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## **Da 72 a 124: Dickens, Sikes, Nancy**

Relatore:

Prof.ssa Francesca SAGGINI

Correlatore:

Dott.ssa Alessandra SPADAFORA

Candidata:

Valentina Totonelli Matr. 272



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## 1. DICKENS E LA CARRIERA DA LETTORE PUBBLICO

Dickens è stato ed è tuttora uno dei massimi esponenti della letteratura inglese, “attento cantore della società britannica della prima metà dell’epoca vittoriana, cioè di quel particolare periodo storico in cui la società era attenta ai fasti dell’impero, allo sviluppo della nuova borghesia industriale, ma più lenta nel miglioramento delle condizioni delle classi povere”<sup>1</sup> e dove la letteratura cercava di dare il suo contributo per modificare questi atteggiamenti e cercare di far sviluppare una maggiore attenzione verso temi sociali. In questo particolare periodo nasce il “romanzo vittoriano a puntate e la sua naturale tendenza per il dramma, il senso del teatrale e del sensazionale, il gusto per i dialoghi vivaci e svelti, la vocazione a tratteggiare personaggi a forti tinte”<sup>2</sup>.

Sin da giovane Dickens aveva mostrato un particolare amore per il teatro, tanto che quasi intraprese la carriera di attore. All’età di venti anni si situa infatti la svolta della sua carriera: secondo la tradizione, mancata un’audizione a causa di un brutto raffreddore, intraprese la carriera di giornalista e romanziere, ma rimase sempre profondamente legato al teatro. Scrisse alcune commedie<sup>3</sup> e fu attore, regista e produttore di numerosi spettacoli teatrali, ma le letture pubbliche rappresentarono il suo vero interesse e passione: “The actor

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ciao.it> Consultato il 04-04-2008.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.univirtual.it> Consultato il 04-04-2008.

<sup>3</sup> Tra cui: *No Thoroughfare*, *The Lighthouse* (1855) e *The Frozen Deep* (1857). Dickens Charles, *The Public Readings*, edited by Philip Collins. Oxford, Calarendon Press, 1975, p. XVIII.

in him was simply claiming his due”, spiega J.B. Van Amerongen<sup>4</sup>. Tra il 1853 e 1870 Dickens dette circa 472 letture pubbliche in Gran Bretagna e in America. Dal 1858 queste divennero una vera e propria professione remunerata. La prima lettura pubblica per beneficenza risale al 15 aprile del 1858; il ricavato fu devoluto allo “Hospital for Sick Children” di Londra.<sup>5</sup>

La carriera di lettore di Dickens iniziò in un periodo in cui i pregiudizi contro il teatro erano ancora molto vivi e in cui la borghesia, pur rimanendo ostile al teatro, ne era allo stesso tempo attratta.<sup>6</sup> In questo periodo il mestiere di attore era visto negativamente rispetto a quello dell’artista e circolava l’idea che un romanziere di fama come Dickens si sarebbe declassato se avesse dato delle letture pubbliche. Nel 1850, dopo ben dodici anni d’attesa, Dickens portò le sue opere al cospetto di un attento pubblico di ascoltatori e dette vita ai suoi personaggi. Si passò così dalla lettura silenziosa e solitaria ad una lettura a viva voce, rivolta ad un vasto pubblico, comprese quelle classi più povere che potevano così ascoltare ciò che non erano in grado di leggere da sé. Dickens rivoluzionò l’arte di lettura, creando un romanzo d’intrattenimento di straordinaria popolarità: “It was not a reading - it was really a play without

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<sup>4</sup> Ferguson Susan L. “Dickens’s Public Reading and the Victorian Author”, *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, Vol. 41, N°4. The Nineteenth Century (Autunno 2001), p. 733.

<sup>5</sup> Andrews Malcom, *Charles Dickens and His Performing Selves: Dickens and the Public Reading*. New York, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 42.

<sup>6</sup> Volck Deborah, *Dickens, Novel Reading and the Victorian popular Theatre*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 1.

scenery”<sup>7</sup>. Purtroppo non ci sono testimonianze visive di queste *performances*; tutte le informazioni provengono da testimonianze di persone che assistevano alle letture, dalle *prompt copies*, da critiche di studiosi e giornalisti del periodo.

Particolarità della lettura era il rapporto d’amicizia che Dickens riusciva ad instaurare con il suo pubblico. Molti commenti giunti sino a noi riprendono questo aspetto. Un critico dell’età vittoriana scrive: “His reading... is not looked upon as a performance, but as a friendly meeting longed for by whom he has been kind”. Anche Charles Eliot Norton scrive di lui: “No one thinks first of Mr. Dickens as a writer. He is at one, through his books, a friend”<sup>8</sup>. Ciò che rendeva possibile la creazione di questo tipo di rapporto erano i discorsi introduttivi dell’autore, “pezzi” brevi, geniali, entusiasmanti e tesi ad instaurare un legame con il pubblico. “I shall never recall you as a mere public audience, but rather as a host of personal friends”, ricordò Dickens nell’ultima lettura in America il 20 aprile del 1868<sup>9</sup>.

La fase preparatoria di una lettura pubblica era un lavoro molto difficile, che richiedeva una lunga analisi. Le letture erano rivisitazioni di testi famosi già pubblicati, quali *A Christmas Carol*, che subivano infinite modifiche anche dopo essere ultimate e spesso anche dopo la pubblicazione. L’obiettivo principale dell’autore era quello di estrapolare le parti dei testi più importanti,

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<sup>7</sup> Andrews, *Charles Dickens and His Performing Selves: Dickens and the Public Reading*, p. 66.

<sup>8</sup> Ferguson. “Dickens’s Public reading and the Victorian Author”, p. 744.

<sup>9</sup> Andrews, *Charles Dickens and His Performing Selves: Dickens and the Public Reading*, p. 49.

riducendo la narrazione, con l'intento di creare una sorta di storia più breve e coincisa. La tecnica usata era la trasformazione dei discorsi indiretti in discorsi diretti. Ciò permetteva di creare dialoghi che ponevano sempre in contrasto due tematiche: il bene e il male. Da questi dialoghi erano omesse le informazioni sull'enunciato ed enunciazione, fatte intuire durante le *performances* dai cambiamenti di tono e dall'espressione del viso. Questi tagli e correzioni facilitavano la rappresentazione e permettevano a Dickens di mostrare tutte le sue doti d'imitatore.

Le prime letture avevano una durata di circa tre ore, che nel corso della sua carriera si ridussero a due circa.<sup>10</sup> Nonostante che ampie parti di discorso venissero tagliate per risparmiare tempo, tutte le modifiche apportate erano molto selettive e rispondenti a determinate esigenze dell'autore, che intendeva comunque mantenere lo schema narrativo senza trasformare i testi in copioni teatrali. Oltre alla lunga preparazione e alla continua revisione del testo, Dickens passava centinaia di ore perfezionando le letture prima di salire sul palco. Segnava nella sua *prompt copy* in quali parti era necessaria la recitazione, scrivendo *action* sul margine del foglio. Faceva le prove davanti allo specchio, leggendo e rileggendo gli spezzoni per trovare la giusta intonazione e di espressività, ma nonostante ciò spesso saliva sul palco ed

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<sup>10</sup> Andrews, *Charles Dickens and His Performing Selves: Dickens and the Public Reading*, p. 81.

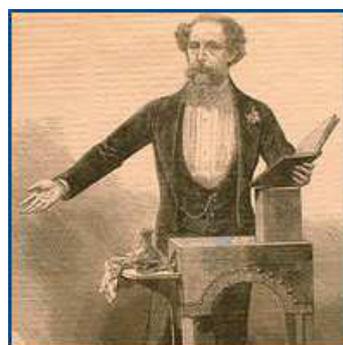
improvvisava, aggiungendo dettagli o chiudendo il libro ed incominciando a recitare ciò che narrava, come nel caso proprio di *Sikes and Nancy*.

Uno degli elementi che caratterizzava le apparizioni pubbliche era il materiale di scena che Dickens portava in *tour*. Come ci riassume Andrews:

- BANCO DA LETTURA: Inizialmente utilizzava un banco alto ed un tavolino d'appoggio per l'acqua. Nel corso della carriera ne preferì uno più basso che gli dava maggiore visibilità. Era così esigente da volere un banco personale, dotato di mensola d'appoggio per gli oggetti da scena, ora esposto al Charles Dickens Museum di Londra.

- LIBRO: Era probabilmente il romanzo da cui era tratta la lettura pubblica oppure un qualsiasi appunto o la *prompt copy* utilizzata come supporto cartaceo. In realtà non aveva bisogno di questi aiuti in quanto studiava talmente tanto le letture da impararle a memoria.

- ACQUA, BICCHIERE, FAZZOLETTO E GUANTI: veri e proprio accessori teatrali. Dickens, ad esempio, beveva mentre raccontava una parte della storia in cui i protagonisti erano seduti a qualche banchetto.



- TAGLIACARTE: talvolta utilizzato durante una lettura per dividere i fogli. Dickens lo usò dall'inizio della sua carriera e divenne da subito parte del repertorio gestuale dell'autore.<sup>11</sup>

Diverse testimonianze descrivono l'entrata dell'autore sul palco:

Punctually [Dickens] would appear onstage unannounced and, books in hand, walk briskly to the table, put the books down, bow, smile, and wait for the applause to subside...When the applause stopped, and, with another bow, he would take up a book, open it, look the audience, say: 'Ladies and gentlemen, I am happy to have the honour to reading to you tonight...'<sup>12</sup>

Dickens era molto pretenzioso: tutto doveva essere come aveva immaginato. Le *performances* non si tenevano mai in teatri, ma in grandi saloni, ispezionati in anticipo per controllare che l'acustica e la visuale si accordassero con le sue esigenze. In particolare è molto attento all'acustica in quanto aveva una voce molto bassa. Per questo motivo passava molto tempo a studiare le tecniche di lettura necessarie per declamare davanti ad un pubblico molto numeroso. Voleva essere certo che le sue parole raggiungessero ogni singolo ascoltatore e gli permettessero di attuare i vari cambi d'intonazione e d'espressione.

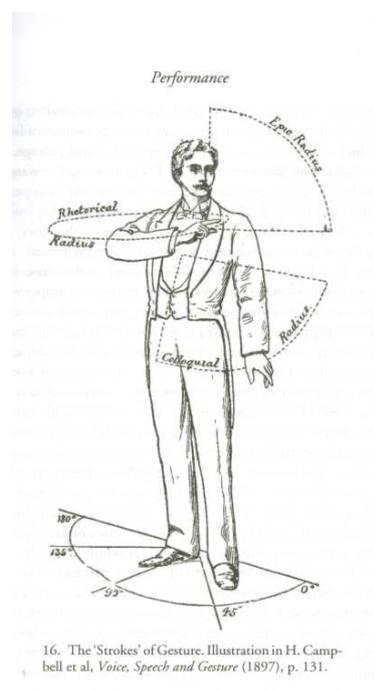
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<sup>11</sup> Andrews, *Charles Dickens and His Performing Selves: Dickens and the Public Reading*, pp. 128-138.

<sup>12</sup> Ferguson, "Dickens's Public reading and the Victorian Author", p. 734.

Anche la gestualità era una componente essenziale delle *performances*. Una volta imparato il testo a memoria, Dickens posava il libro. Avendo così libera la parte superiore del corpo, dava avvio allo spettacolo. I movimenti principali si dividevano in tre categorie:

- Colloquiale: prevedeva una leggera curvatura dell'avambraccio e della mano sotto il livello delle spalle. (Il gesto maggiormente utilizzato da Dickens).
- Retorico: prevedeva il movimento dell'intero braccio, alzato, libero di curvarsi al livello delle spalle o poco più basso.
- Epico: prevedeva il movimento del braccio, indirizzato verso l'alto. (Movimento tipico dell'uccisione di Nancy nella lettura di *Sikes and Nancy*)<sup>13</sup>.



16. The 'Strokes' of Gesture. Illustration in H. Campbell et al, *Voice, Speech and Gesture* (1897), p. 131.

Anche la mano destra e il polso destro erano continuamente in movimento, ad indicare le azioni o i movimenti descritti. Sir Arthur Helps commentò la gestica di Dickens in questi termini:

<sup>13</sup> Andrews, *Charles Dickens and His Performing Selves: Dickens and the Public Reading*. pp. 187-188.

He had most expressive hands—not beautiful, according to ordinary notions of beauty, but nervous and powerful hands. He did not indulge in gesticulation; but the slight movement of those expressive hands helped wonderfully in giving additional force and meaning to what he said.<sup>14</sup>

Anche la mimica lo aiutava nella rappresentazione dei personaggi. Senza avvalersi dei laboriosi cambi d'abito tipici del periodo, Dickens riusciva a far in modo che il pubblico focalizzasse tutto l'interesse su di lui, da solo sul palco, con le luci puntate addosso, circondato da una sorta di scenografia che metteva la sua persona al centro del cono visivo del pubblico.

Ciò che fece diventare Dickens uno dei più grandi lettori pubblici del tempo era la capacità che aveva di trasformarsi, o meglio di diventare i suoi personaggi, facendo interagire le varie voci con grande maestria. Racconta Charles Kent, testimone di una delle letture: “Attending his reading, character after character appear before us, living and breathing, in the flesh, as we looked and listened”<sup>15</sup>. Dickens era un vero e proprio imitatore. Si esercitava nella creazione dei suoi personaggi immaginari pensando a tutti i dettagli, come ad esempio i dialetti londinesi. Ispiratore di questa tecnica di recitazione fu Charles Mathews, il più grande imitatore dell'epoca, apprezzato da Dickens fin dalla giovinezza, dal quale aveva appreso come “Mimicry is the imitation of external traits; Impersonation is the fuller entry into a character of someone

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<sup>14</sup> Andrews, *Charles Dickens and His Performing Selves: Dickens and the Public Reading*, p. 187.

<sup>15</sup> Ferguson, “Dickens’s Public reading and the Victorian Author”, p. 735.

else”<sup>16</sup>. Ciò che Dickens apprese da Mathews fu di valore inestimabile sia per la sua arte di romanziere, sia di lettore. Il narratore scompariva nelle sue letture e l’unica narrazione era quella che serviva a ricreare un mondo immaginario in cui storie e personaggi prendevano vita.

A bloccare la carriera di lettore di Dickens furono gravi problemi di salute, che arrivarono a livelli così elevati da non permettergli più di tenere un libro in mano. Il suo medico curante, Thomas Berard, gli sconsigliò di continuare le letture pubbliche poiché gli avrebbero compromesso la salute in modo irreparabile, sino a condurlo alla morte. Dickens scelse di abbandonare, ma prima volle concedersi un ultimo *tour*, il cosiddetto *Farewell Tour*, che prevedeva 12 letture tra cui quella di *Nancy and Sikes*, tenuta alla St. James’s Hall tra il febbraio e il marzo del 1870. Sempre accompagnato dai familiari, dall’agente e dal dottore, Dickens tenne la sua ultima *performance* alle otto del 15 marzo di fronte a migliaia di persone, che lo acclamarono in piedi per alcuni minuti quando fece l’ultima entrata in scena. Morì dodici settimane più tardi, il 9 giugno del 1870 e fu seppellito nell’Abbazia di Westminster nell’angolo dei poeti.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Andrews, *Charles Dickens and His Performing Selves: Dickens and the Public Reading*, p. 115.

<sup>17</sup> Andrews, *Charles Dickens and His Performing Selves: Dickens and the Public Reading*, pp. 262-266.

## Una nota su *Sikes and Nancy*



La lettura pubblica di *Sikes and Nancy* fa parte dell'ultimo tour concesso da Dickens prima di abbandonare la carriera di lettore pubblico a causa dei gravi problemi di salute, il cosiddetto *Farewell Tour*. *Sikes and Nancy* racconta dell'atroce morte di Nancy per mano di Sikes, tratta dai capitoli 45, 46, 47, 48 e 50 di uno dei suoi più grandi capolavori, *Oliver Twist*, scritto tra il 1837 e il 1838.<sup>18</sup>

Nancy, protagonista indiscussa di questa lettura, è l'amante di Bill Sikes, ladro e criminale. Viene corrotta all'età di 6 anni ed entra a far parte di una banda di ladruncoli con a capo Fagin. Nel romanzo viene descritta come una ragazza di 17 anni che lavora in una locanda, fa largo uso di alcolici e si prostituisce. Diversamente dagli altri protagonisti del romanzo, Nancy non è precisamente buona d'animo come Rose o il signor Brownlow, ma neanche cattiva come Monks, Sikes o Fagin. È un personaggio che oscilla tra il bene e il

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<sup>18</sup> Dickens Charles, *Le avventure di Oliver Twist*, traduzione di Bruno Oddera, Milano, Oscar Classici Mondadori, 1996, pp. XXI.

male: appare tormentata da un conflitto interiore che vede da una parte la sua devozione a Sikes e dall'altra la sua coscienza.<sup>19</sup>

È particolarmente legata ad Oliver, il povero bambino cresciuto in una *workhouse* e reclutato da Fagin per diventare un criminale. Dietro la nascita di Oliver si cela un mistero che Monks, colui che si scoprirà solo alla fine essere il fratellastro del giovane orfano, vuole tenere nascosto. Oliver è erede di una gran fortuna, di cui potrà usufruire solo se rimarrà puro di cuore. Monks e Fagin escogitano un piano per corrompere il piccolo Oliver e portarlo sulla cattiva strada in modo d'assicurarsi la sua fortuna. Nancy scopre il piano e tenta di aiutare Oliver contattando Rose, ma ciò la porta ad una morte crudele. Informato da Fagin del tradimento di Nancy, che di fatto non è mai avvenuto, Sikes uccide brutalmente la giovane.

“I have been trying, alone by myself, the *Oliver Twist* murder, but I have got something so horrible out of it that I am afraid to try it in public”<sup>20</sup>, è ciò che disse Dickens ad un amico nel 1863, mentre già da anni pensava ad una possibile rappresentazione di questo particolare episodio del romanzo. I familiari dell'autore lo implorarono di non fare questa prova per paura dell'effetto che avrebbe avuto sulla sua salute. In particolare il figlio Charley

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<sup>19</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org> Consultato il 07-04-2008.

<sup>20</sup> The World's Classics, *Charles Dickens Sikes and Nancy and Other Public Readings*, Introduction by Philip Collins. New York, Oxford University Press, 1983, p. 229.

gli ingiunse: “The finest thing I have ever heard, but don’t do it.”<sup>21</sup> Anche molti colleghi incitarono Dickens ad abbandonare l’idea; tra questi Wilkie Collins, che sosteneva che fare una lettura del genere in un periodo così instabile per la sua salute “would do more to kill him than all his work put together”<sup>22</sup>. Ma persuaderlo fu impossibile.

