AS HONEST AS
 MINE.

(now spoken in prose)
 A lawyer is an honest employment;
 so is mine. Like me, too, he acts
 in a double capacity, both against
 rogues and for 'em. For 'tis
 fitting that we should protect and
 encourage cheats, since we live by
 'em.

As the play continues, Sydney leads Lucie through a packed and raucous crowd of commoners. Sydney and Lucie take two empty seats. He leans into her.

SYDNEY

It's better down here, up close,
 instead of up there...

(CONTINUED)

88

CONTINUED:

83.

88

He points to the upper balcony and boxes filled with rich folks.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
...with the peacocks.

They both turn their attention to the stage.

89

THE STAGE

89

A later scene in the play - POLLY and MACHEATH...

MACHEATH

(singing)
PRETTY POLLY, SAY,
WHEN I WAS AWAY,
DID YOUR FANCY NEVER STRAY
TO SOME NEW LOVER?

POLLY

(singing)
WITHOUT DISGUISE
HEAVING SIGHS,
DOTING EYES,
MY CONSTANT EYES,
DOTING EYES,
MY CONSTANT HEART DISCOVER...

CUT TO:

90

THE STALLS

90

Sydney watching Lucie. She's smiling broadly, transfixed by the play.

POLLY (O.S.)
FONDLY LET ME LOL!

MACHEATH (O.S.)
O PRETTY, PRETTY POLL.

CUT BACK TO:

91

THE STAGE

91

A later scene. MACHEATH, somberly...

MACHEATH
(singing)
BUT NOW AGAIN MY SPIRITS SINK;
I'LL RAISE THEM HIGH WITH WINE
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED:

MACHEATH (CONT'D)

(drinks a glass of
wine)

BUT VALOUR THE STRONGER GROWS,
THE STRONGER LIQUOR WE'RE
DRINKING;
AND HOW CAN WE FEEL OUR WOES
WHEN WE'VE LOST THE TROUBLE OF
THINKING?

(drinks)

IF THUS --- A MAN CAN DIE
MUCH BOLDER WITH BRANDY.

(pours a bumper of
brandy)

SO I DRINK OFF THIS BUMPER --- AND
NOW I CAN STAND THE TEST.
AND MY COMRADES SHALL SEE, THAT I
DIE AS BRAVE AS THE BEST.

CUT TO:

92 THE STALLS

Lucie steals a glance at Sydney, who has a melancholy
look about him. He's truly moved by the scene.

CUT TO:

93 THE STAGE

The final flourish. The entire COMPANY on stage.

MACHEATH

(singing)

BUT THINK OF THIS MAXIM, AND PUT
OFF YOUR SORROW,
THE WRETCH OF TO-DAY, MAY BE HAPPY
TO-MORROW.

CHORUS

BUT THINK OF THIS MAXIM, AND PUT
OFF YOUR SORROW,
THE WRETCH OF TO-DAY, MAY BE HAPPY
TO-MORROW.

The curtain falls. Thunderous applause, whistles and
hollers. The curtain rises. The applause crescendoes as
the actors take their bow. Lucie is clapping harder than
anyone.

94

EXT. LONDON STREET - LATER

94

Lucie and Sydney walk, her arm looped through his. The street is teaming with weekend revelers - drunkards, dandies, loose women, etc.

LUCIE

It was wonderful.

SYDNEY

Not Hayden or Mozart...

LUCIE

No - but much more...invigorating.

A DRUNKARD chases a WHORE across the street, both of them laughing hysterically as the Drunkard tries to grab the Whore's ass. Lucie recoils a bit as they dart past, then laughs. Sydney smiles.

SYDNEY

This isn't a side of London you're accustomed to.

LUCIE

I scarcely knew it existed until tonight.

SYDNEY

Well I'm honored to be your guide.

LUCIE

The honor is all mine Mr. Carton.

They continue down the street.

95

EXT. MANETTE HOME - FRONT STEPS - NIGHT

95

They are across the street from the house, still arm in arm...

SYDNEY ,

I shall part with you here. We wouldn't want to encourage rumors.

LUCIE

Certainly not.

SYDNEY

Good night then, Ms. Manette. This evening has been...a supreme pleasure.

(CONTINUED)

And he starts to go.

LUCIE

Mr. Carton?

He turns.

LUCIE (CONT'D)

Last week, when you spoke to my father...what did you say to him?

SYDNEY

I rather listened than spoke.

LUCIE

And did he tell you the meaning of Everemonde...?

A slight pause as Sydney considers this.

SYDNEY

He did not.

LUCIE

(disappointed)

I see.

SYDNEY

But you needn't worry yourself Miss Manette. I believe those troubles are behind him.

LUCIE

I shall hope so.

Sydney moves in a step nearer.

SYDNEY

You are his salvation. Stay close by his side and even his most malevolent demons will keep at bay.

It's clear he's talking as much about himself as Dr. Manette. Sydney fears he's shown his cards. He lowers his eyes.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Forgive me if I presume to know your father better than you do yourself.

(CONTINUED)

LUCIE

No Mr. Carton - I find your words
reassuring.

SYDNEY

I should find it reassuring were
you to call me Sydney rather than
Mr. Carton.

LUCIE

Only if you call me Lucie.

Sydney smiles.

SYDNEY

Perhaps we can go to the theatre
again next week.

LUCIE

Or tomorrow...unless that's too
soon.

SYDNEY

I should say it isn't soon enough.

He bows, and takes off abruptly, quitting while he's
ahead. TIGHT on Lucie's face, a mixture of danger and
excitement flickering in her eyes, before she turns and
hurries back toward the house.

Lucie sitting on the edge of her bed in a nightgown, Ms.
Pross brushing her hair. As she does, Lucie hums one of
the tunes from the opera.

MS. PROSS

I smell trouble, Ms. Manette.

LUCIE

How do you mean?

MS. PROSS

You know how I mean.

LUCIE

(turning to her)
He's quite harmless.

MS. PROSS

Show me a man who's harmless and
I'll show you a thief who's
honest.

(CONTINUED)

LUCIE

Thank you Ms. Pross. That will be all.

Ms. Pross puts down the brush and exits, leaving Lucie to herself. Lucie slips beneath the covers. Leans over and blows out the lone candle lighting the room.

97 EXT. WHEAT FIELD - NIGHT

97

98 TIGHT on a burning torch.

98

The camera WIDENS to reveal GABELLE - a lean middle-aged man, chief attendant to the Marquis - standing atop a cart before a gathering of VILLAGERS.

In the background, LABORERS load bushels of wheat into carts.

Holding the torch in one hand, GABELLE reads from a parchment.

GABELLE

By declaration of the Marquis - all harvests are to be confiscated for proper storage until such time as they may be sold...

Gabelle says these words with difficulty, clearly empathizing with the silent villagers who stare at him with hatred.

GABELLE (CONT'D)

Compensation will be ten sous per acre -

Outcries from the crowd...

VILLAGERS

Ten sous! --- That is nothing! --- How are we to eat?!

Gabelle presses on.

GABELLE

Ten sous - delivered in coin on the first of next month...

98

EXT. MANOR HOUSE - LIBRARY - NIGHT

98

A carriage lumbers to the crest of the hill and pulls up in front of the house.

(CONTINUED)

Gabelle is waiting at the front door. At the bottom of the hill below we can see the fields roaring with flames. Gabelle opens the door to the carriage. The Marquis steps out.

MARQUIS

Has he arrived?

GABELLE

Yes, my lord. You'll find him in the Library.

Charles stands at the window. We CUT TO his POV to see the laborers loading the carts at the bottom of the hill below.

A BUTLER swings the doors open. The Marquis enters. Charles turns.

CHARLES

(icily)
Father

MARQUIS

My dear son.

The Marquis waves the Butler off. The Butler exits, closing the doors as he goes. The Marquis settles in a gilded chair. Holds out his ring for Charles to kiss it.

CHARLES

I shall your shake your hand if you like, but I shall not kiss it.

The Marquis lowers his hand, hiding his anger with a cool smile. He takes a snuff box from a side table, taps a helping onto the back of his hand and takes a snort.

MARQUIS

I received your letter.

CHARLES

And your thoughts?

MARQUIS

I found it childish and insolent, just as I find your behavior now.

CHARLES

To be expected, I suppose.

MARQUIS

It was my hope - perhaps a
misplaced one - that you had
traveled here to beg forgiveness.

Charles looks back out the window.

CHARLES

It is you who should beg
forgiveness, father - from those
whose livelihood you are
destroying, whose stomachs you
starve...

The Marquis laughs.

MARQUIS

Bread is not for eating, Charles -
it's for selling. We who grow it
cannot allow its price to drop.

CHARLES

We who grow it?
(pointing out the
window)
It is they who grow it. But it is
only you who profits.

MARQUIS

As it should be. Such is the
natural order of things.

CHARLES

What is natural about one man
enslaving another?

MARQUIS

Repression is the only lasting
philosophy. The dark deference of
fear and slavery, my dear boy,
will keep the dogs obedient to the
whip as long as this roof shuts
out the sky.

CHARLES

That is your philosophy sir, not
mine.

MARQUIS

It's yours by the very virtue of
your title.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES

No longer. This property and France are lost to me. I renounce them both.

MARQUIS

And how do you, under your new philosophy, intend to live?

CHARLES

As I have lived these past two years - by working.

MARQUIS

(viciously now)

In England, yes. No less common than the peasants you champion, toiling day to day with a Doctor and his daughter at your side. So commences the new philosophy!

CHARLES

(very deliberately)

I traveled here to relinquish my inheritance, father, and thereby free myself from the Everemonde estate forever. I shall not play a part in your injustice, not even by perpetuating your name.

The Marquis taps another helping of snuff onto his hand. Inhales.

MARQUIS

So be it. I'll have the papers drawn.

He stands, makes his way toward the door. As he goes.

MARQUIS (CONT'D)

Expect them to be ready by morning. After you sign, you needn't trouble yourself with saying good-bye.

Charles stands over a writing desk. Gabelle lays several parchments down before him. Charles dips a quill in an ink pot.

GABELLE

I plead with you sir to
reconsider.

CHARLES

I've traveled too far in body and
conscience to turn back now.

GABELLE

But think of your future.

CHARLES

My future is precisely what I'm
thinking of.

GABELLE

Please Charles...

Charles tenderly places a hand on Gabelle's shoulder.

CHARLES

You raised me Gabelle. You showed
me kindness and love. You have
proved much more a father than my
father himself ever proved to be.
I regret that this estrangement
may estrange me from you - but it
must be done.

Gabelle nods solemnly. Charles bends down and signs the
parchment.

From a distance we see Lucie walking arm in arm with
Sydney. Sydney says something to her. She laughs. They
pause at the side of the bridge.

