

Chapter 6: Hundreds of People

Vocabulary:

Imputation- accusation

Retributive- reward or punishment, especially after death

Compunction- remorse

Albeit- although

Footpads- people who rob pedestrians

Summary: Four months later, Mr. Lorry, now a trusted friend of the Manette family, arrives at Doctor Manette's home. Finding Manette and his daughter not at home, he converses with Miss Pross. They discuss why the doctor continues to keep his shoemaker's bench.

Their conversation also touches on the number of suitors who come to call on Lucie. Miss Pross complains that they come by the dozen, by the hundred—all "*people who are not at all worthy of Ladybird.*" In Miss Pross's opinion, the only man worthy of Lucie is her own brother, Solomon Pross, who, she laments, disqualified himself by making a certain mistake. Lorry knows, however, that Solomon is a scoundrel who robbed Miss Pross of her possessions and left her in poverty. He goes on to ask if Manette ever returns to his shoemaking, and Pross assures him that the doctor no longer thinks about his dreadful imprisonment.

Lucie and Manette return, and soon Darnay joins them. Darnay relates that a workman, making alterations to a cell in the Tower of London, came upon a carving in the wall: "D I G." At first, the man mistook these for some prisoner's initials, but he soon enough realized that they spelled the word *dig*. Upon digging, the man discovered the ashes of a scrap of paper on which the prisoner must have written a message. The story startles Manette, but he soon recovers.

Carton arrives and sits with the others near a window in the drawing room. The footsteps on the street below make a terrific echo. Lucie imagines that the footsteps belong to people that will eventually enter into their lives. Carton comments that if Lucie's speculation is true, then a great crowd must be on its way.

Analysis: Dickens employs masterful foreshadowing in Chapter 6, as he uses these scenes both to hint at Carton's eventual ascendance into glory and to anticipate two vital plot turns. The discovery of the mysterious letter in the Tower of London, and Manette's distress upon hearing of it, foreshadows the discovery of a second letter.

As the second trial forms the dramatic core of the latter half of the novel, the discovery of this second letter forms a crucial part of the plot and dictates the course of the characters' lives. By introducing the story of a first and parallel letter, Dickens prepares the reader for the discovery of the second. As soon as the second letter surfaces, the reader will instantly recognize it as important. The second event that Dickens foreshadows is the French Revolution itself. The "hundreds of people" to which the title of Chapter 6 owes its name refers not to Lucie's suitors (whose numbers Miss Pross clearly exaggerates) but to the multitude of angry, mutinous revolutionaries who, as Lucie and Carton foretell, will soon march into the characters' lives.

Chapter 7: Monseigneur in Town (Monseignor #1)

Vocabulary:

Manifest- clearly apparent

Episcopal- relating to a government by a hierarchy

Cowed- intimidated

Summary: Monseigneur, a great lord in the royal court, holds a reception in Paris. He surrounds himself with the greatest pomp and luxury. For example, he has four

serving men help him drink his chocolate. The narrator tells us that Monseigneur's money corrupts everyone who touches it. Monseigneur parades around his guests briefly and then returns to his sanctuary. Miffed at Monseigneur's haughtiness, one guest, the Marquis Evrémonde, condemns Monseigneur as he leaves.

The Marquis orders his carriage to be raced through the city streets, delighting to see the commoners nearly run down by his horses. Suddenly the carriage jolts to a stop. A child lies dead under its wheels. The Marquis tosses a few coins to the boy's father, a man named Gaspard, and to the wine shop owner Defarge, who tries to comfort Gaspard. (You saw Gaspard in Chp. 5 of Book the First. What was he doing?)

As the Marquis drives away, a coin comes flying back into the carriage, thrown in bitterness. He curses the commoners, saying that he would willingly ride over any of them. Madame Defarge watches the scene, knitting the entire time.

Analysis: In Chapter 5 of Book the First, we read a description of the French public squabbling over the spilled contents of a broken wine cask; this passage, in its indictment of the greed and viciousness of the mob, forms the backbone of Dickens's criticism against the impending revolution. In this section, in contrast, Dickens expresses an equal disapproval for the aristocracy whose vile mistreatment of the peasantry contributes to the revolution. Again, Dickens uses sarcasm to great effect as he describes the Monseigneur's ridiculous dependence on his serving men:

It was impossible for Monseigneur to dispense with one of these attendants on the chocolate and hold his high place under the admiring Heavens. Deep would have been the blot upon his escutcheon if his chocolate had been ignobly waited on by only three men; he must have died of two.

Dickens's choice of the word *escutcheon*, referring to a family coat-of-arms, is key to our understanding of Monseigneur. For this emblem represents what he sees as a power inherent to his family's bloodline, an innate nobility that he thinks justifies his absurd lavishness. Dickens undercuts Monseigneur's reverence for this symbol of his own power by commenting on his ridiculous fear that he might damage his reputation should he prove insufficiently ostentatious in the frivolous act of drinking chocolate. Moreover, in noting Monseigneur's deep interest in the ritual of imbibing his little treat, Dickens contrasts him with the more loftily motivated characters in the novel. While the novel's worthy characters act according to selfless and righteous goals, the Monseigneur conducts himself according to base and earthly instincts.