Il 14 novembre del 1868 Dickens organizzò una lettura speciale fatta per un pubblico selezionato di critici, giornalisti ed editori, per avere la loro opinione su un’eventuale integrazione di *Sikes and Nancy* nel suo repertorio. Questo esperimento prevedeva che la lettura sarebbe terminata subito dopo la morte di Nancy: si pensava infatti che sarebbe stato improbabile che il pubblico sarebbe riuscito a trattenersi in sala dopo l’assassinio della ragazza. Dietro consiglio di cari amici come Kent, Dickens decise comunque di ampliare l’episodio narrato, aggiungendo pochi e coincisi paragrafi per descrivere la fuga e la morte di Sikes. Sebbene all’ingresso in scena avesse detto: “I want you to watch this particularly, for I am very doubtful about it myself”<sup>23</sup>, già a metà dell’esperimento la maggior parte dei presenti era convinta che fosse opportuno integrare la lettura nel *Farewell Tour*. Si temeva tuttavia l’effetto che avrebbe potuto avere sul pubblico nonché sulla salute stessa dell’autore.

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<sup>21</sup> <http://arts.guardian.co.uk> Consultato il 07-04-2008.

<sup>22</sup> Dickens, *Sikes and Nancy and Other Public Readings*, p. 230.

<sup>23</sup> <http://charlesdickenspage.com> Articolo consultato il 07-04-2008.

*Nancy and Sikes* fu pubblicato in un'edizione limitata, con una tiratura di sole 250 copie, in un periodo in cui Lord Chamberlain aveva proibito alcune opere teatrali proprio a causa della reazione che scene così violente avrebbero suscitato nel pubblico. La prima lettura risale al 5 gennaio del 1869 alla St. James's Hall e l'effetto che ebbe sullo stesso Dickens fu notevole. Il desiderio di ripeterla iniziò ad ossessionarlo, tanto che ebbe una discussione con il suo agente Dolby, quando questi, visti i problemi di salute dell'autore, decise di ridurre il numero delle esibizioni<sup>24</sup>.

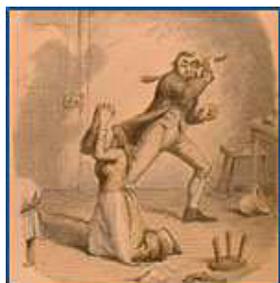
La lettura pubblica consisteva in due parti: la prima comprendeva i primi due capitoli, seguiti da una breve pausa e quindi dal terzo capitolo, ovvero la morte di Nancy e la fuga e morte di Sikes. Puntualmente Dickens saliva sul palco con il "vestito da scena", si posizionava dietro il banco da lettura e iniziava con la prima parte della storia. La voce e il viso gli cambiavano drasticamente mentre interpretava, con terrificante vitalità, il dialogo tra l'ingenuo Bolter e il diabolico Fagin, continuando con la narrazione particolareggiata dell'inseguimento di Nancy fino al London Bridge, senza tralasciare nessuna sfumatura e utilizzando al meglio i gesti per ricreare l'ambientazione spettrale. A questo punto della lettura Nancy era sul ponte e parlava con Rose e il Signor Brownlow, le cui voci venivano distinte nettamente l'una dall'altra: la voce dolce di Rose, quella sicura del Signor Brownlow e quella timorosa di Nancy,

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<sup>24</sup> *Sikes and Nancy and Other Public Readings*. Introduction by Philip Collins pp. 465-471.

imitate con estrema maestria. Il tradimento era avvenuto e Dickens lasciava il palco per una pausa preparatoria, per poi tornare in scena ad uccidere Nancy.

La platea in silenzio attendeva l'arrivo di Bill Sikes, la cui voce si trasformava in un ringhiare furioso ogni volta che si spazientiva con Fagin. I tre protagonisti della vicenda Sikes, Fagin e Noah diventavano vivi sul palco. Le loro voci si univano, creando un crescendo che obbligava il pubblico a trattenere il fiato, fino a che Sikes giungeva davanti alla porta di casa. Condotta il pubblico in quella stanza immaginaria, Dickens dava qui il meglio delle sue doti di attore. Il lungo appello di Nancy a Sikes era una delle parti più difficili da interpretare, fuori dagli schemi teatrali, ma "here the acting of Mr. Dickens is much beyond his writing, which strikes us as fantastic and unreal"<sup>25</sup>. L'assassinio veniva simulato da Dickens-attore, il quale metteva via



il libro e recitava a memoria e con i gesti ciò che stava narrando: con la fronte imperlata di sudore prendeva Nancy per la gola, scaraventandola a terra e la colpiva, battendo sul banco con una tale ferocia da costringere il pubblico a coprirsi gli occhi, quasi che sul palco stesse per consumarsi realmente un atroce delitto. Attimi di silenzio seguivano la scena: Dickens, appoggiato sul banco con respiro affannato, guardava la platea che lo osservava inorridita, come se si aspettasse di trovare un bagno di sangue.

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<sup>25</sup> Dickens, *The Public Readings*, introduction of Philip Collins, p. 469.

Warming with excitement, he flung aside his book and acted the scene of the murder, shrieked the terrified pleadings of the girl, growled the brutal savagery of the murder... Then the cries for mercy: 'Bill! Dear Bill! For God's sake!... When the pleading ceases, you open your eyes in relief, in time to see the impersonation of the murder seizing a heavy club, and striking his victim to the ground.<sup>26</sup>

La narrazione riprendeva, colma di dettagli, fino alla morte di Sikes. Alla fine della lettura Dickens usciva immediatamente di scena portando con sé il libro; si sdraiava nel camerino esausto, occhi chiusi, respiro pesante, volto pallido e senza un filo di voce. Bastavano soltanto dieci minuti di riposo per ritrovare la compostezza e per tornare sul palco a raccogliere gli applausi.<sup>27</sup>

*Sikes and Nancy* riscosse particolare successo poiché era la risposta a tante aspettative del pubblico. Mrs. Keely, che partecipò ad una delle *performances*, osservò: "The public have been waiting a sensation for a few years—and now they've got it!"<sup>28</sup>. Il trionfo era dovuto anche all'attrazione per il "domestic murder" che si riscontrava in quel periodo. *Nancy and Sikes* rispecchiava il gusto per i temi domestici, ma al tempo stesso feroci che attraevano la gente, uniti alla bravura di un imitatore quale era Dickens, considerato "the greatest reader of the greatest writer of the age"<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup> <http://arts.guardian.co.uk> Consultato il 04-04-2008.

<sup>27</sup> Andrews, *Charles Dickens and His Performing Selves: Dickens and the Public Reading*, pp. 219-223.

<sup>28</sup> Andrews, *Charles Dickens and His Performing Selves: Dickens and the Public Reading*, p. 93.

<sup>29</sup> Ferguson. "Dickens's Public reading and the Victorian Author", p.739.

L'ultima performance di *Sikes and Nancy* fu l'8 marzo del 1870. In quell'occasione Dickens bisbigliò all'amico Kent: "I shall tear myself to pieces"<sup>30</sup>. Durante le ultime *performances* del *Farewell Tour* il medico era sempre con l'autore per assisterlo. In questa rappresentazione Dickens dava infatti sfogo a tutte le sue energie e la sua passione, tanto da farsi salire i battiti cardiaci da 72 a 124. È proprio questa particolarità che ha suggerito il titolo di questa tesi. Tre mesi dopo la fine del *Farewell Tour* Dickens morì, ma un suo amico racconta che due giorni prima della morte era stato trovato alla St. James's Hall, mentre recitava ancora una volta la morte di Nancy.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Dickens, *Sikes and Nancy and Other Public Readings*, p. 231.

<sup>31</sup> Dickens, *Sikes and Nancy and Other Public Readings*, pp. 229-231.

## 2. TRADUZIONE

### Sikes e Nancy

#### CAPITOLO I

Fagin, il ricettatore di merce rubata, quella mattina si era alzato in anticipo e aspettava impazientemente l'arrivo del suo nuovo collega, Noah Claypole, meglio conosciuto come Morris Bolter. Finalmente questi si presentò; tagliata un'enorme fetta di pane, cominciò un vorace assalto alla colazione.

“Bolter, Bolter.”

“Be’, sono qui. Che succede? Non chiedermi di fare niente finché non ho finito di mangiare. È un gran difetto di questo posto. Non c'è mai abbastanza tempo per i pasti.”

“Puoi parlare mentre mangi, o no?”

“Sì, posso parlare. Va giù meglio, mentre parlo. Di’ pure. Non m’interromperai.”

Sembrava, infatti, escluso che qualcosa potesse interromperlo, giacché si era chiaramente seduto con l'intenzione di fare un po' d'affari.

“Bolter, voglio che tu,” *appoggiandosi al tavolo*, “facessi un lavoretto per me, mio caro, che richiede gran cura e cautela.”

“Dico, non è che mi metti in pericolo? Non mi sta bene, quello no, te lo dico.”

“Non c’è il benché minimo pericolo—neanche il più piccolo; dovresti solo pedinare una donna.”

“Un’anziana?”

“Una giovane.”

“Quello posso farlo molto bene. Ero un gran spione quando andavo a scuola. Per quale motivo la devo pedinare? Mica per—.”

“Per fare niente, ma mi devi dire dove va, chi vede e, se possibile, cosa dice; ricordarti la strada, se si tratta di una strada, o la casa, se è una casa e riferiscimi tutte le informazioni che metti insieme.”

“Cosa mi darai in cambio?”

“Se lo farai bene, una sterlina, mio caro. Una sterlina. Mai data prima per un lavoro che non mi portasse un considerevole guadagno.”

“Chi è?”

“Una di noi”

“Oh Signore! Hai dubbi su di lei, no?”

“Ha trovato dei nuovi amici, mio caro e io devo sapere chi sono.”

“Capisco. ha! ha! ha! Sono il tuo uomo. Dov’è? Dove devo aspettarla? Dove devo andare?”

“Tutto questo, mio caro, te lo dirò io. Te la indicherò io a tempo debito. Tieniti pronto con i vestiti che ho qui per te e lascia a me tutto il resto.”

Quella notte e la seguente e quella dopo ancora la spia aspettò con gli stivali calzati ed equipaggiata con un travestimento da carrettiere: pronta ad agire ad un cenno di Fagin. Passarono sei notti, in ciascuna delle quali Fagin tornò a casa con il volto insoddisfatto, accennando che non era ancora ora. Al settimo ritornò esultante. Era domenica sera.

“Esce stasera,” disse Fagin, “a fare la cosa giusta, ne sono certo; perché è stata sola tutto il giorno e l’uomo di cui ha tanta paura non sarà di ritorno prima dell’alba. Vieni con me! Sbrigati!”

Lasciarono la casa e muovendosi furtivamente tra il labirinto di strade giunsero di fronte alla locanda. Erano le undici passate e la porta era chiusa; ma si aprì adagio quando Fagin emise un piccolo fischio. Entrarono, senza fare alcun rumore.

Senza nemmeno osare bisbigliare, ma sostituendo i gesti alle parole, Fagin indicò a Noah una lastra di vetro in alto sul muro, gli fece cenno di arrampicarsi su un mobile posto lì sotto e di osservare la persona nella stanza adiacente.

“È quella la donna?”

*Fagin annuì con il capo.*

“Non posso vederla bene in viso. Guarda in basso e la candela è dietro di lei.”

“Rimani lì.” Fece cenno di uscire al ragazzo che gli aveva aperto la porta della locanda—questi entrò nella stanza adiacente e fingendo di smoccolare la

candela, la spostò nella posizione richiesta; poi cominciò a parlare con la ragazza, facendole così alzare il viso.

“Ora la vedo!”

“Chiaramente?”

“La riconoscerei tra mille.”

La spia scese, la porta si aprì e la ragazza uscì. Fagin lo tirò dietro ad un tramezzo e trattennero il respiro, mentre lei, uscendo dalla porta dalla quale erano entrati, passava a pochi metri dal loro nascondiglio.

*“Inseguila!! A sinistra. Gira a sinistra e mantieniti dall'altra parte. Inseguila!”*

La spia le si precipitò dietro e grazie alla luce dei lampioni vide la sagoma sfuggente della ragazza, già a un bel pezzo avanti a lui. Avanzava sul lato opposto della strada, mantenendo un prudente distacco. *Si guardava nervosamente attorno.* Sembrava acquistasse coraggio mentre procedeva, camminando con un passo più sicuro e deciso. La spia si manteneva alla stessa distanza e la seguiva.

## CAPITOLO II

Gli orologi delle chiese rintoccavano le undici e tre quarti quando le due figure emersero sul London Bridge. La giovane avanzava con passo agile e rapido, guardandosi attorno come se fosse alla ricerca di qualche oggetto in particolare; il giovane uomo strisciava, nelle ombre più oscure che poteva trovare, mantenendosi a distanza e adeguando il proprio passo a quello della ragazza. Si fermava quando si fermava lei e si muoveva appena lei ricominciava a muoversi, avanzava furtivamente, ma senza mai permettersi, nell'ardore del suo inseguimento, di avvicinarsi troppo. Così attraversarono il ponte, dal Middlesex alla sponda di Surrey, quando la donna si voltò delusa, scrutando ansiosamente i passanti. Il movimento fu improvviso, ma non colse la spia di sorpresa; si ritirò in una delle rientranze che sovrasta uno dei piloni del ponte e sporgendosi oltre il parapetto per nascondere meglio la sua figura, aspettò che passasse. Una volta ristabilita la stessa distanza che c'era in precedenza, sgattaiolò giù cautamente e continuò a seguirla. A metà circa del ponte lei si fermò. Si fermò anche lui.

Era una notte molto buia. Il tempo era stato brutto e a quell'ora in quel luogo c'erano veramente poche persone in giro. Quelle che c'erano si sbrigavano a passare: probabilmente senza guardare, sicuramente senza notare né la donna né l'uomo. La loro presenza non era di nessun'attrattiva per la povera

popolazione londinese che nella notte si azzardava ad attraversare il ponte. Rimasero lì in silenzio: senza parlare a nessuno e senza che nessuno parlasse loro.

La ragazza fece più volte avanti e dietro—spiata attentamente dal suo osservatore nascosto—*quando la gran campana della chiesa di San Paolo rintoccò la morte di un altro giorno. Era giunta la mezzanotte sulla città affollata. Sul palazzo, sullo scantinato e la prigione, al manicomio: alle stanze della nascita o della morte, sui sani e sui malati, sui volti rigidi dei cadaveri e su quelli tranquilli ed assonnati dei bambini.*

Una giovane donna, accompagnata da un uomo dai capelli brizzolati, scese da una vettura da nolo. Non avevano neanche messo un piede sul marciapiede del ponte quando la ragazza sobbalzò e si unì a loro.

“*Non qui!* Ho paura di parlare con voi qui. Venite via—lontani dalla strada principale—scendiamo le scale laggiù!”

Le scale che indicò erano quelle che si trovavano sullo stesso lato del ponte, sulla sponda del Surrey e della Chiesa di San Salvatore, che cominciano dal pianerottolo d’approdo dal fiume. La spia si diresse velocemente e inosservata verso quel punto e dopo un attimo di perlustrazione cominciò a scendere.

Queste scale fanno parte del ponte; sono costituite da tre rampe. Appena sotto la fine della seconda, scendendo verso il basso, il muro di pietra posto nella parte sinistra finisce in una colonna ornamentale rivolta verso il Tamigi. A

questo punto gli scalini più bassi si allargano: così che girando quell'angolo del muro una persona rimane nascosta alla vista di chiunque casualmente si trovi più in alto, anche di un solo scalino. Raggiunto quel punto, la spia si guardò frettolosamente attorno. Non essendoci un nascondiglio migliore e avendo a disposizione un ampio spazio lasciato dalla bassa marea, si accostò da un lato, appoggiando la schiena alla colonna e lì attese, con la sicurezza che non sarebbero scesi più in basso.

Il tempo passava lentamente in questo luogo isolato. Intanto l'impazienza della spia cresceva, tanto da farlo quasi emergere dal suo nascondiglio per raggiungere nuovamente la strada. Si udì allora il suono di passi e, praticamente allo stesso tempo, delle voci quasi vicine alle sue orecchie.

Si dispose ben dritto contro il muro e ascoltò attentamente.

“Qui siamo abbastanza lontani,” *disse una voce che apparteneva chiaramente all'uomo.* “Non voglio scomodare questa giovane per farla andare oltre. Molti non si sarebbero fidati tanto da arrivare fin qui, ma vede, ho intenzione di assecondarla.”

“Di assecondarmi!” *piagnucolò la voce della ragazza seguita dalla spia.* “È davvero premuroso, signore. Assecondarmi! Be' non importa!”

“Qual è la ragione per cui ci avete condotto in questo strano posto? Perché non ci avete permesso di parlarvi di sopra, dove c'è luce e vita, invece di condurci in questo buco oscuro e tetro?”

“Ve l’ho già detto prima che avevo paura di parlarvi lì. Non so perché”, disse la ragazza tremante “ma ho così tanta paura e timore questa notte che riesco appena a stare in piedi.”

“Timore di cosa?”

“Non so precisamente di cosa—magari lo sapessi. Orribili pensieri di *morte*—*sudari insanguinati*—e la paura che mi fa ardere come se andassi a fuoco—questi pensieri sono stati con me tutto il giorno. Stavo leggendo un libro questa sera, tanto per far passare il tempo e i miei stessi pensieri vi apparvero stampati.”

“Immaginazione!”

“Non è immaginazione. Giuro di avere visto “*Bara*” scritto a caratteri cubitali e in neretto in ogni pagina del libro—già, e me n’è passata una vicino nella strada, stanotte.”

“Non c’è niente d’insolito in questo. Le vedo spesso passare.”

“Sì, ma *quelle sono vere*. Questa non lo era.”

“Per favore, le parli con gentilezza,” disse la giovane all’uomo dai capelli brizzolati. “Povera creatura! Sembra averne così bisogno.”

“Che sia benedetta, signorina, per questo! Persone religiose come voi mi avrebbero disprezzata vedendomi così questa notte e avrebbero gridato alle fiamme e alla vendetta. Oh, cara signorina, perché le persone che si

considerano figlie di Dio non sono così gentili e cortesi con noi poveretti come lo è lei?”

“Non eri qui la scorsa domenica notte, ragazza, come mi avevi detto.”

“Non sono potuta venire. Sono stata trattenuta con la forza.”

“Da chi?”

“*Bill—Sikes*—quello di cui avevo già parlato alla signorina.”

“Spero bene che non avrà sospettato che vi siate messa in contatto con qualcuno per le cose che ci hanno condotto qui stasera?”

“No,” rispose la ragazza, scuotendo la testa. “Per me non è molto semplice lasciarlo se non sa il perché; non avrei potuto vedere la signorina quando la vidi se non gli avessi dato un sorso di *laudano* prima di venire via.”

“Era sveglio quando sei tornata?”

“No; né lui né nessuno degli altri sospetta di me.”

“Bene. Adesso ascoltami. Io sono il signor Brownlow, un amico di questa giovane donna. Voglio, negli interessi di questa signora e per il suo stesso bene, che consegni Fagin alla giustizia.”