CLOSE on the two of them as they look down the river at
all the various ships at dock.

LUCIE

It seems like just yesterday my
father and I were on one of those
ships.

(she turns to him
smiling)

And you were there too - stealing
my tea!

SYDNEY

You leave someone out.

(CONTINUED)

LUCIE
Mr. Lorry?

SYDNEY
Mr. Darnay.

Lucie's eyes darken for a moment.

LUCIE
Yes - I met Charles on that voyage
too.

SYDNEY
When does he return from France?

LUCIE
I don't know. Any day now I'd
imagine. It's been almost a
month.

A pause. Then Sydney ventures, searching...

SYDNEY
Are you fond of him?

LUCIE
(avoiding)
My duty is first to my father,
then to my school.

SYDNEY
That's not what I asked.

LUCIE
I don't see how it's any concern
of yours.

SYDNEY
Isn't it?

Lucie turns back out toward the river, unsure of herself.
This is uncharted territory.

LUCIE
You must have known a great many
women - given your lifestyle?

SYDNEY
I will not lie. I have - in the
past - been...acquainted with my
fair share. But none of them I've
truly known. Not until now.

(CONTINUED)

LUCIE
I see...

SYDNEY
Does that offend you?

LUCIE
I should hope I'm not the sort of
person who finds honesty
offensive.

Sydney decides to throw caution to the wind. He places a hand on Lucie's chin, turns her face toward his.

SYDNEY
That lifestyle to which you refer
is done. These past few weeks -
the theatre, our conversations,
walks such as this - they have
changed me. Not a drop of wine
I've had. Not once have I dallied
with coarse company. All my
former vices combined are no match
against...

LUCIE
(hypnotized)
Against what...?

He leans in and kisses Lucie full on the mouth. She gives in for a moment, then pulls back.

LUCIE (CONT'D)
We are in public.

SYDNEY
What have we to hide?

She stares into his eyes, then returns the kiss. It's both tender and passionate. Eventually they part. Lucie looks away.

LUCIE
I should return to my father.

And with that the magic is broken.

SYDNEY
I'll walk you home.

LUCIE
No - I can walk myself. You must
have a great deal of work to do.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED: (3)

95.

Sydney gets the hint.

SYDNEY

Yes - a great deal.

LUCIE

Good day, then.

Taking her wrist before she can go.

SYDNEY

May I see you later this week?

LUCIE

It might be best if we...
(slipping her wrist
out of his hand)
...if we didn't see each other -
for a short time at least.

SYDNEY

(dejected)
Of course.

Lucie hurries toward's the far end of the bridge. Sydney watches her go as she disappears into the crowd, then briskly begins to walk in the opposite direction.

102 INT. TAVERN - DAY

102

A bustling, vulgar hole-in-the-wall. Sydney elbows his way through a cordon of drunkards and slams a coin on the bar.

SYDNEY

A pint of wine.

BARTENDER

Red or white?

SYDNEY

It doesn't matter.

103 EXT. LONDON STREET - DUSK

103

Sydney totters drunkenly along the street - oblivious to everything. He moves at regular speed, but the sky and the street around him speeds past from dusk to night, night to day, and back to night again.

104

EXT. A DIFFERENT STREET - NIGHT

104

A slovenly, pale Sydney passes by plump HARLOT leaning provocatively against a wall.

HARLOT

You look like you could use some company, sweetheart.

He turns to look at her.

105

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - NIGHT

105

The Harlot leads Sydney up a rickety set of stairs by the hand. He stumbles a bit. She helps him to his feet, then continues leading him up the stairs.

106

INT. HARLOT'S ROOM - NIGHT

106

They enter a cramped, low-ceilinged room furnished only by a cheap bed. She closes the door, looks to Sydney.

HARLOT

Help me with my corset, dear.

She turns her back to him. Sydney clumsily begins to undo the laces.

SYDNEY

Tell me something - do you ever wish to marry?

The Harlot laughs.

HARLOT

Are you proposing?

SYDNEY

I'm simply curious.

HARLOT

What if I told you I was married?

SYDNEY

I wouldn't believe you.

HARLOT

Why not?

SYDNEY

You don't seem the sort.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

97.

106

She turns to him, her corset falling to the floor.

HARLOT

Even women such as myself have a
right to happiness, do we not?

Sydney's taken aback by this, then smiles weakly.

SYDNEY

Quite.

He fishes out a few coins from his jacket. Places them
in her hand.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Here, it's all I've got.

He starts for to the door.

HARLOT

You're leaving me alone?

SYDNEY

I leave you alone with your
happiness.

And he exits.

107 EXT. WHARF- NIGHT

107

Charles disembarks from a packet-ship with a brisk and
purposeful step.

108 EXT. MANETTE HOME - DAY

108

Looking in through a window into the parlor we see
Charles and Lucie seated across from one another.
Charles speaks while Lucie listens intently.

109 INT. MANETTE HOME - STAIRS - DAY

109

We are with Ms. Pross at the top of the first landing,
looking down from her POV at Charles and Lucie in the
foyer. The two are bidding farewell. Charles kisses
Lucie's hand, then leaves. As Lucie shuts the door
behind him Ms. Pross scurries up the stairs before Lucie
spots her spying.

110

INT. LUCIE'S BEDROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

110

Ms. Pross is turning over the sheets on Lucie's bed.
Lucie enters.

MS. PROSS
(fishing)
So Mr. Darnay has returned.

LUCIE
Yes. Just last night.

Lucie sits down on the edge of the bed. She looks
despondent. Ms. Pross sits beside her.

MS. PROSS
What's wrong, my ladybird?

LUCIE
He proposed to me.

MS. PROSS
Oh Lucie - that's wonderful!

LUCIE
Yes, I suppose it is.

MS. PROSS
So why the long face?

LUCIE
I told him I need some time before
I can answer.

Ms. Pross looks alarmed. Takes her hand.

MS. PROSS
Do you love him?

LUCIE
Dearly.

A pause. Ms. Pross anticipates Lucie's dilemma.

MS. PROSS
But you love another too.

LUCIE
(painfully)
I don't know...

MS. PROSS
Mr. Carton I presume.

(CONTINUED)

Lucie does not answer. Ms. Pross presses.

MS. PROSS (CONT'D)
Has Mr. Carton proposed?

LUCIE
No.

MS. PROSS
Do you have any reason to suspect
he will?

LUCIE
None. Except that...I know he
loves me.

MS. PROSS
Has he said so?

LUCIE
He hasn't, not with words...

Ms. Pross ruminates on this. Lucie turns to her.

LUCIE (CONT'D)
What do you think of him?

MS. PROSS
I don't hold the same prejudice
against Mr. Carton that the world
does. Rough around the edges -
yes - but deep down there's
something genuine, something pure.
I'm as fond of him as I am of Mr.
Darnay. Maybe even more so. And
yet, if you love both, and one has
proposed while the other has
not...well - you can't let Mr.
Darnay's proposal go unanswered.
Nor can you wait for a proposal
from Mr. Carton that may never
come.

LUCIE
So you think I should marry
Charles.

MS. PROSS
I think that if you are lucky
enough to find love, you should
grab hold of it.

LUCIE
But which love?

(CONTINUED)

MS. PROSS
Whichever is within reach. And all things being equal, whichever will ensure the most prosperous future. You have built a life for yourself from nearly nothing - your school, this house, you have supported me. And now you must support your father. Mr. Darnay is a responsible, intelligent man of business, whereas Mr. Carton...

Lucie lays her head on Ms. Pross's shoulder.

LUCIE
I'm so confused.

MS. PROSS
I know my darling. I know you are.

111 INT. / EXT. STRYVER'S LAW OFFICE - DAY

111

Stryver is talking to a respectable CLIENT.

STRYVER
...Estate papers, yes, but we could also represent the legal interests of your enterprise. Might I suggest a retainership, in which case -

The front door opens. Stryver and the Client look over to see a disheveled Sydney, his clothes spoiled, his hair awry.

STRYVER (CONT'D)
(to the Client)
A moment, sir.

Stryver rushes over to Sydney and leads him outside.

STRYVER (CONT'D)
What on earth has happened to you?
Are you drunk?

SYDNEY
I have been, but not now. Now I am sober as death.

(CONTINUED)

111 CONTINUED:

101.

111

STRYVER

Sober or not - how dare you show up to the office in this condition.

SYDNEY

I must ask a favor Stryver.

STRYVER

You disappear for three days, not a word, neglecting your duties, and you have the gall to ask a favor of me?

SYDNEY

I need to borrow some money.

STRYVER

You're shameless!

SYDNEY

Please...I'm begging you.

STRYVER

So you can drink and gamble and whore it away?

SYDNEY

No Stryver...the opposite.

112 INT. BARBER - DAY

112

Sydney sits as a BARBER shaves his lathered face.

113 INT. TAILOR SHOP - DAY

113

Sydney stands before a mirror in a brand new suit as a TAILOR looks expectantly at him. Sydney turns to the Tailor and nods.

114 INT. JEWELRY SHOP - DAY

114

Sydney stands before a glass display box. Points to something outside. The CLERK pulls out a ring and shows it to Sydney.

115 EXT. / INT. MANETTE HOME - DUSK

115

Sydney, freshly shaven and attired, approaches the steps to the house. Pauses.

(CONTINUED)

Takes a breath, then bounds up the steps and knocks on the door. A moment later Ms. Pross opens the door and is surprised to see him.

MS. PROSS

Mr. Carton.

SYDNEY

(urgently)

Is Ms. Manette at home?

Panic in Ms. Pross's eyes. Dr. Manette's voice calls out from within.

DR. MANETTE

Who is it Ms. Pross?

MS. PROSS

It's Mr. Carton, sir.

Through the door, we can see Dr. Manette appear in the foyer.

DR. MANETTE

Come in Mr. Carton! Come in!

Sydney enters, Dr. Manette clasps him on the shoulder.

DR. MANETTE (CONT'D)

I'm so glad you're here. We're in the midst of a celebration!

He leads Sydney into the parlor where Lucie, Lorry and Charles each hold flutes of champagne.

DR. MANETTE (CONT'D)

Lucie and Charles have just gotten engaged.

The news hits Sydney like a brick. He looks over to Lucie, who is mortified by his arrival.

Sydney quickly hides the pain that is leveling him inside. He approaches Charles, offering his hand.

SYDNEY

Congratulations sir.

CHARLES

(shaking his hand)

Thank you.

Sydney then goes over to Lucie and bows with bended knee. He takes her hand and kisses it.

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY

And congratulations to you Madame.

As he kisses her hand, he looks up to her. We can see the longing in both their faces, tinged by the impossibility of their predicament.