Chapter 8: Monseigneur in the Country (Monseignor #2)

Vocabulary:

Fagged- toiled

Propitiate- gain the favor of

Clemency- mercifulness

Felicitously- pleasantly

Obsequiousness- subservience,
excessive servitude

Precipitated- hurled downward

Flambeau- flaming torch

Summary: The Marquis arrives in the small village to which he serves as lord. There, too, the people live wretched lives, exploited, poor, and starving. As he looks over the submissive faces of the peasants, he singles out a road-mender whom he passed on his journey, a man whose fixed stare bothered him. He demands to know what the

road-mender was staring at, and the man responds that someone was holding onto the bottom of the carriage. The Marquis continues on his way and soon comes upon a peasant woman, mourning at a rustic graveside. The woman stops him and begs that he provide her husband's grave with some stone or marker, lest he be forgotten, but the Marquis drives away, unmoved. He arrives at his chateau and, upon entering, asks if Monsieur Charles has arrived from England.

Analysis: Dickens uses the Marquis Evrémonte to give a similar portrait of the aristocracy as elitist. The Marquis displays no sympathy for Gaspard, the father of the boy whom his carriage crushes. Rather, he believes that his noble blood justifies his malicious treatment of his plebian subjects. In tossing the coins to Gaspard, he aims to buy his way out of the predicament and rid his own conscience of the nuisance of Gaspard's grief. He believes that it is the commoner's lot in life to struggle and suffer. Likewise, he has no doubt that his nephew's rightful station is to dominate commoners, referring to his nephew's noble blood as his "*natural destiny*." (Chp. 9)

Dickens sets up the Marquis as a representative of the French aristocracy and, as such, a direct cause of the imminent revolution. Using a device called personification, he creates human manifestations of such abstract concepts as greed, oppression, and hatred. The Marquis, so exaggeratedly cruel and flamboyant, hardly seems an actual human being—hardly a realistic character. Instead, the Marquis stands as a symbol or personification of the "*inhuman abandonment of consideration*" endemic to the French aristocracy during the eighteenth century.

Chapter 9: The Gorgon's Head

Vocabulary:

Incommoded- inconvenience

Poniarded- pierced or killed by a type of dagger

Comportable- in accordance with

Summary: Later that night, at the Marquis' chateau, Charles Darnay, the nephew of the Marquis, arrives by carriage. Darnay tells his uncle that he wants to renounce the title and property that he stands to inherit when the Marquis dies. The family's name, Darnay contends, is associated with "*fear and slavery*." He insists that the family has consistently acted shamefully, "*injuring every human creature who came between us and our pleasure*." The Marquis dismisses these protests, urging his nephew to accept his "*natural destiny*." The next morning, the Marquis is found dead with a knife through his heart. Attached to the knife is a note that reads: "*Drive him fast to his tomb. This, from Jacques*."

Analysis: Dickens advances this impression of the Marquis' character in the opening passage of Chapter 9, when he describes the nobleman's chateau:

It was a heavy mass of building, that chateau of Monsieur the Marquis, with a large stone court-yard before it, and two stone sweeps of staircase meeting in a stone terrace before the principal door. A stony business altogether with heavy stone balustrades . . . and stone faces of men, and stone heads of lions, in all directions. As if the Gorgon's head had surveyed it, when it was finished, two centuries ago.

The repetition of the word *stone* solidifies, as it were, our impression of the man who lives in the chateau. His heart, Dickens suggests, possesses the same severity as the castle's walls. The mention of the Gorgon—one of three Greek mythological sisters who had snakes for hair and turned anyone who looked at them to stone—foreshadows the

death of the Marquis. For by the end of the chapter, the chateau has one more stone face added to its collection—the dead Marquis’ face, which the narrator describes as “like a stone mask, suddenly startled, made angry, and petrified.” Lying dead on his pillow, the Marquis serves as a warning of the violence and bloodshed to come, initiated by the masses who can no longer abide the aristocracy’s heartless oppression of them.

Questions, Literary Devices and Allusions:

#	Item	Pgs.	Explanation
1.	Repetition of the phrase “hundreds of people”		
2.	Foreshadowing of Solomon Pross		
3.	Prison Story about “dig” foreshadowing		
4.	Footsteps/ _____ and foreshadowing		
5.	Absurdity #1 Chocolatier		
6.	Absurdity #2 Carriage vs. Child = Coin		
7.	Personification and Symbol: the _____		
8.	Repetition of the word “stone”		
9.	Allusion “Gorgon”		
10.	Foreshadowing Death of Marquis St. Evermonde		