“Fagin! Non lo farò! Non lo farò mai! Diavolo com'è, e per quanto sia stato anche peggio del diavolo con me, come un maestro di diavoleria, non lo farò mai.”

“Perché?”

“Perché la brutta vita che ha vissuto lui l’ho vissuta anche io; e perché ci sono molti di noi che hanno affrontato lo stesso percorso insieme. Non tradirò quelli che avrebbero potuto—ognuno di loro—tradirmi, ma che non l’hanno mai fatto, per quanto cattivi siano. Infine perché— (come faccio a dirlo con la signorina qui davanti!)—tra loro, ce n’è uno, *questo Bill—questo Sikes*—il più disperato di tutti—*che io non posso lasciare*. Non so se è la collera di Dio per gli sbagli che ho commesso, ma nonostante tutto sono attratta da lui e lo sarei, credo, anche se sapessi che sarebbe pronto ad *uccidermi* con le sue mani.”

“Ma consegni un uomo—non lui—non uno del gruppo—quel Monks, nelle mie mani e lasci che me ne occupi io.”

“E se insorgesse contro gli altri?”

“Ti prometto che, in quel caso, la questione si fermerebbe lì, loro sarebbero liberi.”

“Ho anche la promessa della signorina su questo?”

“Certo” rispose Rose Maylie, la giovane.

“Sono stata una bugiarda ed ho vissuto tra i bugiardi sin da bambina, ma crederò alla vostra parola.”

Dopo aver ricevuto rassicurazioni da entrambi che poteva stare tranquilla, continuò con un tono di voce così tenue che era spesso difficoltoso persino capire il senso di quello che stava dicendo. Spiegava il sistema con cui questo Monks poteva essere trovato e catturato. Ma niente l’avrebbe indotta a

compromettere uno dei suoi compagni; anche se non aveva nessuna ragione, poveretta, a risparmiarli.

“Ora” disse il gentiluomo, quando lei ebbe finito, “ci ha dato un aiuto prezioso cara ragazza e voglio che questo vi metta in una posizione migliore. Cosa posso fare per lei?”

“Nulla.”

“Non si ostini a dire così; ci pensi bene; prenda tempo. Mi dica.”

“Nulla, signore. Non può fare niente per aiutarmi. Ho ormai abbandonato ogni speranza.”

“Si è messa da sola al di là di ogni speranza. Il passato è stato un triste sperpero delle sue giovani energie mal usate, tesori sprecati che il Creatore dona una volta e mai più; ma *per il futuro, può ancora sperare!* [non dico che è in nostro potere offrirle la pace interiore, perché quella la deve trovare da sé, ma un rifugio tranquillo, in Inghilterra o, se ha paura di rimanere qui, in qualche paese straniero, questo non solo è nelle nostre possibilità, ma proteggerla è il nostro più grande desiderio. Prima dell'alba, prima che questo fiume si svegli con i primi bagliori del giorno, sarà portata lontano dal tiro dei suoi vecchi alleati, e dietro non rimarrà alcuna traccia di lei come se fosse sparita dalla terra in questo momento.] Venga! Non la lascerò tornare indietro, neanche per scambiare una sola parola con un vecchio compagno, né per dare un'occhiata a qualche vecchio covo. Li molli tutti, adesso che ne ha il tempo e il modo!”

“Sta per persuadersi,” disse la giovane donna.

“Temo di no, mia cara.”

“*No signore—No signorina.* Sono incatenata alla mia vecchia vita. La *detesto* e la *odio*, ma non la posso *lasciare*.—Quando signorine così giovani e buone, così felici e belle come lei, signorina, donate il vostro cuore, l’amore vi porta lontano. Mentre persone come me; senza un tetto sicuro se non quello di una bara, e nessun amico nella buona e nella cattiva sorte se non un’infermiera d’ospedale; tendono il loro cuore marcio a un uomo, con la speranza che le possa curare!—La paura mi assale di nuovo. Devo andare a casa. Lasciamoci. Potrei essere spiata o vista. *Via! Via!* Se vi sono stata d’aiuto, tutto ciò che chiedo è di lasciarmi andare per la mia strada da sola.”

“Prenda questo borsellino,” disse la giovane donna. “Lo accetti per amor mio, così che possa avere qualche risorsa in caso di bisogno o se si trovasse nei guai.”

“*No!* Non l’ ho fatto *per soldi.* *Lasciatemelo pensare.* Eppure—datemi qualcosa che avete indossato—mi piacerebbe avere qualcosa—*no, no,* non un *anello*, me lo ruberebbero subito—i guanti o il fazzoletto—qualsiasi cosa che possa tenere e che le sia appartenuto. Ecco. *Benedetta! Che Dio vi benedica!!*  
*Buona notte, buona notte!*”

L'agitazione della ragazza e la preoccupazione di essere vista e di esporla così alle violenze, sembrò convincere il gentiluomo a lasciarla andare. Seguirono rumori di passi che si allontanavano e le voci cessarono.

Dopo una breve attesa Nancy risalì in strada. La spia rimase al suo posto ancora per qualche minuto, finché, *dopo aver dato un'occhiata in giro* per assicurarsi di non essere osservato, sfrecciò via verso la casa di Fagin con tutta la forza delle sue gambe.

### CAPITOLO III

Mancavano quasi due ore all'arrivo del mattino; quel periodo che nell'autunno dell'anno può essere definito veramente la morte della notte; quando le strade sono silenziose e deserte; quando anche i suoni appaiono sonnecchiare e la depravazione e il disordine tornano a casa, barcollanti; era in quest'ora calma e silenziosa che Fagin sedeva nella sua vecchia tana. Disteso sopra un materasso sul pavimento giaceva Noah Claypole, meglio noto come *Morris Bolter*, profondamente addormentato. Talvolta il vecchio volgeva lo sguardo su di lui per qualche istante e poi lo riportava sulla candela che si consumava.

Sedette senza cambiare posizione e senza prestare la minima attenzione al passare del tempo finché il campanello non suonò. Strisciò di sopra e di lì a poco ritornò, accompagnato da un uomo coperto fino al mento, che portava un fagotto sotto il braccio. Tirato indietro il cappotto, l'uomo espose *il grande corpo di Sikes, lo scassinatore*.

“*Ecco!*” disse, appoggiando il fagotto sul tavolo. “Prenditi cura di questo e cerca di ricavarci il più possibile. È stato abbastanza difficile da prendere. Pensavo che ci avrei impiegato tre ore di meno.”

Fagin posò la mano sul fagotto e lo chiuse a chiave in una credenza, ma non distolse mai *lo sguardo dal ladro, neanche per un istante*.

“Che c'è ora?” disse Sikes “Per quale motivo guardi un uomo in quel modo?”

Fagin alzò la mano destra e agitò il dito indice tremante in aria.

“Ehi!” *sentendolo sul petto*. “Sì, è impazzito. Devo stare attento qui dentro.”

“No, no, non è così—non sei tu la persona, Bill. Io non—non ho niente contro di te.”

“Oh! No è?” *Passando una pistola in una tasca più comoda*. “Meglio così—per uno di noi. Non importa chi dei due.”

“Devo dirti una cosa, Bill, che ti renderà peggio di me.”

“Sì? Dimmi! Sentiamo, sbrigati o Nancy penserà che mi sia perso.”

“*Perso!* Lei la faccenda l’ha già sistemato abbastanza bene, in testa sua.”

Fissò la faccia del vecchio con sguardo perplessa, senza trovare però una soluzione soddisfacente a quell’indovinello. Lo prese per il colletto del cappotto con le enormi mani e lo scosse violentemente.

“Parla, lo farai? Altrimenti se non lo farai sarà perché non avrai più fiato. Apri la bocca e di’ quello che devi dire. Muoviti, *fulminante, confusionaria, prodigiosa vecchia canaglia*, muoviti!”

“Supponiamo che quel ragazzo sdraiato là” iniziò Fagin.

*Sikes si voltò nella direzione dove Noah stava dormendo*, come se non lo avesse notato prima. “Allora?”

“Supponiamo che quel ragazzo stesse per fare una soffiata—stesse per tradirci tutti. Supponiamo che quel ragazzo lo facesse per un suo capriccio—non perché forzato, né istigato, né interrogato dal prete e costretto a confessare

perché messo a pane ed acqua—ma di sua iniziativa; per soddisfare il proprio gusto; sgattaiolando via durante la notte per farlo. Mi stai ascoltando? Supponiamo che abbia fatto tutto questo, allora che faresti?”

“Che farei? Se fosse ancora in vita al mio arrivo gli macinerei la testa sotto il tacco di ferro dei miei stivali, frantumandola in così tanti granelli quanti sono i capelli che ha in testa.”

“E se lo *avessi* fatto *io!* *Io*, che so così tante cose, e potrei far impiccare così tanta gente oltre a me?”

“Non lo so. Farei qualcosa per farmi mettere ai ferri; e se fossi processato con te, ti cadrei addosso in tribunale così da farti schizzare fuori il cervello davanti alla gente. Ti spapolerei la testa come se ti ci fosse passato sopra un carro carico.”

Fagin guardò attentamente il ladro ed invitandolo a stare in silenzio, si chinò vicino al letto sul pavimento e cominciò a scuotere colui che vi dormiva sopra per svegliarlo.

“*Bolter! Bolter! Povero ragazzo!*” disse Fagin, sollevando lo sguardo con un’espressione di anticipazione demoniaca e parlando lentamente e con gran enfasi. “*È stanco*—stanco per averla spiata così a lungo—averla spiata, Bill.”

“Che cosa vuoi dire?”

Fagin non rispose, ma chinandosi nuovamente sul dormiente, lo sollevò in posizione seduta. Dopo che il finto nome fu ripetuto più volte, Noah si strofinò gli occhi e sbadigliando si guardò attorno assonnato.

“Ripetilo—ancora una volta, solo per farglielo sentire,” disse l’ebreo, *indicando* Sikes mentre parlava.

“Dirti cosa?” chiese l’assonnato Noah muovendosi irascibilmente.

“Quello—NANCY!! L’hai seguita?”

“Sì.”

“Fino al London Bridge?”

“Sì.”

“Dove ha incontrato due persone?”

“Sì, è così.”

“Un gentiluomo e una signora che aveva già incontrato di sua spontanea volontà, che le chiesero di consegnare i suoi amici, Monks per primo, cosa *che fece*—di descriverlo, cosa *che fece*—di dire loro in quale casa ci incontriamo, cosa *che fece*—da dove può essere osservata meglio, e *lo fece*—a che ora la gente va lì, cosa *che fece*. Ha fatto tutto questo. Ha spifferato *tutto*, ogni parola, senza una minaccia, senza lamentarsi—*lo ha fatto—giusto?*”

“Giusto” replicò Noah, *grattandosi il capo*. “Questo è proprio quello che è successo!”

“Che hanno detto di domenica scorsa?”

“Domenica scorsa! Te l’ho già detto prima, cribbio.”

“Meglio ancora. Dillo ancora!”

“Le chiesero,” svegliandosi e cominciando ad intuire chi era Sikes, “Le chiesero perché non era andata, come promesso, domenica. Prima disse che non aveva potuto.”

“*Perché? Digli quello?*”

“Perché era stata trattenuta a casa con la forza da Bill—Sikes—l’uomo di cui aveva già parlato loro.”

“E che altro su di lui? Che altro su Bill—Sikes—l’uomo di cui gli aveva già parlato? Diglielo, *diglielo.*”

“Che lei non poteva uscire facilmente senza che lui sapesse dove stava andando, così la prima volta che si era recata dalla signorina,—*ah! ah! ah!* Questo mi ha fatto *ridere* quando lo ha detto, *proprio così*—gli ha fatto bere del *laudano*. Ah! ah! ah!”

Sikes si precipitò fuori della stanza e sfrecciò su per le scale.

“Bill, *Bill*” gridò Fagin, seguendolo in fretta. “Una parola. Solo una parola.”

“Fammi uscire. Non mi *parlare!* Non è *sicuro*. Fammi *uscire.*”

“Lascia che ti dica una cosa” ripeté Fagin, posando la mano sulla chiave.

“Non sarai—non sarai—*troppo—violento*, Bill?”

Il giorno stava spuntando e la luce era abbastanza per poter vedere l'uno il volto dell'altro. Si scambiarono una breve occhiata; c'era lo stesso fuoco negli occhi di entrambi.

“Voglio dire non troppo—*violento*—per—per—*sicurezza*. *Sii astuto*, Bill, e non troppo *audace*.”

Il ladro si precipitò nelle strade ancora silenziose.

Senza una pausa o momento di riflessione; senza girarsi neanche una volta né a destra né a sinistra; senza mai alzare lo sguardo verso il cielo o abbassarlo verso terra, ma guardando dritto davanti a sé con fermezza feroce: non borbottò una parola, non rilassò un muscolo finché non raggiunse la porta di casa. L'aprì con la chiave, senza far rumore e sommessamente salì su per le scale, entrato in camera sua la chiuse a *doppia mandata e tirò via la coperta dal letto*.

La donna era sdraiata sul letto, semivestita. L'aveva svegliata dal sonno, così si tirò su con uno sguardo frettoloso e allibito.

“Alzati!”

“Sei *tu*, Bill!”

“*Alzati!!!*”

*C'era una candela accesa, ma lui la prese dal portacandele e la scaraventò con violenza nel caminetto. Vedendo la fioca luce dell'alba, la ragazza si alzò per tirare le tende.*

*“Lascia stare. C’è abbastanza luce per cosa devo fare.”*

*“Bill, perché mi guardi in quel modo?”*

*Il ladro la osservò per alcuni secondi, con le narici allargate e il respiro pesante; poi, afferrandola per la testa e per la gola, la trascinò al centro della stanza e le posò la grossa mano sulla bocca.*

*“Sei stata spiata questa notte, diavolo di una donna, ogni tua parola è stata sentita.”*

*“Se è stata sentita ogni parola che ho detto allora è stato sentito anche che ti ho risparmiato. Bill, caro Bill, non puoi avere il coraggio di uccidermi. Oh! Pensa a tutto quello a cui ho rinunciato per te proprio questa notte, per te. Bill, Bill! Per amor del cielo, fermati prima di versare il mio sangue!!! Ti sono stata fedele, lo giuro sulla mia anima colpevole, lo sono stata!!! Questa notte quel gentiluomo e quella cara signorina mi hanno parlato di un rifugio in qualche paese straniero dove avrei potuto passare il resto della mia vita in solitudine e in pace. Permettimi d’incontrarli di nuovo, li pregherò in ginocchio di mostrare la stessa pietà verso di te; lasciamo entrambi questo posto terrificante e lontano da qui condurremo una vita migliore, dimenticando come abbiamo vissuto se non nelle preghiere, senza ricaderci mai più. Non è mai troppo tardi per pentirsi. Così mi hanno detto—e adesso lo sento. Ma dobbiamo avere tempo—avere un po’ di tempo, solo un po’!”*

*Lo scassinatore si liberò una mano e afferrò la pistola. La certezza di un'immediata scoperta se avesse sparato gli balenò per la mente, così la colpì due volte sul viso girato che quasi sfiorava il suo.*

*Lei barcollò e cadde a terra, rialzandosi s'inginocchiò e sfilò dal seno un fazzoletto bianco—quello di Rose Maylie—e alzandolo verso il cielo sospirò una preghiera di misericordia verso il Creatore.*

*Era una scena orrenda da guardare. L'assassino impallidì e nell'indietreggiare verso il muro si coprì gli occhi con la mano, afferrò un randello e le diede un colpo tanto forte da scaraventarla a terra!!*

*Il sole brillante cominciò a splendere intenso e radioso sulla città affollata.*

*Attraverso costosi vetri colorati e finestre riparate con la carta, attraverso la cupola della cattedrale e le fessure putride, il sole diffondeva equamente lo stesso raggio. Illuminò la stanza dove giaceva la donna uccisa. Il sole entrò. Provò a tenerlo fuori, ma entrava dentro. Se la visione era già stata spaventosa in quella cupa mattinata, cosa sarebbe diventata, adesso, sotto quella luce brillante!!!*

*Non si era mosso; aveva avuto paura a muoversi. C'era stato un gemito e un movimento della mano; e con terrore aggiunto alla rabbia, l'aveva colpita e colpita ancora. Gli aveva gettato sopra un tappeto; ma era peggio immaginare gli occhi e vederli muoversi verso di lui, che vederli fissi verso l'alto, come se stesse guardando il riflesso della pozza di sangue che palpitava e ballava sul*

*soffitto, sotto la luce del sole.* Lo strappò via. E lì c'era il corpo— semplicemente carne e sangue, nient'altro—ma *che carne, e così tanto sangue!!!*

Sfregò un fiammifero, accese il fuoco e gettò il randello nelle fiamme. Sull'estremità c'erano dei capelli attaccati che si ridussero in cenere e salirono vorticosamente nel camino. Anche questo lo impaurì, ma continuò ad impugnare l'arma finché non si ruppe, poi la gettò sul carbone per farla bruciare e tramutarsi in cenere. Si lavò e strofinò i vestiti; c'erano macchie che non sarebbero andate via, ma le tagliò e le bruciò. *Quante macchie sparse in tutta la stanza! Anche le zampe del cane erano insanguinate!!!!*

In tutto questo tempo non aveva *voltato* mai, *neanche una volta*, le spalle al *cadavere*. Poi si mosse, *indietro*, verso la porta; trascinandosi dietro il cane, chiuse piano la porta, la serrò con la chiave, la prese e se ne andò via dalla casa.

Mentre si allontanava dalla città cercava anche di lasciarsi dietro quell'intera giornata. Trascorse quella notte nella solitudine e nell'oscurità della periferia, ma *era perseguitato da quell'orribile figura che seguiva i suoi passi*. Poteva sentire il fruscio dei suoi abiti tra le foglie; ogni alito di vento arrivava carico di quell'ultimo grido soffocato. Se lui si *fermava*, anch'esso si *fermava*. Se *correva*, lo *inseguiva*; ma senza correre però—quello sarebbe stato un

sollievo—ma generato da un lento e malinconico soffio d'aria che non aumentava e non diminuiva.

Spesso si voltava pronto a lottare contro il fantasma, anche a costo di rimetterci la vita, ma i capelli gli si drizzavano in testa e il sangue gli si gelava poiché il fantasma si era girato con lui e gli era nuovamente dietro. Appoggiò la schiena contro una sponda e sentì che si trovava sopra di lui, era sopra di lui, nel cielo gelido di quella notte. Si buttò sdraiato sulla strada. *Gli era sopra la testa, silenzioso, diritto e immobile: un tumulo funerario umano con l'epitaffio in sangue!!*

Improvvisamente, verso l'alba, prese la disperata decisione di tornare a Londra. “C'è qualcuno con cui parlare lì, in ogni caso. Ed anche un nascondiglio nella vecchia casa della banda a Jacob's Island.—Correrò il rischio.”