DR. MANETTE

May I get you a glass of champagne
Mr. Carton?

SYDNEY

No - I just happened to be in the area and thought I'd stop by to say a brief hello. I really must be back to work.

CHARLES

Surely you can stay for a little while.

MR. LORRY

Yes - I don't see how Mr. Stryver could object to you sharing our joy for an hour or so.

SYDNEY

I truly wish I could...
(directly to Lucie)
But I had better not. I'll leave you to your festivities.

He bows, then quickly makes for the door. In the foyer, Ms. Pross grabs him by the wrist.

MS. PROSS

(in hushed tones,
sympathetically)
Mr. Carton - I tried to warn you...

SYDNEY

Indeed you did, Ms. Pross. And I was a fool not to heed your warning.

He places something in her hand.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Give this to Lucie, will you?

And he's out the door.

116 INT. LUCIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

116

Lucie stands before the mirror looking at the engagement ring on her finger. She picks up a small velvet box from the dresser. Opens in. Inside is another ring, far more beautiful than one she is wearing. She gasps, distraught, then snaps the box shut.

117 INT. STRYVER'S LAW OFFICE - DAY

117

Stryver is alone at work. Lucie enters through the front door. Stryver stands.

STRYVER

Ms. Manette...

LUCIE

Is Sydney here?

STRYVER

I'm afraid he isn't.

LUCIE

Do you know where I might find him?

STRYVER

On a boat I presume.

LUCIE

A boat?

Stryver picks up a piece of parchment.

STRYVER

This was tacked to the door when I arrived...

He hands the parchment to Lucie. As she reads we hear Sydney's voice...

SYDNEY (V.O.)

I'm sorry to leave you in the lurch old friend, but I can no longer fathom a life in London, or in all of England for that matter...

CUT TO:

118 EXT. A PACKET SHIP - DAY

118

Sydney leans on the gunwale, peering at the ocean as the boat plows through choppy waters.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

...I have left for France to start my life anew. You are probably better off without me, for my vices only show signs of entrenching themselves rather than retreating. I thank you for the money you lent me, and promise to repay you as soon as I am able...

CUT BACK TO:

119 STRYVER'S LAW OFFICE

119

Lucie reads the last of the note.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

With sincere admiration and greatest affection...Sydney.

She puts the parchment down, stricken by the news.

LUCIE

My god...

STRYVER

I take it you declined his proposal.

LUCIE

(inwardly)

He never got the chance to make one.

She pulls out the velvet case.

LUCIE (CONT'D)

Did you lend him the money for this?

STRYVER

It's money he well deserved I'd say - for all his talent and...

(now moved himself)

...for his friendship.

Holding out the box.

(CONTINUED)

LUCIE

Will you make sure it finds its
way back to him?

STRYVER

I will not.

LUCIE

I cannot keep it.

STRYVER

Nor can I. So put it someplace
dear, if only for remembrance. We
both owe the man at least as much.

120

INT. PARIS BROTHEL - NIGHT

120

It's the same brothel as we saw him at earlier in the
film, with the same sordid array of prostitutes milling
about. Sydney enters, and is immediately spotted by
Madame Boulet.

MADAME BOULET

Mr. Carton, it's been years. So
good to see you again.

She gestures to several lounging prostitutes.

MADAME BOULET (CONT'D)

Please - take your pick.

SYDNEY

I'm not here for that.

MADAME BOULET

Then what can you possibly be here
for?

SYDNEY

Lodgings, if you can spare them.

MADAME BOULET

I'm not in that line of business
Monsieur Carton.

SYDNEY

I beg of you Madame - for an old
and loyal customer...

121 INT. BROTHEL - UPSTAIRS ROOM - NIGHT 121

A small room, sparsely furnished, with a single window
Sydney sets down a trunk.

MADAME BOULET
It's small, but it's all I can
manage.

SYDNEY
More than enough. Thank you.

MADAME BOULET
I'll leave you be, then.

And she exits, shutting the door behind her. Sydney
glances about, having a look at his new surroundings.

122 EXT. MANETTE HOME - GARDEN - DAY 122

Lucie and Charles stand before a minister - Charles in
the finest suit, Lucie in a flowing, brilliant white
gown. Dr. Manette, Lorry, Ms. Pross are the only
witnesses.

Charles slips a wedding band onto Lucie's hand. As he
lifts her veil to kiss her, the camera PANS UP into an
immaculate blue sky.

DISSOLVE TO:

123 A DIFFERENT SKY 123

...Filled with gray, low-hanging clouds. The camera PANS
BACK DOWN to...

124 EXT. DEFARGE'S WINE SHOP - DAY 124

A narrow street in Saint-Antoine.

SUPERTITLE: PARIS, JULY 1789

TWO MEN are unloading casks of wine from a cart as Mr.
Defarge looks on. When the TWO MEN turn, we see that one
of them is Sydney, dressed in common laborers clothes.
Like everyone around him he wears pants instead of
culottes.

125

INT. WINE SHOP - A LITTLE LATER

125

Sydney and the SECOND MAN place the cask upright behind the bar. Defarge places drops several coins in the Second Man's hand, who in turn drops a few in Sydney's hand.

SECOND MAN

There's your share.

SYDNEY

Merci.

SECOND MAN

See you tomorrow at dawn.

And the Second Man exits. Sydney saddles up to the bar, sets one of his coins down. He is dripping with sweat and has a look of humility about him.

SYDNEY

A pint please.

Mr. Defarge fetches the wine.

MR. DEFARGE

I swear Sydney, you alone must drink half the wine you deliver.

SYDNEY

What the difference whether I carry it on my back or in my belly?

Mr. Defarge chuckles. MARAT - a dark, jittery man with matted hair - at the end of the bar raises his head, looks over. He's clearly very drunk.

MARAT

(to Sydney)

You're not French...You speak with an accent.

Sydney ignores him.

MARAT (CONT'D)

Hey. You...

Sydney continues to ignore him.

MARAT (CONT'D)

You! Foreigner! I'm talking to you!

(CONTINUED)

MR. DEFARGE
That's enough...

MARAT
Only citizens are allowed in here!

From the other side of the shop comes a voice in Sydney's defense. It is Gaspard.

GASPARD
This man earns his living as we do - with honest work. That makes him as much a citizen as any of us, whether he be born in France or no.

MARAT
But is he willing to shed his blood when the time comes? That's the only mark of a true citizen.

Marat stands and takes a step toward Sydney.

MARAT (CONT'D)
(to Sydney)
Are you foreigner? Are you willing to shed your blood?

Sydney lowers his eyes.

MARAT (CONT'D)
I didn't think so.

Marat spits in Sydney's direction.

DEFARGE
(to Marat)
Out with you! Go!

Marat spits in Mr. Defarge's direction too, then stumbles out.

DEFARGE
(to Sydney)
I'm sorry. That is Marat. He often causes trouble...

SYDNEY
No matter...

(CONTINUED)

And Sydney glumly takes a sip of his wine. Looks behind him and locks eyes with Gaspard. Raises his glass in thanks. Gaspard raises his in return.

CUT TO:

The shop is nearly empty except for a few late night hangers-on. Among them is Sydney, now drunk, sitting at a table with an equally drunk Gaspard. Mr. Defarge is beginning to put chairs up on tables. Mme. Defarge is knitting in the corner.

GASPARD

(on a rant)

All this talk, talk, talk - the rattling of sabers, the call for constitutions, for a National Assembly - all of it is meaningless to me. Will the National Assembly avenge my son? No - they will write a petition, they will make speeches, they will negotiate. And none of it will bring my son back to life.

SYDNEY

How long ago was he killed?

GASPARD

Four years now.

(then sadly)

He would've been eleven...

SYDNEY

It was four years ago I moved here from England.

GASPARD

Why did you abandon your country?

SYDNEY

It's not my country I abandoned, it was...

(changing course, he smiles broadly)

No. Enough despair for tonight. Would you like another glass?

GASPARD

I would.

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY

Monsieur Defarge, two more pints
for me and Monsieur -

But before he can finish a YOUNG MAN wearing a tri-color
cockade bursts through the door.

YOUNG MAN

(frantically)
We have muskets! Quick! Come and
arm yourselves!

All the men in the wine-shop look at each other. Mr.
Defarge springs into action.

DEFARGE

Let's go men! On your feet! The
day has arrived!

All the men begin to file out into the street. Sydney
stands follows them out to see what's happening.

Gaspard is left alone with Mme. Defarge. She walks over
to Gaspard with her quilt and places shoulder.

MME. DEFARGE

Did you hear him? The day has
come. Your day has come.

She points to a row of symbols on the quilt.

MME. DEFARGE (CONT'D)

The Marquis D'Everemonde.

Sydney watches in a daze as...

Dozens of men are gathered around a cart filled with
muskets. The YOUNG MAN is handing out arms to any man
who will take one.

A YOUNG WOMAN is pinning tri-color cockades on everyone's
hats. She gets to Sydney, pins a cockade to his. He
lets her, too stunned and drunk to object.

A crowd of thousands makes their way through the streets.
Many carry muskets. The rest brandish weapons of every
sort - cudgels, sticks, hoes, knives, etc. They sing
patriotic songs as they march. Drums beat.

(CONTINUED)

112.

128

CONTINUED:

128

The toscin rings. In the distance we see the looming towers of the Bastille.

129

EXT. BASTILLE - DAY

129

Armed troops can be seen atop of the towers, the muzzles of their guns pointing down at the thronging crowd below. People are yelling...

THE CROWD

Down with the Bastille! Out with the troops!

TWO CITIZENS leap from atop a nearby roof onto the rampart wall, one with an axe, the other with a sledge hammer. They race across the rampart, jump down onto the other side of the moat and began to hack way at the pulleys of the draw bridges.

A sudden rattle of chains. The drawbridges began to quiver, then fall with a whoosh, slamming onto the ground.

The CROWD begins to surge into the first courtyard. As they do, musket fire begins to rain down from the towers. Some of the rebels return fire, others take covers.

TIGHT on Defarge as he aims a musket and fires upwards.

Screams from the wounded waft through the smoke.

130

WITHIN THE ONE OF THE TOWERS

130

Swiss TROOPS level a cannon at the crowd. They prep and load it with a buck-shot ball. Musket fire, shouts and screams continue outside.

THE COURTYARD

The tip of the cannon peaks out from one of the towers. A CITIZEN points up.

CITIZEN

Cannon! Cannon!

Just then a thunderous BOOM from the cannon above. Half a dozen citizens are blown off their feet. The screams and shouts intensify.

131 EXT. SAINT ANTOINE - STREET

131

Sydney makes his way down the street, hardly believing what he sees. People are rushing back and forth, but mostly in the direction of the Bastille. In the distance we can see smoke rising from the towers and hear the distant cannon-booms and musket fire from the battle.

CUT BACK TO:

THE COURTYARD

As the fighting continues, the main drawbridge falls. A massive cheer of victory from the crowd. They rush into the inner sanctum of the prison itself.

INSIDE THE BASTILLE

And angry mob snatches weapons from the surrendered troops. One CITIZEN knocks a trooper to the ground and kicks him as others join in.

Elsewhere Citizens rush through the corridors. One of them is Mr. Defarge who, having acquired the gaoler's keys, unlocks a cell, swings the door open.

DEFARGE

Come patriot! Join your brothers!
You are free!

A bewildered PRISONER staggers out into the corridor. Mr. Defarge rushes to the next cell, unlocks it. Swings the door open.

DEFARGE (CONT'D)

Come patriot!...

This SECOND PRISONER also stumbles out. Mr. Defarge pauses when he sees the number on the door...105.

Defarge enters the cell, has a look around as footsteps and shouts echo throughout the halls outside. He sees some initials etched into the wall..."A. M."

TIGHT on his hand as he traces the letters.

DEFARGE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Alexandre Manette...

132

INT. BROTHEL - SYDNEY'S GARRET - DUSK

132

Sydney looks down from his window, the Madame at his side. From their POV we see joyous crowds with torches and weapons raised in the air, celebrating their victory. French troops, bound and bloodied, are paraded down the street, jeers and stones hurled at them as they pass. Behind them, two decapitated heads, staked on pikes, are raised above the procession. The blood-lust is palpable.

SYDNEY

It's anarchy...

MADAME BOULET

Some would call it justice.

SYDNEY

You call that justice?

TIGHT on the two heads on pikes.

MADAME BOULET

I conduct business of the flesh,
not of the mind. Who am I to say
what justice is?

The Madame pulls the curtains shut.

DISSOLVE TO:

133

INT. MANOR HOUSE - MARQUIS'S BEDROOM NIGHT

133

The curtains to the bed are yanked violently open, revealing Gaspard with a dagger.

GASPARD

Marquis D'Everemonde.

We CUT TO the Marquis, wigless, lying in his bed. He wakes at the sound of his name, sees Gaspard standing over him. Gasps in horror. Shields himself with his hands.

We CUT BACK TO Gaspard, raising the dagger high.

134

EXT. MANOR HOUSE - NIGHT

134

Angry PEASANTS are surrounding the house. One throws a rock through a window. Several others are pounding on the door.

135 INT. FRONT HALL - NIGHT

135

Gabelle and several servants are moving a heavy table in front of the door, attempting to block it.

136 OUTSIDE

136

One of the Peasants throws a torch through the broken window. We see flames instantly combust within.

INSIDE

Flames are leaping everywhere. Holding a handkerchief to his mouth, Gabelle heads upstairs through the swirling smoke.

MARQUIS'S BEDROOM

Coughing, Gabelle makes his way into the room.

GABELLE

My lord!

No answer. Gabelle moves nearer to the bed. Cries out with disbelief.

We CUT TO the Marquis, a dagger in his chest, his eyes wide open, his mouth agape, blood trickling down his chin. Placed squarely on his forehead is a single gold coin.

137 EXT. MANOR HOUSE

137

As flames envelop the whole of the house now, Gabelle leaps from a second story window. Injures his leg, but manages to get up. Tries to flee, but his leg slows him down. Half a dozen peasants quickly catch up and apprehend him.

138 INT. LA FORCE PRISON - CELL BLOCK - NIGHT

138

A WARDER tosses Gabelle into large, low vaulted chamber, dismal and dimly lit. The cell is crowded with emaciated ARISTOCRATS of both sexes. They are shells of their former selves - almost ghosts -dazed, wigless, their once-fine clothes torn and faded.

The Warder yells out to all of them...

(CONTINUED)

WARDER

Tomorrow your beloved King will die. And all of you are soon to join him.

And he slams the steel door shut with a clang.

139

EXT. PLACE DE LA REVOLUTION - MORNING

139

Under a gray sky tens of thousands are gathered around a scaffold, atop which stands a guillotine. Revolutionary National Guardsmen line an open path to the center of the square. A light rain is falling as a green carriage makes its way down the path. Onlookers jeer as it passes. Drummers tap out a processional beat.

TIGHT on a LOUIS CAPET (dethroned King of France), as he climbs down from the carriage. Three GUARDS approach him and begin to take off his clothes. He shakes them off, removing his greatcoat, his hat, and his shirt on his own.

The guards move to tie his hands. Again he tries to shake them off, but this time they don't submit. One of the guards speaks up - we recognize him as the Butcher from the kitchen at Versailles.

GUARD

It must be done Your Majesty. No use fighting it.

Louis stills himself as the Guards proceed. His hands tied, the Guards now cut his hair so as to bare his neck. This accomplished, they escort him up the scaffold where the Executioner and his assistants are waiting.

With a firm, stoic step, Louis walks across the platform and makes a sign to the drummers to cease their tapping.

With a loud voice he speaks out to the crowd...

LOUIS

I forgive those who are guilty of my death, and I pray God that the blood you about to shed may never be required of France. I only sanctioned upon compulsion of the -

But before he can finish an officer on horseback shouts a command to the drummers. They immediately resume beating their drums with a thunderous roll, drowning Louis out.

(CONTINUED)

The Executioner and his assistants lead Louis to the guillotine and lay him face down. Without any hesitation, the Executioner pulls the rope and the blade swooshes down. Louis's head rolls into a basket. His blood sprays into the air. The drumming abruptly halts.

A moment of total silence as the crowd stares in awe. Then, with a swelling uproar, a massive cheer rises above the square.

Charles sits at his desk, working. Mr. Lorry approaches him with a note.

LORRY

We must talk, Charles.

CHARLES

More news from France?

LORRY

They have killed their King. The entire nation is peril.

CHARLES

I assume the French office is no more.

LORRY

Evacuated.

CHARLES

Am I still employed?

LORRY

Of course, Charles. There is plenty for you to do here. But that is the least of your worries...

(looking down at the note)

This arrived today from Paris - with one of our bankers who fled here to England.

He hands the note to Charles.

Lucie, Ms. Pross and Dr. Manette are seated in the parlor. Charles paces back and forth.

(CONTINUED)

LUCIE
You cannot go, Charles. It's far
too dangerous.

CHARLES
Gabelle was like a father to me.
Now he languishes in prison with
no one to help but myself. If I
don't attempt to get him released
who knows what fate might befall
him? My actual father's death
means nothing to me. But I could
not live with myself if Gabelle
were to perish because of my
inaction.

DR. MANETTE
They will look upon you as a
traitor for having abandoned your
country.

CHARLES
A risk I must take.

LUCIE
(standing)
No Charles! I won't allow it.

Just then, Alexander, a small boy just over three years
old, peeks into the parlor wearing a night gown.

ALEXANDER
Mama?

Everyone turns.

ALEXANDER (CONT'D)
I can't sleep.

Charles and Lucie lie in bed, Alexander fast asleep
between them. Lucie strokes Alexander's hair. They
speak in hushed tones.

CHARLES
There is no more discussing it. I
leave tomorrow.

A pause as Lucie takes this in.

LUCIE
If you go, we all go.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES

Absolutely not.

LUCIE

I was separated from my father for twenty years. I'll not be separated from my husband, or allow our child to be separated from his father.

CHARLES

And what sort of father would I be if I were to place my family in such danger?

LUCIE

A far better father than one who abandons them.

Charles looks to her. He sees she means business. There's no point in arguing the matter.

Charles, Lucie, Alexander, Dr. Manette and Ms. Pross prepare to board a packet ship. As they do Mr. Lorry comes running down the wharf, lugging a bag.

MR. LORRY

Charles!

They all turn. Mr. Lorry catches up with them, out of breath.

MR. LORRY (CONT'D)

I'll be joining you.

CHARLES

But why...?

LORRY

I'll not have my best employee undertake such a fool-hardy task without proper supervision.

CHARLES

You should really stay...

LORRY

Nonsense. I have invested far too much in this family, and I am not one to neglect my investments.

(CONTINUED)

Charles smiles, warmed by the sentiment.

CHARLES

Here - allow me to take your bag.

He and Charles start up the gangplank, followed by the others. As they all board the ship...

ALEXANDER

Is France far mother?

LUCIE

Yes...it's very far.

ALEXANDER

Does that mean we won't be home for a very long time?

She takes his hand, hiding her fear with a smile.

LUCIE

Let's hope not, dear.

Sydney and a Second Man pull up in a cart laden with wine casks. The shop is bursting with a crowd that spills out from the door onto the street. Sydney hops down from the cart and tries to peer inside. He turns to one of the onlookers.

SYDNEY

What's going on here?

ONLOOKERS

A tribunal. They are trying traitors.

Sydney pushes his way through the crowd inside. The shop is packed with CITIZENS. Most of the furniture has been removed save for a single table, behind which sits Mr. Defarge and two others, all three wearing cockaded hats. Half a dozen ARISTOCRATS, hands bound by rope, all badly beaten, stand before the table.

Sydney watches the following...

DEFARGE

(to one of the
Aristocrats)

Monsieur Foulon...

(CONTINUED)

One of the citizens pushes Foulon forward (We recognize him from the banquet at Versailles).

MR. DEFARGE

...You are an aristocrat and thereby accused of high treason. How do you plead?

FOULON

(meekly)
Not guilty.

DEFARGE

And what is your defense?

FOULON

Please...

JUDGE #2

Speak up Monsieur!

FOULON

...some water...

JUDGE #3

He has no defense!

DEFARGE

The accused has no defense. He is thereby found guilty. Take him to La Force until his sentence is determined.

Two Citizens start to drag Follette out of the room. Sydney steps forward to block them.

SYDNEY

Wait...

DEFARGE

Step aside Monsieur Carton.

SYDNEY

Are the accused to be denied representation?

Murmurs among the crowd.

JUDGE #3

If they have not enlisted attorneys, that is their fault, not ours.

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY

I am an attorney. I will represent them.

JUDGE #2

(laughs)

You are a laborer, like us. I have seen you deliver wine to this shop countless times.

SYDNEY

In my former life - in England - I practised the law. And the number of trials in which I have participated far surpasses the number of barrels I have delivered to this shop. Allow me to defend the accused.

CITIZEN #1

The accused are indefensible!

CITIZEN #2

They are enemies of the state!

SYDNEY

And what state are you protecting if not a state of laws?

JUDGE #2

Who is this foreigner, instructing us about our state? He should be tried as an enemy himself!

DEFARGE

No no. Monsieur Carton has a point. Let us try these men properly, so all the world will know that we may be common, but we are also civilized.