Scegliendo le strade meno trafficate per fare il ritorno, decise di rimanere nascosto a poca distanza dalla città fino a che non fosse di nuovo notte inoltrata e poi procedette per la sua destinazione. Fece così e entrò zoppicando. Trovò tre colleghi ladri spaventati—volto impallidito, occhi infossati, guance scavate—era il fantasma di se stesso. *Il cane alle calcagna con le zampe infangate, zoppicante, mezzo cieco, strisciante, come se fosse stato avvelenato da quelle macchie!!!*

Tutti e tre gli uomini indietreggiarono. Nessuno di loro parlò.

“Tu che custodisci questa casa, hai intenzione di tradirmi o di lasciarmi rifugiare qui fino a che la caccia non sarà finita?”

“Ti puoi fermare qui, se pensi che sia sicuro. Ma quale essere è mai fuggito da quegli uomini che ti stanno cercando!”

“*Ascolta!!!*” Un gran rumore che arrivava come un fuoco impetuoso. Cosa? *Scoperto? Così presto?* La caccia era già finita? Le luci scintillavano là sotto, si udivano voci zelanti che parlavano forte, scalpito di passi affrettati sui ponti di legno nel fossato di Folly, colpi sulla porta pesante e sulle persiane della casa, un'ondata di persone lì fuori nell'oscurità, come un campo di grano mosso da una furiosa bufera!

“Mentre salivo ho visto che c'è la bassa marea. Dammi una corda. Mi calerò dal tetto della casa, sul retro, nel fossato di Folly e sparirò da quella parte o sarò soffocato. *Dammi una corda!*”

Nessuno si mosse. Indicarono il luogo dove tenevano quelle cose. Così l'assassino, presa una grossa corda, si precipitò sul tetto della casa. Di tutte le urla terrificanti che erano mai state udite da orecchie umane nessuna poteva superare il grido furioso emesso quando fu visto. Alcuni strillarono a quelli più vicini alla casa di bruciarla; altri supplicarono gli agenti di sparargli a morte; altri ancora imprecavano contro di lui, cercando di afferrarlo inutilmente in aria. Chi chiese delle scale, chi grosse mazze, mentre altri correvano qua e là con le torce a cercarle.

*“Prometto cinquanta sterline”* urlò il signor *Brownlow* dal ponte più vicino

*“All’uomo che catturerà quell’assassino vivo!”*

Mise il piede sul gruppo di camini, vi fissò saldamente un’estremità della corda e con l’aiuto di mani e denti fece nell’altra estremità un forte nodo scorsoio. Con la corda intorno al corpo poteva calarsi giù, fino ad un’altezza dal suolo inferiore alla sua statura, pronto con il coltello in mano per tagliare la corda e lasciarsi cadere.

Nell’istante in cui portò il cappio sopra la testa, prima di farlo scendere sotto le ascelle, *guardando sul tetto dietro di sé, alzò le braccia e urlò: “Ancora quegli occhi!”*. Come colpito da un fulmine barcollò, perse l’equilibrio e cascò giù dal parapetto. Il cappio che gli era intorno al collo si alzò con il suo peso; teso come una corda d’arco e rapido come una freccia. Cadde cinque piedi e mezzo e rimase appeso con il *coltello stretto nella mano che s’irrigidiva!!!*

Il *cane*, che sino allora era rimasto sdraiato nascosto, corse avanti e indietro sul parapetto con un tetro ululato, preparandosi per fare un salto, cercò di lanciarsi sulle *spalle del morto*. Mancato l’obiettivo, il cadavere precipitò nel fossato, si capovolse mentre cadeva e colpì un sasso che gli spappolò il cervello!!



### **3. DAL ROMANZO ALLA LETTURA PUBBLICA**

CHAPTER 45

*Noah Claypole is employed by Fagin on a secret Mission*

THE old man was up, betimes, next morning, and waited impatiently for the appearance of his new associate, who after a delay that seemed interminable<sup>1</sup>, at length presented himself, and commenced a voracious assault on the breakfast.

‘Bolter,’ said Fagin, drawing up a chair and seating himself opposite to him<sup>2</sup>.

‘Well, here I am,’ returned Noah. ‘What's the matter? Don't yer ask me to do anything till I have done eating. That's a great fault in this place. Yer never get time enough over yer meals.’

‘You can talk as you eat, can't you?’ said Fagin, cursing his dear young friend's greediness from the very bottom of his heart.

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1. Informative detail that does not appear in the public reading because it is non essential.

2. The green highlighted phrases that are in the text of the novel specify: who the person talking is, to whom that person is talking, what he is doing in the meantime and what his feelings are. These clarifications do not appear in the public reading because they are not essential as it is possible to understand them from the context.

### 3.1 CONFRONTO ROMANZO-LETTURA PUBBLICA

## Sikes and Nancy

### CHAPTER I

FAGIN THE receiver, of stolen goods<sup>1</sup> was *up*, betimes, one<sup>2</sup> morning, and waited impatiently for the appearance of his new associate, Noah Claypole, otherwise Morris Bolter<sup>3</sup>; who at length presented himself, and, cutting a monstrous slice of bread<sup>4</sup>, commenced a voracious assault on the breakfast.

‘Bolter, *Bolter*<sup>5</sup>.’

‘Well, here I am. What's the matter? Don't yer ask me to do anything till I have done eating. That's a great fault in this place. Yer never get time enough over yer meals.’

‘You can talk as you eat, can't you?’

- 
1. Clarification of Fagin's name and occupation since the audience may not have read the novel and may not be aware of these details. It does not appear in the novel because he has already been introduced in the eighth chapter.
  2. Substitution of “next” with “one”. This change has been made because “next” is linked to the events of the previous day of which the audience may not be aware.
  3. Added element which clarifies who the protagonist of this chapter is. It does not appear in the novel because he has already been introduced in the fifth chapter. He is the lad met by Oliver while working for Mr. Sowberry.
  4. This phrase is part of a descriptive fragment that will appear later in the novel. The writer has voluntarily omitted the fragment and left only this phrase to provide concrete details about what happens while the main characters were talking.
  5. Repetition of the main character's name. Added to give more emphasis. It does not appear in the novel.

‘Oh yes, I can talk. I get on better when I talk,’ said Noah, cutting a monstrous slice of bread. ‘Where's Charlotte?’

‘Out,’ said Fagin. ‘I sent her out this morning with the other young woman, because I wanted us to be alone.’

‘Oh!’ said Noah. ‘I wish yer'd ordered her to make some buttered toast first. Well<sup>3</sup>.

Talk away. Yer won't interrupt me.’

There seemed, indeed, no great fear of anything interrupting him, as he had evidently sat down with a determination to do a great deal of business.

[‘You did well yesterday, my dear,’ said Fagin.....]<sup>4</sup>

Fagin affected to laugh very heartily; and Mr. Bolter having had his laugh out, took a series of large bites, which finished his first hunk of bread and butter, and assisted himself to a second<sup>5</sup>.

‘I want you, Bolter,’ said Fagin, leaning over the table, ‘to do a piece of work for me, my dear, that needs great care and caution.’

---

3. Charlotte, also known as Noah's girlfriend, appears for the first time in the fourth chapter of the novel. She was the housemaid when Oliver lived and worked in Mr. Sowerby's house. She is not mentioned in the public reading because the audience may not be aware of Oliver's meetings in the previous chapters.

4. Dialogue between Noah and Fagin. It supplies information about Noah's first day of work as a thief with a detailed description about his spoil. It does not appear in the public reading since it provides not essential information.

5. Detailed description of the situation, omitted in the public reading since it is non necessary.

‘Oh yes, I can talk. I get on better when I talk. *Talk away*. Yer won't interrupt me.’

There seemed, indeed, no great fear of anything interrupting him, as he had evidently sat down with a determination to do a deal of business.

‘I want you, Bolter,’ *leaning over the table*, ‘to do a piece of work for me, my dear, that needs great care and caution.’

‘I say,’ rejoined Bolter, ‘don't yer go shoving me into danger, or sending me to any more o' yer police-offices<sup>6</sup>. That don't suit me, that don't; and so I tell yer.’

‘There's not the smallest danger in it — not the very smallest,’ said the Jew; ‘it's only to dodge a woman.’

‘An old woman?’ demanded Mr. Bolter.

‘A young one,’ replied Fagin.

‘I can do that pretty well, I know<sup>7</sup>,’ said Bolter. ‘I was a regular cunning<sup>8</sup> sneak when I was at school. What am I to dodge her for? Not to —’

‘Not to do anything, but to<sup>9</sup> tell me where she goes, who she I sees, and, if possible, what she says; to remember the street, if it is a street, or the house, if it is a house; and to bring me back all the information you can.’

‘What'll yer give me?’ asked Noah, setting down his cup, and looking his employer, eagerly, in the face.

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6. Information that does not appear in the reading because it is linked to events occurred in the previous chapters. In the forty-third chapter of the book, Noah was sent by Fagin to a police station to make sure that Jack Dawkins, who was another associate of Fagin's team, arrested for theft, was not betraying them. The audience may not have read the novel; therefore, they may not be aware of these details.

7. Element that gives more emphasis to Noah's speech. It does not appear in the reading because it is not needed.

8. Adjective that emphasizes the idea of the protagonist's sneaking. It has been omitted in the public reading because this information is not relevant.

9. The infinitive form is not used in the reading. It is a stylistic alteration as the meaning is unchanged.

‘I say, don't yer go a-shoving me into danger, yer know<sup>6</sup>. That don't suit me, that don't; and so I tell yer.’

‘There's not the smallest danger in it—not the very smallest; it's only to *dodge a woman*.’

‘An old woman?’

‘A young one.’

‘I can do that pretty well. I was a regular sneak when I was at school. What am I to dodge her for? Not to—’

‘Not to do anything, but tell me where she goes, who she sees, and, if possible, what she says; to remember the street, if it is a street, or the house, if it is a house; and to bring me back all the information you can.’

‘What'll yer give me?’

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6. Element added to emphasize Noah's speech.

‘If you do it well, a pound, my dear. One pound,’ said Fagin, wishing to interest him in the scent as much as possible. ‘And that’s what I never gave yet, for any job of work where there wasn’t valuable consideration to be gained.’

‘Who is she?’ inquired Noah.

‘One of us.’

‘Oh Lor!’ cried Noah, curling up his nose. ‘Yer doubtful of her, are yer?’

‘She has found out some new friends, my dear, and I must know who they are,’ replied Fagin.

‘I see,’ said Noah. ‘Just to have the pleasure of knowing them, if they’re respectable people, eh<sup>10</sup>? Ha! ha! ha! I’m your man.’

‘I knew you would be,’ cried Fagin, elated by the success of his proposal.

‘Of course, of course,’ replied Noah<sup>11</sup>. ‘Where is she? Where am I to wait for her? Where am I to go?’

‘All that, my dear, you shall hear from me. I’ll point her out at the proper time,’ said Fagin. ‘You keep ready, and leave the rest to me.’

That night, and the next, and the next again, the spy sat booted and equipped in his carter’s dress: ready to turn out at a word from Fagin. Six nights passed –

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10. Noah’s emphatic exclamation. It does not appear in the reading because it is not essential.

11. Brief dialogue between Noah and Fagin in which Noah accepts the job. Omitted in the reading because the content of their dialogue is understandable from the context.

‘If you do it well, a pound, my dear. One pound. And that's what I never gave yet, for any job of work where there wasn't valuable consideration to be **got**<sup>7</sup>.’

‘Who is she?’

‘One of us.’

‘Oh Lor! Yer doubtful of her, are yer?’

‘She has found out some new friends, my dear, and I must know who they are.’

‘I see. Ha! ha! ha! I'm your man. Where is she? Where am I to wait for her? Where am I to go?’

‘All that, my dear, you shall hear from me. I'll point her out at the proper time. You keep ready, **in the clothes I have got here for you**<sup>8</sup>, and leave the rest to me.’

That night, and the next, and the next again, the spy sat booted and equipped **in the disguise of a carter**<sup>9</sup>: ready to turn out at a word from Fagin. Six nights passed,

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7. Different verb used in the novel. It is a stylistic adjustment since the meaning is unchanged.

8. Added information. It defines how the action is going to occur, and suggests that what is going to happen is a premeditated action. It does not appear in the novel because the reader is already aware of this information.

9. This phrase is written differently in the novel but with identical meaning. It is a stylistic difference.

six long weary nights<sup>12</sup> - and on each, Fagin came home with a disappointed face, and briefly intimated that it was not yet time.

On the seventh, he returned earlier<sup>13</sup>, and with an exultation he could not conceal. It was Sunday.

‘She goes abroad tonight,’ said Fagin, ‘and on the right errand, I’m sure; for she has been alone all day, and the man she is afraid of will not be back much before daybreak. Come with me. Quick!’

Noah started up without saying a word; for the Jew was in a state of such intense excitement that it infected him<sup>14</sup>. They left the house stealthily, and, hurrying<sup>15</sup> through a labyrinth of streets, arrived at length before a public-house, which Noah recognized as the same in which he had slept, on the night of his arrival in London<sup>16</sup>.

It was past eleven o'clock, and the door was closed. It opened softly on its hinges<sup>17</sup>

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12. Element that provides more details to the event. Omitted in the public reading because this information is not essential.

13. Information omitted in the P.R. since it is not essential to have a complete understanding of the events.

14. Description of the protagonist’s feelings omitted in the public reading since it is not essential.

15. Adjective that emphasizes the action. Omitted in the public reading because it provides not essential information.

16. Fragment that recalls previous events and places. It is linked to Noah and Fagin’s first meeting (46th chapter of the novel). Omitted in the public reading because the audience may not be aware of these facts.

17. Element that provides more details to the action. Omitted in the public reading because this information is not essential.

and on each, Fagin came home with a disappointed face, and briefly intimated that it was not yet time. On the seventh he returned **exultant**<sup>10</sup>. It was Sunday **Night**<sup>11</sup>

‘She goes abroad to-night,’ said Fagin, ‘and on the right errand, I’m sure; for she has been alone all day, and the man she is afraid of will not be back much before daybreak. Come with me! Quick!’

They left the house, and, **stealing**<sup>12</sup> through a labyrinth of streets, arrived at length before a public-house.

It was past eleven o’clock, and the door was closed; **but**<sup>13</sup> it opened softly

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10. Summary of the main character’s feeling about this new event. In the novel there is a wider explanation of his feeling, which is summarized in the reading.

11. Specification added to clarify the time in which the action takes place. Omitted in the novel since it is not needed.

12. In the novel, an adverb is used to describe the action. It is a stylistic difference since the meaning is unchanged.

13. Conjunction added to connect the previous and the following phrase. In the novel they are divided by a full stop. It is a stylistic adjustment.

as Fagin gave a low whistle. They entered, without noise; and the door was closed behind them<sup>18</sup>.

Scarcely venturing to whisper, but substituting dumb show for words, Fagin, and the young Jew who had admitted them<sup>19</sup>, pointed out the pane of glass to Noah, and signed to him to climb up and observe the person in the adjoining room.

‘Is that the woman?’ he asked, scarcely above his breath.

Fagin nodded yes.

‘I can't see her face well,’ whispered Noah. ‘She is looking down, and the candle is behind her.’

‘Stay there,’ whispered Fagin. He signed to Barney, who withdrew. In an instant, the lad<sup>20</sup> entered the room adjoining, and, under pretence of snuffing the candle, moved it in the required position, and, speaking to the girl, caused her to raise her face.

‘I see her now,’ cried the spy.

‘Plainly?’

‘I should know her among a thousand.’

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18. Segment that provides more details about the action. Omitted in the public reading because it is not essential.

19. Specification omitted in the reading because it could confuse the audience, who might not know who the Jew is.

20. Detail about the protagonist and the speed of the action. Omitted in the public reading because it provides not essential information.

as Fagin gave a low whistle. They entered, without noise.

Scarcely venturing to whisper, but substituting dumb show for words, Fagin pointed out a pane of glass high in the wall<sup>14</sup> to Noah, and signed to him to climb up, on a piece of furniture below it<sup>15</sup>, and observe the person in the adjoining room.

‘Is that the woman?’

*Fagin nodded ‘yes’.*

‘I can't see her face well. She is looking down, and the candle is behind her.’

‘Stay there,’ He signed to the lad, who had opened the house-door to them<sup>16</sup>; who withdrew—entered the room adjoining, and, under pretence of snuffing the candle, moved it in the required position; then he spoke to the girl, causing her<sup>17</sup> to raise her face.

‘I see her now!’

‘Plainly?’

I should know her among a thousand.

---

14. Specification of how the action was going to occur. It has been added to clarify the context in which the action will take place.

15. Information added to help the audience understand how the action is going to develop.

16. Substitution of Barney's name with a more generic one. The audience may not have read the novel and therefore, they may not know who this character is as he appears in the previous chapters.

17. In the novel the two verbs have an inverted conjugation. It is a stylistic difference since the meaning is unchanged.

He hastily<sup>21</sup> descended, as<sup>22</sup> the room-door opened, and the girl came out. Fagin drew him behind a small partition which was curtained off<sup>23</sup>, and they held their breaths as she passed within a few feet of their place of concealment, and emerged by the door at which they had entered.

'Hist!' cried the lad who held the door. 'Dow.'

Noah exchanged a look with Fagin, and darted out<sup>24</sup>.

'To the left,' whispered the lad; 'take the left had, and keep od the other side.'

He did so; and, by the light of the lamps, saw the girl's retreating figure, already at some distance before him.

He advanced as near as he considered prudent, and kept on the opposite side of the street, the better to observe her motions. She looked nervously round, twice or thrice, and once stopped to let two men who were following close behind her, pass on<sup>25</sup>. She seemed to gather courage as she advanced, and to walk with a steadier and firmer step. The spy preserved the same relative distance between them, and followed: with his eye upon her<sup>26</sup>.

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21. Adverb that emphasizes the action. Omitted in the public reading since it provides not essential information.

22. Element that provides the sensation of few actions occurring at the same time. In the public reading it has been omitted in order to provide stage directions.

23. Descriptive element, omitted in the public reading since it provides not essential information.

24. Omitted dialogue. Only the relevant content has been extracted and summarized in the reading.(Noah's darted out)

25. Detailed description omitted in the public reading since it provides not essential information.

26. Specification that emphasizes the action. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential.

The spy<sup>18</sup> descended, the room-door opened, and the girl came out. Fagin drew him behind a small partition, and they held their breaths as she passed within a few feet of their place of concealment, and emerged by the door at which they had entered.

'After her!!'<sup>19</sup> To the *left*. Take the left hand, and keep on the<sup>20</sup> other side. After her<sup>21</sup>

The spy darted off<sup>22</sup>; and, by the light of the street<sup>23</sup> lamps, saw the girl's retreating figure, already at some distance before him.

He advanced as near as he considered prudent, and *kept* on the opposite side of the street. *She looked nervously round*. She seemed to gather courage as she advanced, and to walk with a steadier and firmer step. The spy preserved the same relative distance between them, and followed.

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18. Substitution of the personal pronoun with “the spy”, which is clearer for the audience.

19. Added to emphasize the situation.

20. “Had” and “Od” from the novel, are written as they were pronounced in that period. In the public reading they have been substituted with “hand” and “on the”, which is their correct written form.