CITIZEN #3

Put it to a vote.

DEFARGE

All those in favor?

Mr. Defarge raises his hand. Taking his cue, several others follow suit, then finally, a majority of the rest.

DEFARGE

It's settled then. But Monsieur Carton, there is no pay for your services.

(CONTINUED)

144 CONTINUED: (3)

123.

144

SYDNEY
None required, Monsieur Defarge.

DEFARGE
You have five minutes to confer
with the defendant. Then the
trial will resume.

145 INT. CARRIAGE - NIGHT

145

Lucie, Charles et al are within. As the carriage rumbles
along.

MS. PROSS
Bon soo-wah Mon-sewer.

DR. MANETTE
Bon soir, Monsieur.

MR. PROSS
Bon soir, Mon-sewer.

DR. MANETTE
Monsieur.

MS. PROSS
Monsieur...

DR. MANETTE
Better.

146 EXT. INVALIDE GATE - PARIS -NIGHT

146

A carriage pulls up to the gate. A CITIZEN-GUARD with a
musket raises his hand. The carriage comes to a halt.
The CITIZEN-GUARD peers inside.

CITIZEN-GUARD
Papers?

Charles fishes out some papers from a valise, hands them
to the Guard. The Guard glances at them, then looks up
to Charles suspiciously.

CITIZEN-GUARD (CONT'D)
Charles Darnay?

CHARLES
That is I.

CITIZEN-GUARD
These say you come from England.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES
Yes sir, that is correct.

CITIZEN-GUARD
And why were you in England?

CHARLES
To retrieve my mother and
father...

(gesturing Dr.
Manette and Ms.
Pross)

They were exiled by the King for
condemning the monarchy. But now
that the revolution has begun,
they wished to return.

DR. MANETTE
Bon soir.

MS. PROSS
Bon soir, Monsieur.

CHARLES
(gestures to Lucie
and Alexander)
My wife and child joined me on the
journey.

GUARD
(pointing to Mr.
Lorry)
And who are you?

CHARLES
My uncle, who also joined us. But
he is deaf.

Mr. Lorry touches his ears and smiles back to the Guard.
The Guard looks them all over, then passes the papers
back to Charles. He waves at the driver to proceed. The
carriage lumbers through the gate.

The carriage pulls up in front of an austere building
with the sign "BANQUE DE TELLSON" writ large above the
door. All of the windows are dark, some of them smashed.

148

INT. TELLSON'S BANK - PARIS OFFICE - NIGHT

148

Black. A large door creaks open, revealing Mr. Lorry and the others. Mr. Lorry leads the way as they all enter. His single lantern reveals an office in disarray - tables turned over, papers scattered everywhere.

LORRY

Ransacked...

(to Charles)

Shut the door.

Charles does so.

LORRY (CONT'D)

It may prove uncomfortable, but we can stay here until we find better accommodation.

149

INT. CRAMPED PRINTING SHOP - NIGHT

149

The room is dimly lit and filled with clutter. Marat labors over his printing-press, rolling out single-sheets pamphlets. He takes a look at one, holding it up to a candle.

TIGHT on the sheet. Its masthead reads "Amis du Peuple" and immediately beneath it is a large headline which reads: SANG! (blood).

Satisfied, Marat returns to the press and continues to roll out the sheets.

150

INT. LA FORCE PRISON - DAY

150

A new tribunal has been convened. Although larger and more official looking than the tribunal at the wine shop, it still has a mob-fueled unruly nature to its proceedings.

Marat, with ink-stained clothes and fingers, hands out his pamphlets to the onlookers. As he does...

An aristocratic woman - MADAME DE RIVAUD - dressed in silk finery, stands before the JUDGES, one of whom is Mr. Defarge. (We recognize Mme. De Rivaud from the banquet at Versailles). Sydney makes an argument on the her behalf.

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY

A man - or woman for that matter - cannot be convicted on simple hearsay alone. There is no documented evidence of the crimes for which she is accused. I thereby appeal to the tribunal's mercy and sense of reason.

DEFARGE

Is that all Monsieur Carton?

SYDNEY

Yes. The defense rests.

The Judges confer for a moment, then...

DEFARGE

The accused is found guilty. Her punishment is death. Guards...

Several Citizens take hold of the Mme. De Rivaud and begin to drag her off as she struggles and sobs. Sydney watches dejectedly, knowing there is nothing he can do.

JUDGE #2

Who is next?

WARDER

(looking at a list)
That is all the prisoners for today.

DEFARGE

So be it. The tribunal will reconvene tomorrow at noon.

He pounds a staff against the ground. The crowd begins to disperse. Sydney makes his way to door, his head hung low. Just as he's about to exit he hears...

VOICE (O.S.)

Mr. Carton...?

Sydney looks up and is surprised to see Charles entering the room.

SYDNEY

My God - what are you doing here?

CHARLES

I was about to ask the same of you.

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY

I've been representing the prisoners, though to little avail. Twenty-three trials we held today, twenty-three convictions. It's a farce.

CHARLES

Have you come across a prisoner by the name of Gabelle?

SYDNEY

No - who is Gabelle?

CHARLES

The man who raised me.

SYDNEY

Your father...?

CHARLES

Not in blood. But in the eyes of God - yes.

(pulls out a parchment)

I have a letter saying he's being held in this prison. I hope to retrieve him. Can you help?

Sydney hesitates a moment, then...

SYDNEY

Come with me.

CUT TO:

A dank, dark hallway lined with cells. The moans of prisoners echo along the walls. Charles and Sydney stand before a Warder who pages through several sheets of lists.

WARDER

Gabelle you say?

CHARLES

Yes.

WARDER

No prisoners by that name...

(then finding it)

Oh wait - here he is.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

151 CONTINUED:

151

WARDER (CONT'D)

Gabelle...Chief Attendant to the
Marquis D'Everemonde...

At hearing "Everemonde" Sydney can barely contain his surprise. The Warder eyes Charles warily.

WARDER (CONT'D)

Why do you ask of this man?

Sydney steps in.

SYDNEY

Monsieur Darnay was wronged by the Marquis. He has come to testify against Gabelle. We simply wish to know if he is on your roll.

The Warder looks back down at the list.

WARDER

Monsieur Gabelle was indeed a prisoner here, but he died of illness a week ago.

Charles gasps. He cannot hold back his tears.

WARDER (CONT'D)

(to Charles)

I thought this man was your enemy...

SYDNEY

He weeps for joy, sir. He weeps for joy...

And before Charles gives himself away completely, Sydney takes him by the shoulder and begins to lead him out of the prison.

152 INT / EXT. LA FORCE PRISON - DAY

152

Sydney and Charles make their way up a spiraling stairwell. Charles sadness has already begun to transform into anger.

CHARLES

My father dug his own grave, but Gabelle - he didn't deserve such a fate.

SYDNEY

Even if he were alive, there is nothing you could have done.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES
I could have tried.

SYDNEY
You would have tried and failed.
He would have been convicted and
put to death no matter what you
did. What is one man against
hundreds? Against thousands?

As they exit the prison they see a large crowd gathered in the courtyard. The crowd forms a circle around Mme. De Rivaud, who has been brought out for execution. Most of her hair has been chopped off. As several citizens hold her down, others rip the clothes off her body. Half-naked, she screams in fear and humiliation. Onlookers cheer and laugh.

The EXECUTIONER stands before her with a sword. He turns to the crowd.

EXECUTIONER
Should I give her one last go of
it before she meets her maker?!

The crowd cheers in approval. The Executioner unbuckles his pants.

EXECUTIONER (CONT'D)
Hold her down!

Several citizens bend her over a chopping block. Her screams grow louder.

Charles, who has been watching with despair, can stand no more.

CHARLES
We cannot allow it.

He steps forward to intervene. Sydney chases after him.

SYDNEY
Don't be a fool!

But Charles has already leapt into the middle of the circle. He pushes the Executioner away just as he's about to mount Mme. De Rivaud.

CHARLES
Have you no shame?!

Silence falls upon the crowd. The Executioner takes a step back.

(CONTINUED)

EXECUTIONER
You interfere with official
patriotic business!

CHARLES
Raping and torturing this woman -
You call that patriotic? Is this
how you baptize a new nation?

He turns to the crowd.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
You have accomplished something no
people in Europe has ever
accomplished. You have freed
yourselves from the savagery of a
King and his nobility. And with
freedom at your fingertips, you
choose to bloody your hands in
this way? To repay their savagery
with your own?

A citizen calls out from the crowd.

CITIZEN
An eye for an eye!

CHARLES
No! You are better than that.
You must respect the rights of
even those who failed to respect
yours. Otherwise you are simply
replacing one form of tyranny with
another.

Marat steps forward from the crowd, points viciously at
Charles.

MARAT
This man is a traitor to the
revolution!

CHARLES
I am a friend of the revolution!

MARAT
He is a friend of the Nobles!

CITIZEN #2
Arrest him!

Shouts of "Arrest him!" ring out among the crowd.
Several Citizens descend upon Charles.

(CONTINUED)

They begin to drag him toward the prison door. Sydney tries to fight through the crowd...

SYDNEY

Charles!...

But he can only get so far. Charles sees him and yells out...

CHARLES

Go to Tellson's. Lucie and her father are there...

And before he can utter another word, he has been whisked inside.

Lucie, Mr. Lorry, Ms. Pross and Alexander have set up camp on the far side of the lobby. Three candles are their only light. The group bites into hard pieces of baguette.

MS. PROSS

I'm sorry the bread is so stale.
It's the best I could find.

ALEXANDER

Should we save some for father?

Lucie looks at Alexander warmly. Breaks her portion in half.

LUCIE

That's a good idea Alexander.
I'll save this piece for him.

A loud knock at the front door. Everyone freezes.

LUCIE (CONT'D)

(whispering)
Maybe it's Charles.

Another loud knock.

LORRY

(whispering)
We mustn't take any chances.
Come, go to the other room.

Mr. Lorry blows out two of the three candles. With the third he shepherds the group into a nearby corridor.

(CONTINUED)

ALEXANDER
It's dark Mama.

LUCIE
Shhhh....

We CUT TO Lorry making his way to the front door as a third loud knock echoes through the lobby.

LORRY
(through the door)
Who knocks?

VOICE (O.S.)
Open up.

LORRY
Charles, is that you?

VOICE (O.S.)
It's Sydney Carton.

Lorry moves a desk out the way that is blocking the door, opens it.

LORRY
(shocked)
Mr. Carton...

SYDNEY
(wasting no breath)
Charles told me that Lucie and her father were here.

LORRY
You've spoken to him?

SYDNEY
Yes. Where are they?

LUCIE'S VOICE (O.S.)
Sydney...?

CUT TO Lucie peering out from the corridor. She and Sydney lock eyes. It's the first time they've seen each other in years. She goes pale. He's speechless. The others emerge from the corridor. When Sydney spots the little boy he snaps back into action.

SYDNEY
Let's go. All of you. It isn't safe here.

154

INT. BROTHEL - SYDNEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

154

Everyone is crammed into the small room. Lucie is beside herself.

LUCIE

But why...?

SYDNEY

Because he tried to save a woman from...

He looks to Alexander, chooses his words carefully.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

...from unspeakable acts.

Madame Boulet appears in the door.

MADAME BOULET

The other rooms are ready.

Ms. Pross realizes Alexander ought not be present for this conversation.

MS. PROSS

(to Alexander)

Come on - we'll put you to bed.

She takes Alexander by the hand, starts to lead him out. He turns to Lucie.

ALEXANDER

Is Papa going to be alright?

SYDNEY

He'll be fine, young man. You needn't worry.

And Ms. Pross takes him out of the room. Sydney shuts the door behind them.

LUCIE

Will he though? Will he be fine?

SYDNEY

The situation is grim. He's accused of being a traitor.

Lucie nearly breaks down, but her strength and resilience keep the tears at bay. She goes to the window, looks out.

(CONTINUED)

LORRY

What can be done? If anything?

SYDNEY

(pacing)

Perhaps - if we have some proof of his patriotism - then I can make a case. If somebody were to speak up for him, somebody whose opinion the tribunal would respect, somebody who...

An idea strikes. He stops cold in his tracks.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Doctor Manette...

Doctor Manette looks up.

DR. MANETTE

Me...?

SYDNEY

You spent twenty years in the Bastille. That will count for something. Your wrongful imprisonment will give you high standing in court.

DR. MANETTE

If you think it will help...

SYDNEY

I believe it may be our only hope.

Lucie turns back and looks to Sydney.

LUCIE

And if it should fail?

Sydney cannot bring himself to answer. Lucie darts out of the room.

DR. MANETTE

(rising)

Lucie...

SYDNEY

No - I'll speak to her.

155 INT. HALLWAY

155

Lucie is at the far end hall, seated on the ground, covering her face with her hands as she sobs. Sydney tentatively approaches, sits down beside her.

SYDNEY

He showed great courage today.

She turns to him fiercely, eyes damp and flashing.

LUCIE

Forgive me if that is of no consolation.

SYDNEY

It should be. While others stood by - others...like myself - your husband did not. He put his own life at risk for another's. I always thought him a man of mere words, but no...it is men like me who hide behind their words. Your husband is much, much more. He is a man of action. Few men are capable of such courage.

LUCIE

And what good is their courage when they are dead?

SYDNEY

He isn't dead yet.

LUCIE

But he will be.

SYDNEY

You don't know that.

LUCIE

I can feel it.

Sydney sees this clearly isn't working. He stands.

SYDNEY

Come - take a walk with me.

LUCIE

I'm in no mood.

SYDNEY

Some air will do you good.

(CONTINUED)

She looks up to him - sees the kindness in his eyes.
Decides to give in and takes his hand.

EXT. PARIS STREETS - NIGHT

The two walk, arm in arm. They find themselves on a bridge traversing the Seine.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
Do you remember how we used to
walk together, all those years
ago?

LUCIE
Not so many years I think.

SYDNEY
But enough. Much has happened
since.

LUCIE
I suppose much has...

SYDNEY
What is his name? Your son?

LUCIE
Alexander.

SYDNEY
After his grandfather.

LUCIE
Yes.

SYDNEY
He's a handsome boy.

LUCIE
After his papa.

A pause.

SYDNEY
I've often wondered what it would
be like to have a child of my own.

LUCIE
You have time yet.

SYDNEY
No - such a thing was never meant
to be.

(CONTINUED)

LUCIE

Was it never?

SYDNEY

Once perhaps, or so I thought.
But I thought wrong.

LUCIE

I still have the ring.

Sydney stops, looks to her. We can see the pain and longing in his face.

LUCIE (CONT'D)

Back home. I've kept it safe.
And from time to time I take it out and I...I also wonder.

Sydney turns out to the water.

SYDNEY

You mustn't do that. You mustn't wonder.

LUCIE

You do.

SYDNEY

That's different.

LUCIE

Is it?

SYDNEY

You have everything. A father, a good husband, a healthy son. You have a home - you have your school - you have a life. Wondering is for those of us who haven't such blessings.

(beat)

It was unfair of me to leave that ring for you.

LUCIE

Had I known I might have -

SYDNEY

(sternly)

Don't you dare say it.

LUCIE

Sydney...

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY

No.

They stare intently at one another.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Tell me you've been happy.

Tears well up in Lucie's eyes. As they begin to fall...

LUCIE

I have been very happy.

Sydney wipes away her tears.

SYDNEY

You'll return to that happiness
soon enough. I give you my word.

She embraces him. He gently kisses her forehead. She looks up, doing her best to smile.

LUCIE

It's so quiet here. You'd hardly
know a revolution goes on all
around us.

SYDNEY

Even the revolution must sleep.
But we should go - it'll wake up
soon enough.

They let go of each other. She places her arm in his.
The two make their way back across the bridge.

The once towering prison is now halfway demolished,
slowly being brought to the ground stone by stone.
Workers stand atop what's left of the edifice, prying
away the masonry and dropping it over the edge into the
moat below.

A LABORER dislodges a stone with a crow-bar. Behind it
he finds a folded parchment. He opens it and takes a
look.

We CUT TO another part of the prison, where Mme. Defarge
is working. The Laborer scrambles toward her.

LABORER

Madame Defarge!

(CONTINUED)

MME. DEFARGE

(looking up)

What is it?

The Laborer hands her the parchment.

LABORER

Something for your husband...

Alexander is still asleep in bed. Lucie is preparing to leave. A light knock. Sydney cracks the door.

SYDNEY

It's time.

LUCIE

I'll be right out.

Sydney shuts the door.

PROSS

Perhaps I should stay here with Alexander.

LUCIE

Yes, that's probably for the best.

PROSS

My prayers are with you my dear.

LUCIE

Don't pray for me. Pray for Charles.

PROSS

I'll pray for us all.

(beat)

Go. You mustn't be late.

Once again, Mr. Defarge presides over the tribunal with the other judges. A larger crowd than usual has assembled to watch, including Lucie, Lorry and Dr. Manette. Sydney stands for the defense.

DEFARGE

Charles Darnay.

(CONTINUED)

A guard pushes Charles forward. He's pale and gaunt. Looks over to Lucie, who is shaken by his appearance.

DEFARGE (CONT'D)

You are accused of being an emigrant and an enemy of the people. How do you plead?

CHARLES

Not Guilty.

MR. DEFARGE

So be it. The prosecution may begin.

The Public Prosecutor - a wiry and stern looking man - steps forward.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR

(to Charles)

sir, yesterday afternoon you came to this very building inquiring about a prisoner by the name of Gabelle, did you not?

CHARLES

Yes.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR

Why did you ask for him?

Charles hesitates, looks over to Sydney. The Prosecutor presses on.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR (CONT'D)

Why did you ask for Gabelle?!

CHARLES

He was a friend.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR

But that is not what you told the Warder, is it? You told him Gabelle was your enemy.

CHARLES

I admit...in that particular instance...I did not tell the truth.

Murmurs from the crowd.

(CONTINUED)

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR
But why Monsieur Darnay? What
were you hiding?

Charles does not respond.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR (CONT'D)
Your given name is Charles - that
we know. But according to my
records the Marquis D'Everemonde -
to whom Gabelle was employed - had
a son named Charles. Could it be
that your name is not Charles
Darnay, but in fact Charles
D'Everemonde?

Louder murmurs from the crowd.

CHARLES
(meekly)
Yes, I was born with the name of
Everemonde.

More murmurs. Gaspard yells out from the crowd.

GASPARD
It was the Marquis D'Everemonde
who killed my child!

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR
Everemonde! And you are his son -
heir to his estate, and
accordingly - Enemy of the people!

CHARLES
No! I am not his heir! I signed
away those rights four years ago,
and in so doing severed myself
from the name of Everemonde and
any claim to nobility.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR
Where are those documents now?

CHARLES
Burned I would presume, along with
my father's house.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR
And how are we to believe a man
whom we know to be a liar?

Sydney steps forward.

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY
Monsieur Defarge...

The crowd looks to Sydney.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
Might I present a true patriot - a
man who spent twenty years
unjustly imprisoned in the
Bastille. He can vouch for the
honesty of the accused.

MR. DEFARGE
Who is this patriot?

SYDNEY
Dr. Alexandre Manette.

Dr. Manette steps forward. Mr. Defarge is shocked to see him.

JUDGE #2
What proof have we that this man
was imprisoned as you say?

SYDNEY
Monsieur Defarge himself is proof.

Gasps from the crowd.

MR. DEFARGE
(shaken)
It is true. I was his assistant
as a boy, watched when he was
taken. Twenty years later I freed
the doctor myself and gave him
lodging...I can attest to his
patriotism.

DR. MANETTE
And I can attest to Monsieur
Darnay's.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR
Monsieur Everemonde.

DR. MANETTE
Whatever you wish to call him. To
me he is not a name, but simply my
son-in-law, a good husband to my
daughter...

(he gestures to
Lucie)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DR. MANETTE (CONT'D)

...And a good father to my grandchild. The same deep love he harbors for them he harbors for this country. In England he was tried for being a friend to France, tried by the very sort of aristocrats you claim him to be. Often I have heard him speak about a new France, one ruled by the people instead of a King.

(to the crowd)
This man is not your enemy.

Mme. Defarge steps forward.

MME. DEFARGE
You contradict yourself!

The crowd turns to her. She holds a parchment aloft in the air.

MME. DEFARGE (CONT'D)
I have a letter, written in your own blood, found hidden behind a stone in the cell where you suffered for so many years - One Hundred Five, North Tower.

She walks stridently to the tribunal and hands them the letter. The tribunal huddles to read it. Mme. Defarge continues...

MME. DEFARGE
(to Dr. Manette)
It tells of unforgivable crimes the Marquis committed against Dr. Manette and others - rape, murder...

(turning to Doctor Manette)
Your own imprisonment Doctor.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR
(to Dr. Manette)
Did you write that letter?

DR. MANETTE
(the blood draining from his face)
I did, but I - I did so in a different state of mind - when I was -

(CONTINUED)

MME. DEFARGE
And do you remember the final
words you wrote?
(to the tribunal)
Look to the last page.