21. Added to emphasize the situation.

22. Added to specify the subject and emphasize the action. It summarizes what has been explained in a previous omitted dialogue of the novel.

23. Information that specifies where the action takes place. Added to give the audience more details about the event.

CHAPTER 46

*The Appointment kept*

THE church **clocks**<sup>1</sup> chimed three-quarters past eleven, as two figures emerged on London Bridge. **One, which** advanced with a swift and rapid step, **was that of a woman** who looked **eagerly**<sup>2</sup> about her as though in quest of some expected object; **the other figure was that of a man**, who slunk along in the deepest shadow he could find, and, at some distance, accommodated his pace to hers: stopping when she stopped: and as she moved again, creeping stealthily on: but never allowing himself, in the ardour of his pursuit, to gain upon her **footsteps**<sup>3</sup>. Thus, they crossed the bridge, from the Middlesex to the Surrey shore, when the woman, **apparently**<sup>4</sup> disappointed in her anxious scrutiny of the foot-passengers, turned back. The movement was sudden; but **he who watched her** was not thrown off his guard by it; for, shrinking into one of the recesses which surmount the piers of the bridge, and leaning over the parapet the better to conceal his figure, he suffered her to pass **on the opposite pavement**<sup>5</sup>.

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1. Specification that does not appear in the reading. It provides not essential details.
  2. Adverb that provides more details to the action. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential.
  3. Specification omitted in the public reading. It is not essential.
  4. Adverb omitted in the reading since it is non essential.
  5. Clarification omitted in the reading since it provides unnecessary detail.

## CHAPTER II

THE churches chimed three quarters past eleven, as **the**<sup>1</sup> two figures emerged on London Bridge. **The young woman**<sup>2</sup> advanced with a swift and rapid step, and looked about her as though in quest of some expected object; **the young man**<sup>3</sup>, who slunk along in the deepest shadow he could find, and, at some distance, accommodated his pace to hers: stopping when she stopped: and as she moved again, creeping stealthily on: but never allowing himself, in the ardour of his pursuit, to gain upon her. Thus, they crossed the bridge, from the Middlesex to the Surrey shore, when the woman, disappointed in her anxious scrutiny of the foot-passengers, turned back. The movement was sudden; but **the man**<sup>4</sup> was not thrown off his guard by it; for, shrinking into one of the recesses which surmount the piers of the bridge, and leaning over the parapet the better to conceal his figure, he suffered her to pass.

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1. Definite article added to specify, to the audience, who these two people are. The two figures are, in fact, introduced in the previous chapter. The novel recreates a mysterious atmosphere. These characters will be explained later in the paragraph.
  2. Specification of who the main character of the action is. In the novel, this character is referred to as “one” in order to create a mysterious atmosphere.
  3. Element that clarifies who the other main character of the action is. In the novel it is clarified later.
  4. In the novel the protagonist is indicated by the assignment he was carrying out, “he who watched her”. In the reading the indication of this character has been summarized with “the man”.

When she was about the same distance in advance as she had been before, he slipped quietly down, and followed her again. At nearly the centre of the bridge, she stopped. **The man** stopped **too**<sup>6</sup>.

It was a very dark night. The day had been unfavorable, and at that hour and place there were few people stirring. Such as there were, hurried **quickly** past, **very** possibly without seeing, **but**<sup>7</sup> certainly without noticing, either the woman, or the man **who kept her in view**<sup>8</sup>. Their appearance was not **calculated to attract the importunate regards** of such of London's destitute population, as chanced to take their way over the bridge that night **in search of some cold arch or doorless hovel wherein to lay their heads**<sup>9</sup>; they stood there in silence: neither speaking nor spoken to, **by any one who passed**<sup>10</sup>.

**[A mist hung over.....]**<sup>11</sup>

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6. Added element omitted in the reading because it is possible to understand it from the context.

7. Specifications that give more emphasis to the action. They have been omitted in the reading since they are non essential.

8. Specification added to the main character's action omitted in the reading since it is non essential.

9. Descriptive phrase about London's population. It has been omitted in the reading since it provides not essential information.

10. Specification omitted in the reading since it provides unnecessary information.

11. Segment of the novel that provides a detailed description of the surroundings and gloomy atmosphere of where the action takes place. It has been omitted because this information is not essential for the reading.

When she was about the same distance in advance as she had been before, he slipped quietly down, and followed her again. At nearly the centre of the bridge she stopped. He<sup>5</sup> stopped

It was a very dark night. The day had been unfavorable, and at that hour and place there were few people stirring. Such as there were, hurried past; possibly without seeing, certainly without noticing, either the woman, or the man. Their appearance was not attractive<sup>6</sup> of such of London's, destitute population, as chanced to take their way over the bridge that night; and they stood there in silence: neither speaking nor spoken to.

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5. The character “the man”, that appears in the novel, is substituted with the personal pronoun. The change has been made because the clarification of the personal pronoun is not needed.

6. Summarization of a wider concept, expressible in one word.

The girl had taken a few restless<sup>12</sup> turns to and fro — closely watched meanwhile<sup>13</sup> by her hidden observer—when the heavy bell of St Paul's tolled for the death of another day. Midnight had come upon the crowded city. The palace, the night-cellar, the jail, the madhouse; the chambers of birth and death, of health and sickness; the rigid face of the corpse and the calm sleep of the child — midnight was upon them all<sup>14</sup>.

The hour had not struck two minutes<sup>15</sup>, when a young lady, accompanied by a grey-haired gentleman, alighted from a hackney-carriage within a short distance of the bridge, and, having dismissed the vehicle, walked straight towards it<sup>16</sup>. They had scarcely set foot upon its pavement, when the girl started, and immediately made towards them.

[They walked onward....]<sup>17</sup>

‘Not here,’ said Nancy hurriedly, ‘I am afraid to speak to you here. Come away- out of the public road—down the steps yonder!’

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12. Adjective omitted in the reading since it does not provide essential details.

13. Element that gives a sense of simultaneous actions. It has been omitted in the reading since it not essential.

14. Specification that emphasizes the description. It does not appear in the reading because it is not essential.

15. Specification about the situation and the time in which it occurred. It does not appear in the reading because the information that it provides is not essential.

16. Fragment that provides more details about how the action occurred. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential.

17. Segment describing the protagonists' meeting and the anxiety caused by a countryman who brushed against them, and made Nancy want to find a more secure place to talk. This part does not appear in the reading since it is not relevant to a complete understanding of Nancy's murder.

The girl had taken a few turns to and fro—closely watched by her hidden observer— *when the heavy bell of St. Pau’s tolled for the death of another day. Midnight had come upon the crowded, city. Upon<sup>7</sup> the palace, the night-cellar, the jail, the madhouse: the chambers of birth and death, of health and sickness, upon<sup>7</sup> the rigid face of the corpse and the calm sleep of the child.*

A young lady, accompanied by a grey-haired gentleman, alighted from a hackney-carriage. They had scarcely set foot upon the pavement of the bridge<sup>8</sup>, when the girl started, and joined them<sup>9</sup>.

‘*Not here!!* I am afraid to speak to you here. Come away—out of the public road—down the steps yonder!’

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7. Specification that does not appear in the novel. Added to give more emphasis to the description.

8. Specification added in the reading to clarify where the action takes place. The possessive adjective is used in the novel because a previous omitted phrase of the text of the novel had already informed the reader about this fact.

9. Expressed differently in the novel. It is a stylistic alteration since the meaning is unchanged.

[As she uttered these words...]<sup>18</sup>

The steps to which the girl had pointed, were those which, on the Surrey bank, and on the same side of the bridge as Saint Saviour's Church, form a landing-stairs from the river. To this spot, the man bearing the appearance of a countryman, hastened unobserved; and after a moment's survey of the place, he began to descend.

These stairs are a part of the bridge; they consist of three flights. Just below the end of the second, going down, the stone wall on the left terminates in an ornamental pilaster facing towards the Thames. At this point the lower steps widen: so that a person turning that angle of the wall, is necessarily unseen by any others on the stairs who chance to be above him, if only a step. The countryman looked hastily round, when he reached this point; and as there seemed no better place of concealment, and, the tide being out, there was plenty of room, he slipped aside, with his back to the pilaster, and there waited: pretty certain that they would come no lower, and that even if he could not hear what was said, he could follow them again, with safety<sup>19</sup>.

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18. Paragraph that explains where Nancy wanted to go to talk to her interlocutors for security needs. Omitted in the reading since it provides not essential information.

19. Details about the occurring action. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential information.

The steps to which she pointed<sup>10</sup>, were those which, on the Surrey bank, and on the same side of the bridge as Saint Saviour's Church, form a landing-stairs from the river. To this spot the spy<sup>11</sup> hastened unobserved; and after a moment's survey of the place, he began to descend.

These stairs are a part of the bridge; they consist of three flights. Just below the end of the second, going down, the stone wall on the left terminates in an ornamental pilaster facing towards the Thames. At this point the lower steps widen: so that a person turning that angle of the wall, is necessarily unseen by any others on the stairs who chance to be above, if only a step. The spy<sup>11</sup> looked hastily round, when he reached this point; and as there seemed no better place of concealment, and as<sup>12</sup> the tide being out there was plenty of room, he slipped aside, with his back to the pilaster, and there waited: pretty certain that they would come no lower down<sup>13</sup>.

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10.Substitution of "the girl" with the personal pronoun. The verb tense has also been substituted with the simple past. They are stylistic difference since the meaning is unchanged.

11.The novel presents the protagonist as a person looking like a countryman, while the name given in the reading is equivalent to the assignment he was carrying out. It has been changed because it is linked to previous omitted paragraphs of the novel.

12.Element that does not appear in the novel. It gives a sense of simultaneous actions.

13.Specification added to let the audience understand better, how and where, the action takes place. It does not appear in the novel because it is explained in the following section.

So tardily **stole** the time in this lonely place, and so eager was the spy **to penetrate** the motives of an interview so different from what he had been led to expect, that he more than once gave the matter up for lost, and persuaded himself, either that they had stopped far above, or had resorted to some entirely different spot to hold their **mysterious conversation**<sup>20</sup>. He was on the point of emerging from his hiding-place, and regaining the road above, when he heard the sound of footsteps, and directly afterwards of voices almost close at his ear.

He drew himself straight, upright against the wall, and, **scarcely breathed**<sup>21</sup>, listening attentively.

‘This is far enough,’ said a voice, which was evidently that of the gentleman. ‘I will not suffer the young lady to go any farther. Many people would have distrusted you too much to have come even so far, but you see I am willing to humour you.’

‘To humour me!’ cried the voice of the girl whom he had followed. ‘You’re considerate, indeed, sir. To humour me! Well, well, it’s no matter.’

Why, for what,’ **said the gentleman in a kinder tone**, **‘for what**<sup>22</sup> purpose can you have brought us to this strange place? Why not have let me speak to you, above there, where it is light, and there is something stirring, instead of bringing us to this

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20. Detailed description of the spy’s feelings and thoughts about what was occurring at the moment. It has been omitted and put a connector instead, since it is not essential for a complete understanding of the events.

21. Specification omitted in the reading since it is not essential information.

22. Repetition that gives more emphasis to the gentleman’s speech. It does not appear in the reading because it is not necessary.

So tardily **went**<sup>14</sup> the time in this lonely place, and so eager was the spy, **that**<sup>15</sup> he was on the point of emerging from his hiding-place, and regaining the road above, when he heard the sound of footsteps, and directly afterwards of voices almost close at his ear.

He drew himself straight upright against the wall, and listened attentively.

‘This is far enough,’ *said a voice, which was evidently that of the gentleman.* ‘I will not suffer the young lady to go any further. Many people would have distrusted you too much to have come even so far, but you see I am willing to humour you.’

‘To humour me!’ *cried the voice of the girl* whom he had followed. ‘You’re considerate, indeed, sir. To humour me! Well, well, it’s no matter.’

‘Why, for what purpose can you have brought us to this strange place? Why not have let me speak to you, above there, where it is light, and there is something stirring, instead of bringing us to this

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14. Different verb used compared with the novel. It is a stylistic adjustment.

15. Element that substitutes an omitted paragraph of the novel. It has been added to connect the paragraphs of the reading.

dark and dismal hole?’

‘I told you before,’ replied Nancy, ‘that I was afraid to speak to you there. I don’t know why it is,’ said the girl, shuddering, ‘but I have such a fear and dread upon me tonight that I can hardly stand.’

‘A fear of what?’ asked the gentleman, who seemed to pity her.

‘I scarcely know of what,’ replied the girl. ‘I wish I did. Horrible thoughts of death, and shrouds with blood upon them, and a fear that has made me burn as if I was on fire, have been upon me all day. I was reading a book tonight, to while the time away, and the same things came into the print.’

‘Imagination,’ said the gentleman, soothing her.

‘No imagination,’ replied the girl in a hoarse voice. ‘I’ll swear I saw "coffin" written in every page of the book in large black letters, - aye, and they carried one close to me, in the streets tonight.’

‘There is nothing unusual in that,’ said the gentleman. ‘They have passed me often.’

‘*Real ones;*’ rejoined the girl. ‘This was not.’

[There was something so uncommon in her manner....]<sup>23</sup>

‘Speak to her kindly,’ said the young lady to her companion. ‘Poor creature! She seems to need it.’

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23. Detailed description of Nancy’s and the spy’s feelings in that particular situation and context. It has been omitted in the reading since it provides not essential information.

dark and dismal hole?’

‘I told you before, that I was afraid to speak to you there. I don't know why it is,’  
*said the girl shuddering*, ‘but I have such a fear and dread upon me to-night that I  
can hardly stand.’

‘A fear of what?’

‘I scarcely know of what—I wish I did. Horrible thoughts *of death*— and *shrouds*  
with *blood* upon them—and a fear that has made me burn as if I was on fire—have  
been upon me all day. I was reading a book tonight, to while the time away, and the  
same things came into the print.’

‘Imagination!’

‘No imagination. I swear I saw "*coffin*" written in every page of the book in large  
black letters,—aye, and they carried one close to me, in the streets to-night.’

‘There is nothing unusual in that. They have passed me often.’

‘*Real ones*. This was not.’

‘Pray<sup>16</sup> speak to her kindly,’ said the young lady to the grey-haired gentleman<sup>17</sup>.

‘Poor creature! She seems to need it.’

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16. Emphatic word that does not appear in the novel. Added to emphasize the situation.

17. Expressed differently in the novel. Change made to specify to the audience who the protagonist of the action is.

‘Your haughty religious people would have held their heads up to see me as I am tonight, and preached of flames and vengeance,’ cried the girl. ‘Oh, dear lady, why ar'n't those who claim to be God's own folks as gentle and as kind to us poor wretches as you, who, having youth, and beauty, and all that they have lost, might be a little proud instead of so much humbler<sup>24</sup>?’

[‘Ah!’ said the gentleman. ‘A Turk turns his face.....’]<sup>25</sup>

‘You were not here last Sunday night,’ he said

‘I couldn't come,’ replied Nancy: ‘I was kept by force.’

‘By whom?’

‘Bill - him that I told the young lady of before.’

‘You were not suspected of holding any communication with anybody on the subject which has brought us here tonight, I hope?’ asked the old gentleman anxiously.

‘No,’ replied the girl, shaking her head. ‘It's not very easy for me to leave him unless he knows why; I couldn't have seen the lady when I did, but that I gave him a drink of laudanum before I came away.’

‘Did he awake before you returned?’ inquired the gentleman.

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24. Statement made by Nancy to give more emphasis to her speech. It does not appear in the reading since it is not essential.

25. Comment about society made by the man who came with the young lady to calm Nancy down. It has been omitted since it is not essential information.

‘Bless you, miss, for that<sup>18</sup>! Your haughty religious people would have held their heads up to see me as I am to-night, and would have<sup>19</sup> preached of flames and vengeance. Oh, dear lady, why ar'n't those who claim to be God's own folks, as gentle and as kind to us poor wretches as you!’

— ‘You were not here last Sunday night, girl, as you appointed<sup>20</sup>.’

‘I couldn't come. I was kept by force.’

‘By whom?’

‘Bill— — Sikes<sup>21</sup>—him that I told the young lady of before.’

‘You were not suspected of holding any communication with anybody on the subject which has brought us here to-night, I hope?’

‘No,’ replied the girl, shaking her head. ‘It's not very easy for me to leave him unless he knows why; I couldn't have seen the lady when I did, but that I gave him a drink of *laudanum* before I came away.’

‘Did he awake before you returned?’

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18. Emphatic phrase that does not appear in the novel. Added to give more stress to the situation.

19. Hypothetical sense added to the reading. It does not appear in the novel because it is not necessary.

20. Clarification. It allows the audience to understand that the two young girls have already met before (thirty-ninth chapter of the novel). Accordingly, this was an already planned secret meeting. It does not appear in the novel because the reader is already informed about this fact.

21. Clarification of who Bill is. Omitted in the novel because the reader is already aware of this information.

‘No; and neither he nor any of them suspect me.’

‘Good,’ **said the gentleman.** ‘Now listen to me.’

‘I am ready,’ replied the girl, as he paused for a moment<sup>26</sup>.

‘This young lady,’ [the gentleman began, ‘has communicated to me<sup>27</sup>.....you must deliver up the Jew.’]

‘Fagin!’ **cried the girl, recoiling.**

‘I will not do it! I will never do it!’ replied the girl. ‘Devil that he is, and worse than devil as he has been to me, I will never do **that.**’

‘You will not?’ said the gentleman, who seemed fully prepared for this answer.

‘Never!’ returned the girl<sup>28</sup>.

‘Tell me<sup>29</sup> why.’

‘For **one** reason,’ rejoined the girl firmly, ‘for one reason, that the lady knows and will stand by me in, I know she will, for I have her promise; and for this other reason, besides<sup>30</sup>, that, bad life as he has led, I have led a bad life too; there are many

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26. Initial part of Nancy and Mr. Brownlow’s dialogue, which follows in the next omitted section. It does not appear in the reading because the information provided is not essential.

27. Nancy and Mr. Brownlow’s dialogue about previous events. Mr. Brownlow expresses his willingness to trust Nancy. Omitted in the P.R. since it is not essential for a complete understanding of this chapter.

28. Dialogue between Nancy and Mr. Brownlow. Omitted in the reading since it does not provide essential information.

29. The imperative form of the novel does not appear in the reading since it is not an essential request.

30. Part, linked to Nancy and the young lady’s first meeting (39th chapter of the novel). It does not appear in the reading because it could confuse the listeners who may not have read the novel and so they may not be informed about it.

‘No; and neither he nor any of them suspect me.’

‘Good. Now listen to me. I am Mr. Brownlow, this young lady's friend. I wish you, in this young lady's interest, and for her sake, to deliver up Fagin<sup>22</sup>.’

‘Fagin! I will not do it! I will never do it! Devil that he is, and worse than devil as he has been to me, as my Teacher in all Devilry, I will never do it<sup>23</sup>.’

‘Why?’

‘For the<sup>24</sup> reason that, bad life as he has led, I have led a bad life too; for the reason<sup>24</sup> that there are many

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22.Specification of who the gray-haired man is, and why he is with the young lady. Omitted in the novel because the reader already knows it, as he has read the previous chapters. In the reading, Mr. Brownlow advises Nancy to deliver up Fagin. In the omitted part of the novel, he explains to the girl that if Monks can not be secured she must give him up. This change has been made because this part is linked to previous events, told in the novel, related to the story of Oliver and Monks.

23.Phrase that does not appear in the novel, added to emphasize the situation.

24.Substitution of “one” with the definite article. This change has been made to specify the reasons for which Nancy does not want to give Fagin up. It has been repeated to emphasize the speech.

of us who have kept the same courses together, and I'll not turn upon them, who might - any of them - have turned upon me, but didn't, bad as they are.'

'Then,' said the gentleman, quickly, as if this had been the point he had been aiming to attain; 'put Monks into my hands, and leave him to me to deal with.'

'What if he turns against the others?'

'I promise you that in that case, if the truth is forced from him, there the matter will rest; there must be circumstances in Oliver's little history which it would be painful to drag before the public eye, and if the truth is once elicited<sup>31</sup>, they shall go scot free.'

'And if it is not?' suggested the girl.

'Then,' pursued the gentleman, 'this Fagin shall not be brought to justice without your consent. In such a case I could show you reasons, I think, which would induce you to yield it<sup>32</sup>.'

'Have I the lady's promise for that?' asked the girl.

'You have,' replied Rose. 'My true and faithful pledge<sup>33</sup>.'

['Monks would never learn....']<sup>34</sup>

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31. Segment omitted since it is linked to previous chapters and characters that appear in the novel. They are never mentioned in the reading.

32. Dialogue between Nancy and Mr. Brownlow. Omitted in the reading because it does not provide essential information.

33. Emphatic exclamation made by the young girl. It has been omitted in the reading since it is not essential.

34. Dialogue between Nancy and Mr. Brownlow in which she asks and receives assurance from him. Omitted since it is not essential for a complete understanding of this chapter.

of us who have kept the same courses together, and I'll not turn upon them, who might—any of them—have turned upon me, but didn't, bad as they are. Last, for the reason—*(how can I say it with the young lady here!)*—that, among them, there is one— *this Bill—this Sikes—the most desperate of all—that I can't leave.* Whether it is God's wrath for the wrong I have done, I don't know, but I am drawn back to him through everything, and I should be, I believe, if I knew that I was to *die* by his hand<sup>25</sup>!

‘But, put one man—not him—not one of the gang—the one man Monks<sup>26</sup> into my hands, and leave him to me to deal with.’

‘What if he turns against the others?’

‘I promise you that, in that case, there the matter shall<sup>27</sup> rest; they shall go scot free.’

‘Have I the lady's promise for that?’

‘You have,’ replied Rose Maylie, the young lady<sup>28</sup>

25.Segment that does not appear in the novel. Added to emphasize and to explain what kind of relationship there was between Nancy and Sikes. The audience may not have read the novel and therefore, may not know about it.

26.Specification added to emphasize the situation. It does not appear in the novel.

27.Substitution made to show the diversities of register between the two classes. “Shall” is more formal and therefore, more appropriate to Mr. Brownlow’s social rank.

28.Specification of the young girl’s name since it has not been revealed yet. It is not shown in the novel because, the reader already knows this information.

‘I have been a liar, and among liars from a little child,’ said the girl after another interval of silence, ‘but I will take your words.’

After receiving an assurance from both, that she might safely do so, she proceeded in a voice so low that it was often difficult for the listener to discover even the purport of what she said, to describe, [by name and situation, the public-house .....]<sup>35</sup> [‘He is tall,’ said the girl, ‘and a strongly made man.....’]<sup>36</sup>

‘Now,’ he said, returning: so it seemed by the sound; to the spot where he had stood before<sup>37</sup>, ‘you have given us most valuable assistance, young woman, and I wish you to be the better for it. What can I do to serve you?’

‘Nothing,’ replied Nancy.

‘You will not persist in saying that,’ rejoined the gentleman, with a voice and emphasis of kindness that might have touched a much harder and more obdurate heart. ‘Think now. Tell me.’

‘Nothing, sir,’ rejoined the girl, weeping. ‘You can do nothing to help me. I am past all hope, indeed<sup>38</sup>.’

‘You put yourself beyond its pale,’ said the gentleman. ‘The past has been a dreary

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35. Detailed description of where, how and when Monks could be caught. Omitted in the P.R. because it is linked to places of which the audience, who may not have read the novel, may not know about and also because it is not relevant.

36. This paragraph provides Monks’ detailed description and a dialogue between Nancy and Mr. Brownlow who thinks he may know this Monks. Omitted in the reading because these fragments of information are not relevant to the story.

37. Details about the action. Omitted in the reading since they are not essential information.

38. Element that gives more emphasis to Nancy’s speech. It does not appear in the reading since it is not essential.

‘I have been a liar, and among liars from a little child, but I will take your words.’

After receiving an assurance from both, that she might safely do so, she proceeded in a voice so low that it was often difficult for the listener to discover even the purport of what she said, to describe **the means by which this one man Monks might be found and taken. But nothing would have induced her to compromise one of her own companions; little reason though she had, poor wretch! to spare them**<sup>29</sup>.

‘Now,’ said **the gentleman, when she had finished**<sup>30</sup>, ‘you have given us most valuable assistance, young woman, and I wish you to be the better for it. What can I do to serve you?’

‘Nothing.’

‘You will not persist in saying that; think now; **take time**<sup>31</sup>. Tell me.’

‘Nothing, sir. You can do nothing to help me. I am past all hope.’

‘You put yourself beyond **the pale of hope**<sup>32</sup>. The past has been a dreary

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29. Emphatic phrase which describes Nancy’s wish to not betray her companions. The details explaining how Monks could be caught, that appear in the novel, have been left out because they are not essential to the reading.

30. Substitution of the personal pronoun, that appears in the novel, to specify the person who is now speaking. The second part of the highlighted phrase has been added, to give the idea of time passing. It does not appear in the novel because it is understandable from the previous omitted paragraph in which Nancy explains how Monks could be caught.

31. Added to emphasize the situation.

32. Substitution of the possessive adjective (*its*) that appears in the novel with a clarification, which has been added to make it easier for the audience understand the events.

waste with you, of youthful energies misspent, and such **priceless**<sup>39</sup> treasures lavished, as the Creator bestows but once and never grants again, but, for the future, you may hope. I do not say that it is in our power to offer you peace of heart and mind, for that must come as you seek it; but a quiet asylum, either in England, or, if you fear to remain here, in some foreign country, it is not only within the compass of our ability but our most anxious wish to secure you. Before the dawn of morning, before this river wakes to the first glimpse of daylight, you shall be placed as entirely beyond the reach of your former associates, and leave as **utter** an absence of all traces behind you, as if you were to disappear from the earth this moment. Come! I would not have you go back to exchange one word with any old companion, or take one look at any old haunt, **or breathe the very air which is pestilence and death to you**<sup>40</sup>. Quit them all, while there is time and opportunity!’

‘She will be persuaded now,’ cried the young lady. **‘She hesitates, I am sure**<sup>41</sup>.’

‘I fear not, my dear,’ **said the gentleman**.

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39. Adjective that does not appear in the reading since it provides non essential information.

40. Descriptive details that give more emphasis to the situation. They do not appear in the reading since they are not essential.

41. Information that does not appear in the reading since it is not essential.

waste with you, of youthful energies mis-spent, and such treasures lavished, as the Creator bestows but once and never grants again, *but, for the future, you may hope!* [I do not say that it is in our power to offer you peace of heart and mind, for that must come as you seek it; but a quiet asylum, either in England, or, if you fear to remain here, in some foreign country, it is not only within the compass of our ability but our most anxious wish to secure you. Before the dawn of morning, before this river wakes to the first glimpse of daylight, you shall be placed as entirely beyond the reach of your former associates, and leave as **complete**<sup>33</sup> an absence of all trace behind you, as if you were to disappear from the earth this moment.] Come! I would not have you go back to exchange one word with any old companion, or take one look at any old haunt. Quit them all, while there is time and opportunity!'

'She will be persuaded now,' cried the young lady.

'I fear not, my dear.'

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33. Different descriptive element used. It is a stylistic change.

‘No, sir, I do not,’ replied the girl, after a short struggle. ‘I am chained to my old life. I loathe and hate it now<sup>42</sup>, but I cannot leave it. I must have gone too far to turn back, — and yet I don't know, for if you had spoken to me so, some time ago, I should have laughed it off. But,’ she said, looking hastily round, ‘this fear comes over me again. I must go home.’

‘Home!’ repeated the young lady, with great stress upon the word

‘Home, lady,’ rejoined the girl. ‘To such a home as I have raised for myself with the work of my whole life<sup>43</sup>. Let us part. I shall be watched or seen. Go! Go! If I have done you any service, all I ask is, that you leave me, and let me go my way alone.’

[‘It is useless,’ said the gentleman.....]<sup>44</sup>

‘This purse,’ cried the young lady. ‘Take it for my sake, that you may have some resource in an hour of need and trouble.’

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42. Information that does not appear in the P.R It lets the reader understand that Nancy has now changed her point of view about people. This change is better explained in the next phrase that appears modified in the reading because it recalls Nancy's previous life of which the audience may not be aware.

43. Brief dialogue between Rose and Nancy. It does not appear in the reading because it is linked to Nancy's life about which the audience may not know.

44. Brief dialogue omitted in the reading since it provides non essential information. In this dialogue Mr. Brownlow shows his fear as he has made Nancy remain there more time than she expected. The dialogue also shows Rose's concern about Nancy's life and finally, Nancy's response to her worries. Nancy explains to Rose that women like herself are destined to die alone and fortunately people like Rose will never know about it.

‘No, sir—*no, miss*<sup>34</sup>. I am chained to my old life. I *loathe* and *hate* it, but I cannot *leave* it.—When ladies as young and good, as happy and beautiful as you, miss, give away your hearts, love will carry even you all lengths. When such as I, who have no certain roof but the coffin-lid, and no friend in sickness or death but the hospital-nurse, set our rotten hearts on any man, who can hope to cure us<sup>35</sup>!—This fear comes over me again. I must go home.

Let us part. I shall be watched or seen. *Go!* *Go!* If I have done you any service, all I ask is, leave me, and let me go my way alone.’

‘*Take*<sup>36</sup> this purse,’ cried the young lady. ‘Take it for my sake, that you may have some resource in an hour of need and trouble.’

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34. Element that does not appear in the novel. It has been added to emphasize the situation.

35. This segment of Nancy’s speech is different compared with the one that appears in the novel. In the reading, Nancy makes an emphatic explanation of her poor life condition, which enables the audience to understand her feelings. In the novel, she talks about her changed point of view about people of Rose’s class. It has been changed because the dialogue of the novel is linked to events occurred in other chapters. It does not appear in the novel.

36. Added to give more emphasis to the young lady’s wish.

‘No!’ replied the girl. ‘I have not done this for money. Let me have that to think of. And yet - give me something that you have worn: I should like to have something - no, no, not a ring - your gloves or handkerchief — anything that I can keep, as having belonged to you, sweet lady. There. Bless you! God bless you. Good night, good night!’

The violent agitation of the girl, and the apprehension of some discovery which would subject her to ill-usage and<sup>45</sup> violence, seemed to determine the gentleman to leave her, as she requested.

The sound of retreating footsteps were audible and the voices ceased.

[The two figures of the young lady and her companion.....]<sup>46</sup>

After a time she arose, and with feeble and tottering steps<sup>47</sup> ascended to the street.

The astonished listener remained motionless<sup>48</sup> on his post for some minutes

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45. Specifications added to give more emphasis to the event. Omitted in the reading since it does not provide essential information.

46. Segment that describes the young woman and the man leaving the meeting place. Rose was very concerned for Nancy, her story had put her in such alarm, that she even thought she heard Nancy calling her. Omitted in the reading because it is not necessary information.

47. Detailed description of how Nancy left the bridge. It does not appear in the reading because it is not essential information.

48. Descriptive element omitted in the reading because it does not provide essential details.

*'No! I have not done this for money. Let me have that to think of. And yet— — give me something that you have worn—I should like to have something—no, no, not a ring, they'd rob me of that<sup>37</sup>—your gloves or handkerchief—anything that I can keep, as having belonged to you. There. Bless you! God bless you!! Good-night, good-night!*

The agitation of the girl, and the apprehension of some discovery which would subject her to violence, seemed to determine the gentleman to leave her. The sound of retreating footsteps followed<sup>38</sup>, and the voices ceased.

After a time Nancy<sup>39</sup> ascended to the street. The spy<sup>40</sup> remained on his post for some minutes,

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37. Added to the reading to let the audience get an idea of the people that were in Nancy's life. It does not appear in the novel because the reader already knows this information since it is described throughout the pages of the entire book.

38. A different verb is used compared to the novel. It summarizes what is expressed in the novel.

39. Specification that clarifies to the audience who the protagonist of the current action is. It appears substituted with a personal pronoun in the novel.

40. Clarification of who the protagonist of the action is. In the novel, Noah is indicated with different names. In the reading, the names used for his character are only three: Noah, the spy and Bolter, to avoid confusing the audience.

afterwards, and having ascertained, with many cautious glances round him, that he was again alone, crept slowly from his hiding-place, and returned, stealthily and in the shade of the wall, in the same manner as he had descended.

Peeping out, more than once, when he reached the top<sup>49</sup>, to make sure that he was unobserved, Noah Claypole darted away at his utmost speed<sup>50</sup>, and made for the Jew's house as fast as his legs would carry him.

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49. Details about how the action occurred. Omitted in the reading since it provides non essential information.

50. Clarification of who the protagonist is and how the action takes place. Omitted in the reading since it is non essential.

and then<sup>41</sup>, *after peeping out*, to make sure that he was unobserved, darted away, and made for Fagin's<sup>42</sup> house as fast as his legs would carry him.

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41. Element added to connect two phrases of the novel in order to create one phrase in the reading.

42. Specification that clarifies the action. Change made to make sure the audience gets a complete understanding of what happened in the reading.

CHAPTER 47

*Fatal Consequences*

IT was nearly two hours before day-break; that time which in the autumn of the year, may be truly called the dead of night; when the streets are silent and deserted; when even sounds appear to slumber, and profligacy and riot have staggered home to dream; it was at this still and silent hour, that Fagin sat **watching** in his old lair, **[with face so distorted and pale, and eyes so red and bloodshot....]**<sup>1</sup>

Stretched upon a mattress on the floor, lay Noah Claypole, fast asleep. Towards him the old man sometimes directed his eyes for an instant, and then brought them back again to the candle; **which with a long-burnt wick drooping almost double, and hot grease falling down in clots upon the table, plainly showed that his thoughts were busy elsewhere**<sup>2</sup>.

**[Indeed they were. Mortification at the overthrow of his notable scheme; hatred of the girl who had dared to palter with strangers....]**<sup>3</sup>

- 
1. Detailed description of Fagin's devil-like appearance. Omitted in the reading since this information is not relevant for a complete understanding of this character. The public reading focuses on Nancy's murder.
  2. Detailed description of the burning candle that shows that Fagin was absorbed in his thoughts. Omitted in the reading since this information is not essential.
  3. Detailed description of Fagin's thoughts such as: his fear of being caught, the things that did not go as he planned and his desire for revenge. It does not appear in the reading since this information is not essential.

### CHAPTER III

IT was nearly two hours before daybreak; that time which in the autumn of the year, may be truly called the dead of night; when the streets are silent and deserted; when even sound appears to slumber, and profligacy and riot have staggered home to dream; it was at this still and silent hour, that Fagin sat in his old lair. Stretched upon a mattress on the floor, lay Noah Clay pole, *otherwise Morris Bolter*<sup>1</sup>, fast asleep. Towards him the old man sometimes directed his eyes for an instant, and then brought them back again to *the wasting*<sup>2</sup> candle.

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1. Specification of who Noah Clypole is. Added to let the audience understand whom Fagin is watching. It does not appear in the novel because the reader already knows this information.

2. Added element that provides the idea of time passing. In the novel, this feeling is shown in the next paragraph that does not appear in the reading.

Fagin laid his hand upon the bundle, and locking it in the cupboard, sat down again without speaking<sup>8</sup>. But he did not take his eyes off the robber, for an instant, during this action; and now that they sat over against each other, face to face, he looked fixedly at him, with his lips quivering so violently, and his face so altered by the emotions which had mastered him, that the housebreaker involuntarily drew back his chair, and surveyed him with a look of real affright<sup>9</sup>.

‘Wot now?’ cried Sikes. ‘Wot do you look at a man so for?’

Fagin raised his right hand, and shook his trembling forefinger in the air; but his passion was so great, that the power of speech was for the moment gone<sup>10</sup>.

‘Damme!’ said Sikes, feeling in his breast with a look of alarm<sup>11</sup>. ‘He's gone mad; I must look to myself here.’

‘No, no,’ rejoined Fagin, finding his voice. ‘It's not - you're not the person. Bill. I've no - no fault to find with you.’

‘Oh, you haven't, haven't you?’ said Sikes, looking sternly at him, and ostentatiously passing a pistol into a more convenient pocket. ‘That's lucky - for one of us. Which one that is, don't matter.’

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8. Detailed description of how the action was occurring. Omitted in the reading because it is not essential.

9. Detailed description of the action. This segment provides more details about the main characters' feelings. Omitted in the reading because it is not essential.

10. Detailed description of Fagin's feelings in that precise moment. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential.

11. Detail that describes Sikes's fear. Omitted in the reading because it is not essential.

Fagin laid his hand upon the bundle, and **locked it**<sup>5</sup> in the cupboard. But he did not take *his eyes off the robber, for an instant.*

‘Wot now?’ cried Sikes. ‘Wot do you look at a man, **like that, for**<sup>6</sup>?’

Fagin raised his right hand, and shook his trembling forefinger in the air.

‘**Hallo**<sup>7</sup>!’ *feeling in his breast.* ‘He's gone mad. I must look to myself here.’

‘No, no, it's not—you're not the person, Bill. I've no—no fault to find with you.’

‘Oh! You haven't, haven't you?’ *passing a pistol into a more convenient pocket*

‘That's lucky—for one of us. Which one that is, don't matter.’

- 
5. Different conjugation of this verb. In the novel, it is in the continuous form because it is connected to the next phrase. It shows contemporary actions. In the reading, the phrase, which this verb is linked to, does not appear so the verb is in the simple past.
  6. Expressed differently in the novel. The meaning is unchanged; it is a stylistic difference.
  7. Exclamation expressed differently in the novel. In the novel a stronger term is used while in the reading a weaker one is chosen, due to performing needs.