JUDGE #3

(reads)
"The Marquis D'Everemonde, and all
of his descendants, to the last of
their race, I Alexandre Manette,
unhappy prisoner, in my unbearable
agony, denounce to the times when
all these things shall be answered
for. I denounce them to Heaven
and Earth."

Silence in the stunned room. Then...

MME. DEFARGE
(to Dr. Manette)
You yourself are proof that this
man should die.
(to the crowd)
And let the name of Everemonde die
with him!

Sydney leaps forward, appealing to the tribunal.

SYDNEY
That letter was written many years
ago. Shouldn't Dr. Manette's
present testimony before you now -
in the flesh, in his own voice -
outweigh any words have me have
composed under the duress of
imprisonment?

A moment of silence. Both the tribunal and the crowd
seem torn. Then Marat, who is among the onlookers, cries
out...

MARAT
Kill the Aristocrat!

Suddenly exclamations from all around...

THE CROWD
Kill him! --- Death to the
traitor! --- Be gone with him!

Mr. Defarge pounds a staff against the ground.

(CONTINUED)

DEFARGE
Silence! Order!

The yelling dies down. Mr. Defarge turns to the other judges. They confer for a moment. Then Mr. Defarge looks up. He says the following slowly and sadly, sympathizing with Dr. Manette.

MR. DEFARGE
The Accused is hereby found
guilty. Condemned to death by
guillotine.

Cheers from the crowd as guards lead Charles away.

JUDGE #2
(pounding with the
staff)
This court is adjourned!

Lucie remains motionless in shock. Dr. Manette is withered. Sydney is left standing powerless.

159 INT. BROTHEL - UPSTAIRS ROOM - AFTERNOON

159

Ms. Pross is playing with Alexander on the floor. They have a chess set before them. She holds up a piece.

MS. PROSS
This is a pawn. It can only move one square forward at a time, but if it's on the right square, it can threaten even a king...

The door opens, revealing Lucie. She seems to have aged ten years since the morning.

MS. PROSS (CONT'D)
(to Lucie)
Is he saved?

But before she even finishes the question, she can tell from Lucie's face what the answer is.

160 INT. BROTHEL - SYDNEY'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

160

Sydney, Dr. Manette and Lorry commiserate. Dr. Manette is distraught.

DR. MANETTE
I never imagined the letter would be found...

(CONTINUED)

LORRY

It's not your fault. There's
nothing you could have done.

DR. MANETTE

(to Sydney)
Is there no way to appeal?

SYDNEY

We can try. Perhaps if you and I
go speak to Monsieur Defarge we
can persuade him to reconsider the
case, or at least delay the
sentence.

DR. MANETTE

(rising)
Let us go then.

LORRY

Can I be of help?

SYDNEY

Stay here with Lucie and the
others. We'll return soon.

The street is brimming with patriots. Marat stands on a
wine cask, donning a red hat with its obligatory cockade.
He reads from his own leaflet.

MARAT

"...May all of France bristle with
pikes, bayonets, cannon and
daggers; so that everyone shall be
a soldier! Let the blood of the
traitors flow. That is the only
way to save the country!"

Sydney and Dr. Manette inconspicuously thread their way
past the crowd into the wine shop.

INT. DEFARGE'S WINE SHOP - MOMENTS LATER

Defarge is behind the counter, Mme. Defarge knitting her
quilt a few feet away. Defarge spots Sydney and Dr.
Manette entering. Throughout the following we can hear
Marat orating in the street.

DEFARGE

Dr. Manette, what are you doing
here...?

(CONTINUED)

DR. MANETTE

I've come to beg mercy, for my daughter's husband.

SYDNEY

(gesturing toward Marat outside)

You must put an end to this madness.

Mme. Defarge edges closer, listening in.

DEFARGE

(to Dr. Manette,
forlornly)

I feel for you Doctor, and for your daughter. And yet I can do nothing. It is the will of the people.

SYDNEY

Their will can be swayed. These people respect you. If you speak, they will listen.

Mme. Defarge can stand no more.

MME. DEFARGE

Everemonde dies tomorrow at noon...

(holding up her quilt)

Along with all the others whose names I've listed here.

DEFARGE

But perhaps they are right...Hasn't enough blood been spilled?

MME. DEFARGE

(viciously)

You grow weak.

(to Dr. Manette)

And you Doctor, grow too bold. Be grateful that your daughter has escaped the same fate as her husband, for she too bears the name Everemonde.

Dr. Manette glares back at her with anger and despair.

(CONTINUED)

MME. DEFARGE (CONT'D)
Off with the both of you before I
stitch her name into my quilt as
well.

Sydney lays a hand on Dr. Manette's shoulder.

SYDNEY
Come - we must go.

But just before they get to the door, Dr. Manette turns.

DR. MANETTE
May you be damned as all your
victims have been damned you
wretched woman!

Sydney guides him out before he can say more. Mme. Defarge calls over to a nearby table.

MME. DEFARGE
Gaspard!

Gaspard rises from the table.

MME. DEFARGE (CONT'D)
Follow them. See where they are
staying.

Gaspard nods, and starts for the door.

Sydney and Dr. Manette make their way back to the
brothel.

DR. MANETTE
So there is no hope...

SYDNEY
Until the blade falls, there is
still hope.

DR. MANETTE
My God - I feel as though I am
fast asleep and living through a
nightmare from which I cannot
wake.

An idea strikes Sydney. He stops dead in his tracks.

SYDNEY
Asleep...

(CONTINUED)

DR. MANETTE

What is it?

SYDNEY

(urgently)

I know it has been a long time
since you practiced medicine, but
how well do you recall your craft?

DR. MANETTE

To what end?

SYDNEY

To sleep - a recipe for sleep...

163 INT. PHARMACY - A SHORT WHILE LATER

163

TIGHT on various powders and herbs being ground together
with a mortar and pestle.

CUT TO Sydney and Dr. Manette watching the PHARMACIST at
work.

DR. MANETTE

What do you plan to do with this?

SYDNEY

In due time, Doctor - all will be
known.

164 EXT. BROTHEL - TWILIGHT

164

From a distance we see Sydney and Dr. Manette at the
door. Sydney knocks. A moment later the door opens,
revealing the Madame. She ushers them in, closing the
door behind them.

We CUT TO Gaspard standing in an alcove, and realize we
have been watching from his POV.

165 INT. BROTHEL - UPSTAIRS - NIGHT

165

Lucie, Alexander, Ms. Pross and Lorry are sitting
silently before the fire. Sydney and Dr. Manette come
in. The rest look up expectantly. Dr. Manette shakes
his head. Everyone's eyes darken.

SYDNEY

Mr. Lorry, may I have a moment?

166

INT. BROTHEL - SYDNEY'S ROOM

166

Sydney and Mr. Lorry are alone.

MR. LORRY
(indignantly)
I cannot allow you to do it.

SYDNEY
It's the only way.

MR. LORRY
Well I refuse to play a part.

SYDNEY
Without your help it's impossible.

MR. LORRY
And how am I to live with myself?

SYDNEY
(insistent)
I gave Lucie my word that Charles
would be saved, and I intend to
keep my word. I did not deliver
him from the gallows in England
only to have my work undone in
France.

(imploring)
Please - help me to do this. Help
me - for once in my life - to be a
man of action rather than words.

Lorry takes him in, brow furrowed. He sees that Sydney
is utterly determined.

MR. LORRY
What must I do?

SYDNEY
Arrange a carriage for the others
at once. Then meet me at the
prison by midnight. Bring a
horse.

Lorry nods. Sydney heads for the door.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
And Mr. Lorry - do not speak of
this plan to Lucie or her father.
It is better if they do not know.

167 INT. BROTHEL - UPSTAIRS ROOM - NIGHT 167

Lucie looks out the window. She sees Sydney crossing the street.

168 EXT. STREET - NIGHT 168

Sydney is already a hundred yards away.

LUCIE'S VOICE (O.S.)

Sydney!

He turns back. Lucie comes running up to him.

LUCIE

Where are you going?

SYDNEY

I'm going for a drink.

LUCIE

A drink...?

SYDNEY

Return to your son.

LUCIE

How can you drink at a time like this?

SYDNEY

It's of no concern of yours.

LUCIE

But -

SYDNEY

I have failed you and your father!
Now return to your son and forget me!

Lucie stares at him dumbfounded, her face awash with hurt. She searches Sydney's eyes, but finds nothing. She turns and slowly makes her way back to the brothel. Sydney watches her go for a moment, then turns and continues on his way.

169 INT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT 169

Sydney makes his way down the central aisle toward the altar.

(CONTINUED)

His footsteps echo throughout the vast room, heard by no one or nothing but empty pews - except for an old PRIEST, who emerges out of the shadows with a hand-made pike.

PRIEST

(warily)
Who goes there?

SYDNEY

I do, father.

PRIEST

No others?

SYDNEY

Only I.

PRIEST

To what purpose?

SYDNEY

None - other than to pray perhaps.

The Priest lowers the pike, takes a step closer.

PRIEST

Forgive my caution. These are
dangerous times for the Church.

SYDNEY

You have nothing to fear from me.

PRIEST

May I help you in some way?

SYDNEY

I think I am beyond help.

The Priest comes closer.

PRIEST

No soul is beyond help, my son.

(looks to the
crucifix)

Not in the eyes of the Lord.

(back to Sydney)

Would you like to confess?

SYDNEY

I think...I should just like to
stand here for a moment.

PRIEST

I shall leave you in peace, then.

(CONTINUED)

The Priest starts to go.

SYDNEY

Father...?

The Priest turns.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

You say no soul is beyond help?

PRIEST

Do you not know your scriptures?

SYDNEY

It has been a long time since I've
set foot in a church.

The Priest smiles.

PRIEST

"I am the resurrection and the
Life saith the Lord: he that
believeith in me, though he were
dead, yet shall live: and
whosoever liveth and believeth in
me... "

SYDNEY

"...shall never die."

PRIEST

You recall them.

SYDNEY

Yes. Thank you, father.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Don't give thanks to me. Give
thanks to the Lord. They are His
words, not mine.

They both look up to the cross together.

TIGHT on the bell as it begins to strike a toll of
twelve. We PAN DOWN to the entrance of the cathedral far
below to see Sydney exit the from the front with a brisk
step.

171

INT. THE BROTHEL - PARLOR - NIGHT

171

The room is empty, except for Madame Boulet, who sits alone by a fire, drinking a glass of brandy. We can hear the church bell tolling in the distance.

A BANGING at the door.

Madame Boulet slowly sets down her glass, makes her way to the door as the banging continues. She opens the door, revealing Mme. Defarge and several Citizen Guards.

MME. DEFARGE
We've come for Miss Manette!

MADAME BOULET
(calmly)
There is no one here.