He sat without changing his attitude **in the least<sup>4</sup>**, or appearing to take the smallest heed of time, until **his quick ear seemed to be attracted by a footstep in the street.**

**‘At last,’ he muttered, wiping his dry and fevered mouth. ‘At last<sup>5</sup>!’**

The bell rang **gently as he spoke**. He crept upstairs **to the door<sup>6</sup>**, and presently returned accompanied by a man muffled to the chin, who carried a bundle under one arm. **Sitting down and<sup>7</sup>** throwing back his outer coat, the man displayed the burly frame of Sikes.

‘There!’ **he said**, laying the bundle on the table. ‘Take care of that, and do the most you can with it. It's been trouble enough to get; I thought I should have been here, three hours ago.’

- 
4. Specification that provides more information about the situation. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential.
  5. Descriptive part that provides more details to the situation. It does not appear in the reading since this information is not relevant.
  6. Parts that provide more details about the action. They do not appear in the reading because they are not essential.
  7. Detail about how the action was taking place. Omitted in the reading as it is not relevant.

He sat without changing his attitude, or appearing to take the smallest heed of time, until the door<sup>3</sup>-bell rang. He crept up-stairs, and presently returned accompanied by a man muffled to the chin, who carried a bundle under one arm. Throwing back his outer coat, the man displayed the *burly frame of Sikes, the housebreaker*<sup>4</sup>.

‘*There!*’ laying the bundle on the table. ‘Take care of that, and do the most you can with it. It’s been trouble enough to get. I thought I should have been here three hours ago.’

---

3. Specification added to clarify the situation. It does not appear in the novel because it is understandable from the context.

4. Added information that specifies, to the audience, who the protagonist of the action is. Also added to emphasize the description given. It does not appear in the novel because it is not needed.

‘I’ve got that to tell you. Bill,’ said Fagin, drawing his chair nearer, ‘will make you worse than me.’

‘Aye?’ returned the robber with an incredulous air. ‘Tell away! Look sharp, or Nance will think I’m lost.’

‘Lost!’ cried Fagin. ‘She has pretty well settled that, in her own mind already.’

Sikes looked with an aspect of great perplexity into the Jew’s face, and reading no satisfactory explanation of the riddle there, clenched his coat collar in his huge hand and shook him soundly.

‘Speak, will you!’ he said; ‘or if you don’t, it shall be for want of breath. Open your mouth and say wot you’ve got to say in plain words<sup>12</sup>. Out with it, you thundering old cur, out with it!’

‘Suppose that lad that’s lying there -’ Fagin began.

Sikes turned round to where Noah was sleeping, as if he had not previously observed him. ‘Well!’ he said, resuming his former position.

‘Suppose that lad,’ pursued Fagin, ‘was to preach — to blow upon us all - first seeking out the right folks for the purpose, and then having a meeting with ‘em in the street to paint our likeness, describe every mark that they might know us by, and the crib where we might be most easily taken<sup>13</sup>

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12. Element that gives more emphasis to the action. It does not appear in the reading because this information is not necessary.

13. Ample explication of how the betrayal might have occurred. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential.

‘I’ve got that to tell you, Bill, will make you worse than me.’

‘Aye? Tell away! Look sharp, or Nance will think I’m lost.’

‘*Lost!* She has pretty well settled that, in her own mind, already.’

He looked, perplexed<sup>8</sup>, into the old man<sup>9</sup>’s face, and reading no satisfactory explanation of the riddle there, clenched his coat collar in his huge hand and shook him soundly.

‘Speak, will you? Or if you don’t, it shall be for want of breath. Open your mouth and say wot you’ve got to say. Out with it, you *thundering, blundering, wondering*<sup>10</sup> old cur, out with it!’

‘Suppose that lad that’s lying there— —’ Fagin began.

*Sikes turned round to where Noah was sleeping*, as if he had not previously observed him. ‘Well?’

‘Suppose that lad was to peach—to blow upon us all.

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8. Summarization of Sikes’s feeling, widely expressed in the novel. Condensed in the reading while maintaining the same meaning.

9. In the novel, the old man is referred to as “the Jew”. Substitution made to avoid confusing the audience.

10. Added adjectives that emphasize Fagin’s character. They do not appear in the novel since the reader is already aware of these characteristics. They are evident throughout the novel.

Suppose he was to do all this, and besides to blow upon a plant we've all been in, more or less<sup>14</sup> - of his own fancy; not grabbed, trapped<sup>15</sup>, tried, earwigged by the parson and brought to it on bread and water, - but of his own fancy; to please his own taste; stealing out at nights to find those most interested against us, and peaching to them. Do you hear me?' cried the Jew, his eyes flashing with rage. 'Suppose he did all this, what then?'

'What then!' replied Sikes; with a tremendous oath. 'If he was left alive till I came, I'd grind his skull under the iron heel of my boot into as many grains as there are hairs upon his head.'

'What if *I* did it!' cried Fagin almost in a yell. '*I*, that know so much, and could hang so many besides myself!'

'I don't know,' replied Sikes, clenching his teeth and turning white at the mere suggestion. 'I'd do something in the jail that 'ud get me put in irons; and if I was tried along with you, I'd fall upon you with them in the open court, and beat your brains out afore the people. I should have such strength<sup>16</sup>;' muttered the robber, poising his brawny arm, 'that I could smash your head as if a loaded waggon had gone over it.'

---

14. Details that describe the protagonists' projects for Oliver. Omitted in the reading. The audience may not have read the novel and therefore, they may not be aware of facts related to Oliver's story.

15. Adjective that does not appear in the reading since it is not essential.

16. Explication that does not appear in the reading since it is non essential information.

Suppose **that lad**<sup>11</sup> was to do **it**<sup>12</sup>, of his own fancy—not grabbed, tried, earwigged by the parson and brought to it on bread and water,—but of his own fancy; to please his own taste; stealing out at nights to **do it**<sup>13</sup>. Do you hear me? Suppose he did all this, what then?’

‘What then? If he was left alive till I came, I'd grind his skull under the iron heel of my boot into as many grains as there are hairs upon his head.’

‘What if I did it! *I*, that know so much, and could hang so many besides myself!’

‘I don't know. I'd do something in the jail that 'ud get me put in irons; and, if I was tried along with you, I'd fall upon you with them in the open court, and beat your brains out afore the people. **I'd**<sup>14</sup> smash your head as if a loaded waggon had gone over it.’

- 
11. Substitution of the personal pronoun that appears in the novel, with the explication to whom that personal pronoun is referred. It is a stylistic change.
  12. Change made to summarize the concept that the personal pronoun intends to express in the novel. It is a stylistic difference.
  13. Summarization of an ample description of what Noah could have done to betray them. It does not appear in the reading since it is not essential.
  14. A different auxiliary is used in the novel. It is linked to the previous phrase and shows Sikes's ability to do what he had decided. In the reading, the phrase to which the auxiliary is linked does not appear. It is substituted with an auxiliary that shows Sikes's willingness to perform that action.

‘You would?’

‘Would I!’ said the housebreaker. ‘Try me.’

‘If it was Charley, or the Dodger, or Bet, or-’

‘I don’t care who,’ replied Sikes impatiently. ‘Whoever it was, I’d serve them the same<sup>17</sup>.’

Fagin looked hard at the robber; and, motioning him to be silent, stooped over the bed upon the floor, and shook the sleeper to rouse him. Sikes leant forward in his chair: looking on with his hands upon his knees, as if wondering much what all this questioning and preparation was to end in<sup>18</sup>.

‘Bolter, Bolter! Poor lad!’ said Fagin, looking up with an expression of devilish anticipation, and speaking slowly and with marked emphasis. ‘He’s tired - tired with watching for *her* so long, - watching for *her*, Bill.’

‘Wot d’ye mean?’ asked Sikes, drawing back.

Fagin made no answer, but bending over the sleeper again, hauled him into a sitting posture. When his assumed name had been repeated several times, Noah rubbed his eyes, and, giving a heavy yawn, looked sleepily about him.

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17. Dialogue between Sikes and Fagin about what he would do if someone betrayed him, whomever that person may be.

Omitted in the reading because it is not essential and also because it provides the names of other characters of which the audience may not know about.

18. Detailed description of the event and Sikes’s possible thoughts. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential.

Fagin looked hard at the robber; and, motioning him to be silent, stooped over the bed upon the floor, and shook the sleeper to rouse him.

‘Bolter! Bolter! *Poor lad*’ said Fagin, looking up with an expression of devilish anticipation, and speaking slowly and with marked emphasis. ‘*He’s tired*—tired with watching for *her so* long—watching for *her*. Bill.’

‘Wot d’ye mean?’

Fagin made no answer, but bending over the sleeper again, hauled him into a sitting posture. When his assumed name had been repeated several times, Noah rubbed his eyes, and, giving a heavy yawn, looked sleepily about him.

‘Tell me that again - once again, just for him to hear,’ said the Jew, pointing to Sikes as he spoke.

‘Tell yer what?’ asked the sleepy Noah, shaking himself pettishly.

‘That about - NANCY,’ said Fagin, clutching Sikes by the wrist, as if to prevent his leaving the house before he had heard enough. ‘You followed her?’

Yes.’

‘To London Bridge?’

‘Yes.’

‘Where she met two people?’

‘So she did.’

‘A gentleman and a lady that she had gone to of her own accord before, who asked her to give up all her pals, and Monks first, which she did - and to describe him, which she did — and tell her what house it was that we meet at, and go to, which she did -and where it could be best watched from, which she did - and what time the people went there, which she did. She did all this. She told it all every word without a threat, without a murmur -she did - did she not?’ cried Fagin, half mad with fury.

‘All right,’ replied Noah, scratching his head. ‘That's just what it was!’

‘What did they say, about last Sunday?’

‘About last Sunday!’ replied Noah, considering. ‘Why, I told yer that before.’

‘Tell me that again—once again, just for him to hear,’ said the Jew, *pointing to Sikes* as he spoke.

‘Tell yer what?’ *asked the sleepy Noah, shaking himself pettishly.*

‘That about— —NANCY!! You followed her?’

‘Yes.’

‘To London Bridge?’

‘*Yes*’

‘Where she met two people?’

‘So she did’.

‘A gentleman and a lady that she had gone to of her own accord before, who asked her to give up all her pals, and Monks first, which *she did*— and to describe him, which *she did*—and to tell her what house it was that we meet at, and go to, which *she did*—and where it could be best watched from, which *she did*—and what time the people went there, which *she did*. *She did all this*. She told it *all*, every word, without a threat, without a murmur— *she did—did she not?*’

‘All right,’ *replied Noah, scratching his head.* ‘That's just what it was!’

‘What did they say about last Sunday?’

‘About last Sunday! Why, I told yer that before’

‘Again. Tell it again!’ cried Fagin, tightening his grasp on Sikes, and brandishing his other hand aloft, as the foam flew from his lips<sup>19</sup>.

‘They asked her,’ said Noah, who, as he grew more wakeful, seemed to have a dawning perception who Sikes was, ‘they asked her why she didn't come, last Sunday, as she promised. She said she couldn't.’

‘Why – why<sup>20</sup>? Tell him that.’

‘Because she was forcibly kept at home by Bill, the man she had told them of before,’ replied Noah.

‘What more of him?’ cried Fagin. ‘What more of the man she had told them of before? Tell him that, tell him that.’

‘Why, that she couldn't very easily get out of doors unless he knew where she was going to,’ said Noah; ‘and so the first time she went to see the lady, she - ha! ha! ha! it made me laugh when she said it, that it did - she gave him a drink of laudanum.’

‘Hell's fire!’ cried Sikes, breaking fiercely from the Jew. ‘Let me go!’

Flinging the old man from him, he rushed from the room, and darted, wildly and furiously<sup>21</sup>, up the stairs.

‘Bill, Bill!’ cried Fagin, following him hastily. ‘A word. Only a word.’

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19. Detailed description of what Fagin was doing to make sure that Sikes would hear Noah's confession. Omitted in the reading because it is not essential.

20. Repetition used to give more emphasis to the situation. Omitted because it is not necessary.

21. Detailed description of Sikes's reaction to the discovery of the betrayal. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential.

‘Again. *Tell it again!*’

‘They asked her,’ as he grew more wakeful, and seemed to have a dawning perception who Sikes was, ‘they asked her why she didn't come, last Sunday, as she promised. She said she couldn't’

‘Why? *Tell* him that.’

‘Because she was forcibly kept at home by Bill—Sikes<sup>15</sup>—the man that<sup>15</sup> she had told them of before’

‘What more of him? What more of Bill—Sikes<sup>15</sup>—the man she had told them of before? Tell him that, *tell him that.*’

‘Why, that she couldn't very easily get out of doors unless he knew where she was going to, and so the first time she went to see the lady, she —*ha! ha! ha!* it made me laugh when she said it, that did<sup>16</sup>—she gave him, a drink of *laudanum!! ha! ha!* ha<sup>17</sup>!’

Sikes rushed from the room, and darted up the stairs.

‘Bill, Bill!’ cried Fagin, following him, hastily. ‘A word. Only a word.’

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15. Specification of the character they are talking about. Added to give more emphasis to Fagin's speech. It does not appear in the novel because it is not needed.

16. The personal pronoun, used in the novel, specifies the action. It does not appear in the reading because it is not needed.

17. It does not appear in the novel. It has been added to the reading to give more emphasis to the author's performance.

The word would not have been exchanged, but that the house-breaker was unable to open the door: on which he was expending fruitless oaths and violence, when the Jew came panting up<sup>22</sup>.

‘Let me out,’ said Sikes. ‘Don't speak to me; it's not safe. Let me out, I say<sup>23</sup>!’

‘Hear me speak a word,’ rejoined Fagin, laying his hand upon the lock. ‘You won't be-’

‘Well,’ replied the other<sup>24</sup>.

‘You won't be — too — violent. Bill?’

The day was breaking, and there was light enough for the men to see each other's faces. They exchanged one brief glance; there was a fire in the eyes of both, which could not be mistaken.

‘I mean,’ said Fagin, showing that he felt all disguise was now useless, ‘not too violent for safety. Be crafty, Bill, and not too bold.’

Sikes made no reply; but, pulling open the door, of which Fagin had turned the lock<sup>25</sup>, dashed into the silent streets.

---

22. Detailed description of the action. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential.

23. Element that gives more emphasis to Sikes's statement. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential.

24. Sikes's response. It has been omitted from the reading because it is not necessary. It is possible to understand it from the context.

25. Detailed description of how the events were occurring. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential.

‘Let me out. Don't *speak* to me! It's not *safe*. *Let me out*.’

‘Hear me speak a word,’ rejoined Fagin, *laying his hand upon the lock*. You won't be— — you won't be— — *too—violent*. Bill ?’

The day was breaking, and there was light enough for the men to see each other's faces. They exchanged a<sup>18</sup> brief glance; *there was the same fire in the eyes of both*<sup>19</sup>.

‘I mean, not too— — *violent— —for— —for*<sup>20</sup>— — *safety*. Be *crafty*. Bill, and not too *Bold*.’

*The robber*<sup>21</sup> dashed into the silent streets.

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18. Substitution of “one” that appears in the novel, with an indefinite article. It is a stylistic change.

19. This phrase is expressed differently in the novel. In the reading, a summary of the concept exposed in the novel is given.

20. Repetition that does not appear in the novel. Added to give more emphasis to the action and to the author's performance.

21. Substitution of the main character's name with his occupation. It is a stylistic change.

Without one pause, or moment's consideration; without once turning his head to the right or left, or raising his eyes to the sky, or lowering them to the ground, but looking straight before him with savage resolution: his teeth so tightly compressed that the strained jaw seemed starting through his skin; the robber held on his headlong course<sup>26</sup>, nor muttered a word, nor relaxed a muscle, until he reached his own door. He opened it, softly, with a key; strode lightly up the stairs; and entering his own room, double-locked the door, and lifting a heavy table against it<sup>27</sup>, drew back the curtain of the bed.

The girl was lying, half dressed, upon it. He had roused her from her sleep, for she raised herself with a hurried and startled look.

‘Get up!’ said the man.

‘It is you. Bill!’ said the girl, with an expression of pleasure at his return.

‘It is<sup>28</sup>,’ was the reply. ‘Get up.’

There was a candle burning, but the man hastily<sup>29</sup> drew it from the candlestick, and hurled it under the grate. Seeing the faint light of early day without, the girl rose to undraw the curtain.

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26. Segment that gives more emphasis to the description of Sikes that appears in the novel. Omitted in the reading because it provides unnecessary information.

27. Descriptive element; omitted in the reading since it is not essential.

28. Confirmation of Sikes's arrival. It does not appear in the reading because it is possible to understand it from the context.

29. Adverb that provides more details to the action. Omitted since it is not essential.

Without one pause, or moment's consideration; without once turning his head to the right or left; **without once**<sup>22</sup> raising his eyes to the sky, or lowering them to the ground, but looking straight before him with savage resolution: **he muttered not a word**<sup>23</sup>, nor relaxed a muscle, until he reached his own **house**<sup>24</sup>-door.— —He opened it, *softly*, with a key; strode lightly up the stairs; and entering his own room, *double-locked the door, and drew back the curtain of the bed.*

The girl was lying, half-dressed, upon **the bed**<sup>25</sup>. He had roused her from her sleep, for she raised herself with a hurried and startled look.

‘Getup!’

‘It is you, Bill!’

‘*Getup!!!*’

*There was a candle burning, but **he***<sup>26</sup> *drew it from the candlestick, and hurled it under the grate. Seeing the faint light of early day without, the girl rose to undraw the curtain.*

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22. Added element that gives more emphasis to the action.

23. In the novel this phrase is written using a different order. It is a stylistic adjustment since the meaning is unchanged.

24. Element that provides more details to the description. It has been added to clarify the action.

25. Specification substituted in the novel with the personal pronoun, “it”. It is a stylistic change in order to provide more emphasis.

26. Substitution of “the man” that appears in the novel with the personal pronoun. It is a stylistic change.

‘Let it be,’ said Sikes, thrusting his hand before her. ‘There's light enough for wot I've got to do.

‘Bill,’ said the girl, in the low voice of alarm, ‘why do you look like that at me!’

The robber sat regarding her, for a few seconds, with dilated nostrils and heaving breast; and then, grasping her by the head and throat, dragged her into the middle of the room, and looking once towards the door<sup>30</sup>, placed his heavy hand upon her mouth.

‘Bill, Bill!’ gasped the girl, wrestling with the strength of mortal fear, - ‘I - I won't scream or cry - not once - hear me - speak to me - tell me what I have done<sup>31</sup>!’

You know<sup>32</sup>, you she devil!’ returned the robber, suppressing his breath. ‘You were watched tonight; every word you said was heard.’

‘Then spare my life for the love of Heaven, as I spared yours,’ rejoined the girl, clinging to him. ‘Bill, dear Bill, you cannot have the heart to kill me. Oh! think of all I have given up, only this one night, for you. You shall have time to think, and save yourself this crime; I will not loose my hold, you cannot throw me off<sup>33</sup>. Bill, Bill, for dear God's sake, for your own, for mine, stop before you spill my blood! I have been true to you, upon my guilty soul I have!