Mme. Defarge and the Citizen Guards push her aside and barge into the room.

172

UPSTAIRS

172

The Citizen Guards bust in one door after another, finding no one.

173

THE PARLOR

173

Mme. Defarge barrels down the stairs in a fury, the Guards close behind her. Madame Boulet stand with her glass of brandy in one hand, the bottle in the other.

MME. DEFARGE
Where have they gone?!

MADAME BOULET
Perhaps some brandy Madame? It will calm your nerves.

Mme. Defarge's eyes go wild. She points to Madame Boulet.

MME. DEFARGE
(to the Guards)
Take her!

174 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

174

A carriage speeds along a dark road. Paris is far behind in the distance.

175 INT. THE CARRIAGE

175

Lucie, Ms. Pross, Dr. Manette and Alexander are within, riding silently. Alexander is asleep on his mother's lap.

176 EXT. LA FORCE PRISON - NIGHT

176

Mr. Lorry waits anxiously across the street from the prison. His horse is tied to a nearby gate. He glances at a pocket-watch. Hears footsteps approaching. Looks up. Sees Sydney emerge from the shadows.

LORRY

(in hushed tones)
I began to fear you wouldn't
arrive.

SYDNEY

The others have gone?

LORRY

They should be halfway to Calais
by now.

Sydney inspects the horse, running his hand along its neck.

SYDNEY

This is a good, strong horse.
You've done well.

(turns to Lorry)
Now listen carefully - once the
deed is done, you must do exactly
what I tell you...

177 EXT. LA FORCE PRISON - FRONT GATE

177

The Warder sits on a bench behind a barred gate, fast asleep. A dim glow appears on his face.

SYDNEY'S VOICE (O.S.)

Citizen!

(CONTINUED)

The Warder snaps awake to see Sydney on the other side of the bars, holding up a lantern. Lorry is beside him, holding a valise.

WARDER

Monsieur Carton...what brings you here at this hour?

SYDNEY

Everemonde is to be executed tomorrow. I have come to collect his last will and testament.

WARDER

The Everemonde estate has been reclaimed for the people. There is no need for a will.

SYDNEY

But the condemned has holdings in England. Would you deprive his wife and child of their inheritance?

The Warder stands and approaches them warily to take a closer look.

WARDER

By what authority do you conduct this business?

SYDNEY

By my own authority, as chief defense attorney for the court of Saint Antoine.

WARDER

(pointing to Lorry)
And who is this man?

SYDNEY

My associate - come to witness the signing. There must be two witnesses for the document to have legal merit.

WARDER

It is not allowed - what you ask...

SYDNEY

(sternly)
I do not ask - I demand.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

157.

177 CONTINUED: (2)

177

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

You will bring us to Everemonde at once or I will take the matter directly to Monsieur Defarge.

178 INT. LA FORCE PRISON - CELL BLOCK

178

The Warder leads Sydney and Lorry down a long stone passage lined with cells. The desperate moans of prisoners waft out from behind closed doors.

We CUT TO a large metal door, aged with rust. The Warder fishes out a set of keys and fits one into the lock. He swings the door open.

WARDER

Be quick.

Sydney and Lorry enter. The Warder closes the door behind them.

179 INT. DARNAY'S CELL - NIGHT

179

Charles is huddled in the corner. He squints at the lantern light.

CHARLES

(rising)
Mr. Lorry...?

LORRY

It is I.

CHARLES

And Carton - is that you?

SYDNEY

(already removing his
own boots)
Hurry now. Take off your boots.

Charles looks to him, baffled.

LORRY

Do as he says.

Charles takes off his boots. Sydney hands him his.

SYDNEY

Put them on.

Charles does.

(CONTINUED)

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
Now your coat. And your cravat.

CHARLES
But there is no escape...

SYDNEY
(ignoring him)
Your coat.

Charles does as he's told. They switch their coats and cravats.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
And your ribbon, give it here.

CHARLES
My ribbon...?

SYDNEY
Please Charles - we haven't time
to argue.

Charles pulls the ribbon from his hair. Hands it to Sydney. Lorry pulls a parchment, quill and ink pot out of the valise.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
(to Charles)
You must write a letter. I shall
dictate.

Lorry hands the quill and paper to Charles.

CHARLES
I have no desk. What am I to
write upon?

LORRY
Use my back. And I shall hold the
ink for you.

Lorry bends over slightly, holding the ink out so Charles can reach it. Charles places the parchment on Lorry's back, dips the quill into the pot. Sydney stands a few paces behind Charles as he dictates...

SYDNEY
"I am thankful that the time has
come when I can prove that I
amount to more than these mere
words..."

(CONTINUED)

The quill scratches against the paper. Sydney combs his hair neatly back with his fingers.

CHARLES

Go on...

SYDNEY

"...That I do so is no subject for regret or grief..."

The quill scratches. Sydney ties his hair with the ribbon.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

"...If it had been otherwise, I should but have had so much to answer for."

The quill scratches. Sydney removes something wrapped in a handkerchief from his breast. Unfolds the cloth - a vial. He uncaps it, pours the contents into the handkerchief.

CHARLES

(still staring at the parchment)

Is that all?

Sydney walks up directly behind him.

SYDNEY

One more thing...

With a lightening speed he reaches around and presses the handkerchief to Charles's face. Charles struggles at first, but Sydney holds him tight. After a moment, Charles goes limp. Lorry and Sydney help him to the ground.

Sydney picks up the parchment and quill. Scratches a few last words on the letter. Folds it, hands it to Lorry.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Give this to her, but only once. When you are at sea.

Lorry takes the letter and places it in his waist coat.

The Warden is waiting outside. He hears a pounding on the cell door. Opens it to see Charles laid out on the ground.

(CONTINUED)

LORRY

The foulness of the air has overtaken Mr. Carton. Help me carry him out.

Lorry places his hands beneath Charles's arms. The Warder grabs hold of his feet. As they lift him up and out of the room, Lorry takes one last look at Sydney, who is huddled in the corner as Charles was. They nod solemnly to one another. The Warder kicks the door shut.

Lucie, Dr. Manette, Ms. Pross and Alexander stand near the gangplank of a packet-ship. The CAPTAIN calls down to them from the deck.

CAPTAIN

You have to board Miss Manette. The ship must set sail.

LUCIE

Just a little more time - We're waiting for a friend.

CAPTAIN

Five more minutes - that's all I can spare.

MS. PROSS

I fear Mr. Lorry did not get past the gates.

DR. MANETTE

Mr. Lorry is a resourceful man.

ALEXANDER

(pointing)
There he is...

We CUT TO a horse in the distance, galloping down the wharf, two men in its saddle.

LUCIE

Yes, I think so...

MS. PROSS

It looks as though Sydney with him...

(CONTINUED)

182 CONTINUED:

161.

They walk forward as the horse draws near. Lorry pulls on the reins. Clinging to him is a sluggish Charles.

DR. MANETTE
My God - it's Charles!

LUCIE
(overjoyed)
Charles!

They all help Charles down from the saddle. He is still dizzy, but conscious. Lucie and Alexander embrace him with all their might.

183

INT. LA FORCE PRISON - DARNAY'S CELL - MORNING

183

A thin light slices through the small, barred window high atop the cell. Sydney reaches up to it, illuminating his hand.

SYDNEY
(to himself)
Whoever liveth and believeth in
me...shall never die...

Footsteps outside. His door scrapes open - the Warder with several armed Guards...

WARDER
It's time Everemonde.

184

EXT. LA FORCE PRISON - COURTYARD

184

A train of tumbrils awaits the prisoners gathered for execution. Sydney is shown to one of the carts. Climbs in. Is surprised to see Madame Boulet beside him.

SYDNEY
Madame...?

MADAME BOULET
Sydney...?

Sydney gently places a hand to her mouth.

SYDNEY
No - I am Everemonde.

MADAME BOULET
(sadly)
Of course...

185 EXT. STREETS - DAY

185

The procession of horse-drawn tumbrils - each carrying a half-dozen prisoners - makes its way along the street. Crowds on either side jeer them as they pass.

186 EXT. PLACE DE LA REVOLUTION - DAY

186

On the platform the Executioner pulls on a rope, raising the blade. It's sharp edge glints in the midday sun.

THE SQUARE'S EDGE

TIGHT on Sydney's face as he stares intently and calmly ahead at the guillotine in the distance. The jeers continue a the crowd of thousands parts for the approaching tumbrils.

THE SQUARE'S CENTER

The tumbrils come to a halt beside the platform. Guards order the prisoners to climb out. As they do, the Guards form the prisoners into a line and begin stripping them coats and shirts, start cutting their hair.

The first prisoner - an old Aristocrat - is guided up the platform steps. The drums begin to roll.

Sydney watches as the Aristocrat is placed on the plank. A moment later the blade descends with a thud. A severed head is held up for display. Wild, blood-thirsty cheers from the crowd.

The second prisoner is led up...

TIGHT on Sydney as the guards strip him of his coat and shirt, begin to cut his hair. Madame Boulet is at his side.

MADAME BOULET

Are you afraid?

SYDNEY

Take my hand, and I will give you courage.

He offers his hand. She takes it. They hold on tightly together.

187 EXT. PACKET-SHIP - DAY

187

Lucie stands at the bow as the ship cuts through the water and wind. She looks down at a letter.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

I am thankful that the time has come when I can prove that I amount to more than these mere words...

188 EXT. THE PLATFORM

188

Sydney's turn has come. He kisses Madame Boulet's hand, then lets go. Begins to ascend the steps.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

...That I do so is no subject for regret or grief...

Once atop, a sea of red hats and cockades stare up at him - shouting, jeering. As the guards tie his hands, he locks eyes with Mme. Defarge. She watches from the front row. Strains to look closer at Sydney...could it be...?

SYDNEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...If it had been otherwise, I should but have had so much to answer for...

The guards lead him toward the plank. TIGHT CLOSE-UP on Sydney's face - fearless, content.

SYDNEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done...

The guards place him face down on the plank.

189 THE SHIP

189

TIGHT CLOSE UP on Lucie's face, her eyes welling with tears as she reads

SYDNEY (V.O.)

It is a far, far, better rest that I go to, than I have ever known.

190

THE GUILLOTINE

190

Looking up from below, we see the bloodied blade raised high. The thunderous roll of drums. A pause...the blade races toward us.

Black. Silence.

A moment later...

DISSOLVE TO:

191

THE SHIP

191

Lucie lowers the letter to her side. Wipes the tears away from her eyes. Looks out to the sea. Holds the letter up to the air and lets it go. We see a faint smile on her lips as she watches the wind carry the letter away.

The camera lifts higher and higher, the ship retreating far beneath us as it sails toward the brilliant white cliffs of England.

THE END