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30. Information that provides more details to the action. Omitted in the reading since it not essential.

31. Detailed description of what happens in the room and Nancy's fears. Omitted in the reading since it is not necessary.

32. Element that emphasizes Sikes's speech. Omitted in the reading as it is not essential.

33. Emphatic phrase added to Nancy's speech to persuade Sikes not to kill her. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential.

‘*Let it be. There's light enough for wot I've got to do— —.*’

‘*Bill, why do you look like that at me?*’

*The robber regarded<sup>27</sup> her, for a few seconds, with dilated nostrils and heaving breast; then, grasping her by the head and throat, dragged her into the middle of the room, and placed his heavy hand upon her mouth.*

‘*You were watched to-night, you she-devil<sup>28</sup>; every word you said was heard*’

‘*Then if every word I said was heard, it was heard that I spared you<sup>29</sup>. Bill, dear Bill, you cannot have the heart to kill me. Oh! think of all I have given up, only this one night, for you. Bill, Bill! For dear God's sake, for your own, for mine, stop before you spill my blood!!! I have been true to you, upon my guilty soul I have!!!*’

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27. The continuous form, “sat regarding”, is used in the novel. In the reading “sat” has been omitted therefore, the simple past is used. Change made because the continuous form is not needed.

28. In the novel this exclamation appears at the beginning of the phrase; it is a stylistic difference in order to give more emphasis to the author’s performance.

29. Expressed differently in the novel. It is a stylistic change that does not alter the content of the phrase.

The man struggled violently to release his arms; but those of the girl were clasped round his, and tear her as he would, he could not tear them away.

‘Bill,’ cried the girl, striving to lay her head upon his breast<sup>34</sup>, ‘the gentleman and that dear lady, told me tonight of a home in some foreign country where I could end my days in solitude and peace. Let me see them again, and beg them, on my knees, to show the same mercy and goodness<sup>35</sup> to you; and let us both leave this dreadful place, and far apart lead better lives, and forget how we have lived, except in prayers, and never see each other more. It is never too late to repent. They told me so — I feel it now — but we must have time - a little, little time!’

The housebreaker freed one arm, and grasped his pistol. The certainty of immediate detection if he fired, flashed across his mind even in the midst of his fury; and he beat it twice with all the force he could summon, upon the upturned face that almost touched his own. She staggered and fell: nearly blinded with the blood that rained down from a deep gash in her forehead; but raising herself, with difficulty<sup>36</sup>, on her knees, drew from her bosom a white handkerchief - Rose Maylie's own<sup>37</sup> -

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34. Descriptive segment that provides more details about the occurring action. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential information.

35. Adjective that gives more emphasis to the action. Omitted in the reading because it is not essential.

36. Descriptive details added to give more emphasis and explanation to a precise action, that is to say Nancy's murder. Omitted in the reading because they are not essential.

37. Specification that does not appear in the reading because it is possible to understand it from the context.

The gentleman and that dear lady told me to-night of a home in some foreign country where I could end my days in solitude and peace. Let me see them again, and beg them, on my knees, to show the same mercy to you; and let us both leave this dreadful place, and far apart lead better lives, and forget how we have lived, except in prayers, and never see each other more. It is never too late to repent. They told me so—I feel it now. But we must have *time*—**we must have**<sup>30</sup> *a little, little time!*'

*The housebreaker freed one arm, and grasped his pistol. The certainty of immediate detection if he fired, flashed across his mind; and he beat it twice upon the upturned face that almost touched his own.*

She staggered and fell, but raising herself on her knees, **she**<sup>31</sup> *drew from her bosom a white handkerchief—Rose Maylie's—*

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30. Element added to give more emphasis to the action performed. It does not appear in the novel because it is not needed.

31. Personal pronoun added to clarify the subject of the action. It does not appear in the novel because it is not necessary.

and holding it up, in her folded hands, as high towards Heaven as her feeble strength would allow<sup>38</sup>, breathed one prayer for mercy to her Maker.

It was a ghastly figure to look upon. The murderer staggering backward to the wall, and shutting out the sight with his hand, seized a heavy club and struck her down.

## CHAPTER 48

### *The Flight of Sikes*

OF all bad deeds that, under cover of the darkness, had been committed within wide London's bounds since night hung over it, that was the worst. Of all the horrors that rose with an ill scent upon the morning air, that was the foulest and most cruel<sup>39</sup>.

The sun - the bright sun, that brings back, not light alone, but new life, and hope, and freshness to man<sup>40</sup> - burst upon the crowded city in clear and radiant glory. Through costly-coloured glass and paper-mended window, through cathedral dome and rotten crevice, it shed its equal ray. It lighted up the room where the murdered woman lay. It did. He tried to shut it out, but it would stream in. If the sight had been a ghastly one in the dull morning, what was it, now, in all that brilliant light!

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38. Descriptive details which explain how the action develops. Omitted in the reading since they are not essential.

39. Descriptive segment of the crime that was committed. It has been omitted in the reading because it provides details that are not essential.

40. Details omitted in the reading since they are not essential.

*and holding it up towards Heaven, breathed one prayer, for mercy to her Maker.*

*It was a ghastly figure to look upon. The murderer staggering backward to the wall, and shutting out the sight with his hand, seized a heavy club, and struck her down!!'*

The bright sun burst upon the crowded city in clear and radiant glory. *Through costly-coloured glass and paper-mended window, through cathedral dome and rotten crevice, it shed its equal ray. It lighted up the room where the murdered woman lay. It did. He tried to shut it out, but it would stream in. If the sight had been a ghastly one in the dull morning, what was it, now, in all that brilliant light!!!*

He had not moved; he had been afraid to stir. There had been a moan and motion of the hand; and, with terror added to rage, he had struck and struck again.

Once he threw a rug over it; but it was worse to fancy the eyes, and imagine them moving towards him, than to see them glaring upward, as if watching the reflection of the pool of gore that quivered and danced in the sunlight on the ceiling. He had plucked it off again. And there was the body- mere flesh and blood, no more - but such flesh, and so much blood!

He struck a light, kindled a fire, and thrust the club into it. There was hair upon the end, which **blazed and** shrunk into a light cinder, and, **caught by the air**, whirled up the chimney. Even that frightened him, **sturdy as he was<sup>41</sup>**; but he held the weapon till it broke, and then piled it on the coals to burn away, and smoulder into ashes. He washed himself, and rubbed his clothes; there were spots that would not be removed, but he cut the pieces out, and burnt them. How those stains were dispersed about the room! The very feet of the dog were bloody.

All this time he had never once turned his back upon the corpse; **no, not for a moment<sup>42</sup>**. **Such preparations completed, he moved**, backward, towards the door: dragging the dog with him, **lest he should soil his feet anew and carry out new evidences of the crime into the streets. He<sup>43</sup>** shut the door softly, locked it, took the

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41. Details added to the action to give more emphasis. Omitted from the reading because they are not essential.

42. Emphatic element omitted from the reading since it is not essential.

43. Details that describe the action. Omitted in the reading since they are not essential.

He had not moved; he had been afraid to stir. There had been a moan and motion of the hand; and, with terror added to rage, he had struck and struck again. Once he threw a rug over it; but it was worse *to fancy the eyes*, and imagine them moving towards him, than to see them glaring upward, as if *watching the reflection of the pool of gore that quivered and danced in the sunlight on the ceiling*. He had plucked it off again. And there was the body—mere flesh and blood, no more—but *such flesh, and so much blood!!!*

He struck a light, kindled a fire, and thrust the club into it. There was hair upon the end, which shrunk into a light cinder, and whirled up the chimney. Even that frightened him; but he held the weapon till it broke, and then piled it on the coals to burn away, and smoulder into ashes. He washed himself, and rubbed his clothes; there were spots **upon them**<sup>32</sup> that would not be removed, but he cut the pieces out, and burnt them. *How those stains were dispersed about the room! The very feet of his dog were bloody!!!!*

All this time he had, *never once*, turned his *back* upon the *corpse*. **He now moved**<sup>33</sup>, *backward*, towards the door: dragging the dog with him, shut the door softly, locked it, took the

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32. Specification added to clarify and give more emphasis to the action.

33. Summary of an ampler explanation that appears in the novel. In this case, “now” stands for: “after he had done cleaning himself up”.

key, and left the house.

[He crossed over, and glanced up at the window...]<sup>44</sup>

He went on doggedly; but as he left the town behind him, and plunged into the solitude and darkness of the road, he felt a dread and awe creeping upon him which shook him to the core. Every object before him, substance or shadow, still or moving, took the semblance of some fearful thing; but these fears were nothing compared to the sense<sup>45</sup> that haunted him of that morning's ghastly figure following at his heels. He could trace its shadow in the gloom, supply the smallest item of the outline, and note how stiff and solemn it seemed to stalk along<sup>46</sup>. He could hear its garments rustling in the leaves, and every breath of wind came laden with that last low cry. If he stopped it did the same. If he ran, it followed - not running too: that would have been a relief: but like a corpse endowed with the mere machinery of life, and<sup>47</sup> borne on one slow melancholy wind that never rose or fell.

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44. In the novel there are many pages describing Sikes's flight. These pages provide detailed descriptions of what he did during his flight, the people he met and his feelings about the night of the murder. Omitted in the reading because they are irrelevant to the performance of the story.

45. Segment that provides more details about Sikes's feelings and fears. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential information.

46. Descriptive segment that provides more details about what Sikes did during his flight. Omitted in the reading because it is not essential.

47. Detailed description of Sikes's sensation. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential.

key, and left the house.

As he gradually left the town behind him all that day<sup>34</sup>, and plunged that night into the solitude and darkness of the country<sup>35</sup>, he was *haunted by that ghastly figure following at his heels*<sup>36</sup>. He could hear its garments rustle in the leaves; and every breath of wind came laden with that last low cry. If *he* stopped, *it* stopped<sup>37</sup>. If *he* ran, *it* followed; not running too—that would have been a relief—but borne on one slow melancholy air that never rose or fell.

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34. This phrase appears differently in the novel because it is linked to the following phrase that does not appear in the reading. It summarises the idea given in the novel but in a more simplistic manner.

35. In the novel, Sikes's flight begins with the description of the road travelled to leave London. In the reading, only few parts of his flight are taken from the novel. "Country" summarizes the specific and detailed description given in the novel.

36. Summarization of an ampler description that appears in the novel.

37. Expressed differently in the novel but the meaning is the same. It is a stylistic change that fits performing needs.

At times he turned, with desperate determination<sup>48</sup>, resolved to beat this phantom off, though it should look him dead; but the hair rose on his head, and his blood stood still, for it had turned with him and was behind him then. He had kept it before him that morning, but it was behind now – always<sup>49</sup>. He leaned his back against a bank, and felt that it stood above him, visibly out against the cold night-sky. He threw himself upon the road - on his back upon the road. At his head it stood silent, erect, and still - a living grave-stone, with its epitaph in blood.

[Let no man talk of murderers escaping justice...]<sup>50</sup>

Suddenly, he took the desperate resolution of going back to London.

‘There's somebody to speak to there, at all events,’ he thought.

‘A good<sup>51</sup> hiding-place, too. They'll never expect to nab me there, after this country scent. Why can't I lie by for a week or so, and, forcing blunt from Fagin, get abroad to France? Damme<sup>52</sup> I'll risk it.’

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48. Specification that provides more details to the action. It does not appear in the reading as it is not essential.

49. Detailed specification that does not appear in the reading because it is not necessary.

50. In the novel there are many pages that talk about Sikes's flight. They provide a description of the shelter he found for the night, his fears and the fire that broke out near his hiding-place. All these circumstances have been omitted by the author in the reading because they are irrelevant to the performance.

51. Adjective that does not appear in the reading since it is not essential.

52. Specification of Sikes's intentions and plans to get himself out of trouble. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential.

At times, he turned to beat this phantom off, though it should look him dead; but the hair rose on his head, and his blood stood still, for it had turned with him, and was behind him then. He leaned his back against a bank, and felt that it stood above him, visibly out against the cold night sky. He threw himself **on his back**<sup>38</sup> upon the road. *At his head it stood, silent, erect, and still: a **human***<sup>39</sup> *gravestone with its epitaph in Blood!!*

Suddenly, **towards daybreak**<sup>40</sup>, he took the desperate resolution of going back to London. 'There's somebody to speak to there, at all events. A hiding-place, too, **in our gang's old house in Jacob's Island**<sup>41</sup>.—I'll risk it.'

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38. Detail added to clarify the action.

39. Synonym of the word used in the novel. It is a stylistic change.

40. Added to give the idea that time has passed. It does not appear in the novel because the reader already knows it since he has read the previous pages that describe what Sikes did during the night.

41. Specification of where Sikes wanted to go. This fragment does not appear in the novel because previously noted.

He acted upon this impulse without delay, and<sup>53</sup> choosing the least frequented roads began his journey back, resolved to lie concealed within a short distance of the metropolis, and, entering it at dusk by a circuitous route, to proceed straight to that part of it which he had fixed on for his destination.

[The dog, though. If any descriptions of him...] <sup>54</sup>

## CHAPTER 50

### *The Pursuit and Escape*

[NEAR to that part of the Thames on which the church at Rother-hithe abuts...] <sup>55</sup>

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53. Specification omitted in the reading because it is not essential.
54. Detailed segment which describes Sikes's intention of get rid of his dog. The dog would make Sikes get caught faster since it would appear in every police description of him. This fragment does not appear in the reading because it is not essential.
55. In this section of the novel there are many pages which provide a detailed description of the road traveled by Sikes to reach Jacob's Island. It also provides a detailed description of the surroundings of the island, of Folly Ditch and of the houses and shops there. The description continues talking about a house where there were three men. They were part of Fagin's team who, after the discovery of Nancy's corpse and the beginning of the investigation, had managed to escape from the police. These three men were talking about their associates Fagin, Bet, and Noah, caught by the police, while Sikes's dog arrived. They feared Sikes would follow. After a while Sikes did arrive. This part of the story has been completely omitted in the reading. It refers to many characters that appeared previously in the novel. The audience is not informed about them because they are never mentioned in the reading as it is focused only on Nancy and Sikes's story. Also omitted because much of the information given are not essential for the performance of the reading.

Choosing the least frequented roads for his journey back, he<sup>42</sup> resolved to lie concealed within a short distance of the city until it was dark night again, and then proceed to his destination<sup>43</sup>, He did this, and limped in among three affrighted fellow-thieves<sup>44</sup>,

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42. Specification added to clarify who the protagonist of the action is. It does not appear in the novel because it was clarified in the previous phrase which has been omitted from the reading.

43. This phrase summarizes how the action was going to take place. It is expressed differently in the novel.

44. In the reading, many pages of the fiftieth chapter of the novel have been omitted. The author has added phrases to connect different parts of his narration. This phrase summarizes the pages of the novel, in which, it is told that Sikes had hidden until night and then he had gone to his destination in Jacob's Island, where he found three members of Fagin's team.

Crakit went down to the door, and returned followed by a man with the lower part of his face buried in a handkerchief, and another tied over his head under his hat. He drew them slowly off<sup>56</sup>.

Blanched face, sunken eyes, hollow cheeks, beard of three days' growth; wasted flesh, short thick breath<sup>57</sup>; it was the very ghost of Sikes.

There was an uneasy movement among them, but nobody spoke.

'You that keep this house,' said Sikes, turning his face to Crakit, 'do you mean to sell me, or to let me lie here till this hunt is over?'

'You may stop here, if you think it safe,' returned the person addressed, after some hesitation.

[Sikes carried his eyes slowly up the wall behind...]<sup>58</sup>

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56. Description of Sikes's arrival. He was let in by Crakit. Omitted in the reading because the audience may not know who Crakit is or his relevance to the story.

57. Added details that give more emphasis to Sikes's description. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential.

58. Dialogue between the men that were in the house. Sikes asked if Nancy's body was buried. Charly Beats, other member of Fagin's team, arrived in the house. He was mad at Sikes for what he had done. The two started fighting and Sikes locked him in a small room. The lad promised that if someone had come to get him, he would have given him up. Omitted in the reading because it is focused only on Nancy and Sikes without mentioning other characters that could confuse the audience.

the ghost of himself<sup>45</sup>—blanched face, sunken eyes, hollow cheeks—*his dog at his heels covered with mud, lame, half blind, crawling as if those stains had poisoned him*<sup>46</sup>!!

All three men shrank away. Not one of them spoke<sup>47</sup>.

‘You that keep this house.—Do you mean to sell me, or to let me lie here 'till the<sup>48</sup> hunt is over?’

‘You may stop if you think it safe. But what man ever escaped the men who are after you<sup>49</sup>!’

*Hark!!!! A great sound coming on like a rushing fire! What? Tracked so Soon? The hunt was up already*<sup>50</sup>?

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45. In the novel, this exclamation follows the list of adjectives which describe Sikes’s aspect. It is a stylistic change.

46. The fiftieth chapter of the novel has been changed to fit the author’s performing needs. In this case, the highlighted phrase appears in an omitted part of the novel. In the novel, the dog arrives before Sikes. Its aspect is described at this time. The author has given this description much importance and therefore, decided to keep it in the reading in a paragraph where it could best fit.

47. It is expressed differently in the novel but the meaning is the same. It is a stylistic change.

48. Stylistic change.

49. Exclamation that does not appear in the novel. It is added to give more emphasis to the lecture.

50. Emphatic phrase that summarizes omitted parts of the novel, in which a description is given of what was going on outside the house. It is added to help the audience understand that many people came to witness the arrest of Sikes.

There were<sup>59</sup> lights gleaming below, voices in loud and earnest conversation, the tramp of hurried footsteps — endless they seemed in number<sup>60</sup> — crossing the nearest wooden bridge. One man on horseback seemed to be among the crowd; for there was the noise of hoofs rattling on the uneven pavement. The gleam of lights increased; the footsteps came more thickly and noisily on. Then, came a loud knocking at the door, and then a hoarse murmur from such a multitude of angry voices as would have made the boldest quail<sup>61</sup>. ‘The tide<sup>62</sup>’, cried the murderer, as he staggered back into the room, and shut the faces out, ‘the tide was in as I came up. Give me a rope, a long rope. They’re all in front<sup>63</sup>. I may drop into the Folly Ditch, and clear off that way. Give me a rope, or I shall do three more murders and kill myself<sup>64</sup>.’

The panic-stricken men pointed to where such articles were kept; the murderer, hastily selecting the longest and strongest cord, hurried up to the house-top.

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The fiftieth chapter of the novel has been modified due to the performing needs of the reading. Many paragraphs have been omitted or placed in a different order. Like the above section which has been placed forward in the novel in comparison to the reading.

59. Specification that does not appear in the reading since it is not essential.
60. Descriptive phrase that provides more details to the action. Omitted in the reading because it is not essential.
61. Detailed description of what was occurring outside the house. Omitted in the reading because the information provided is not essential.
62. Repetition that does not appear in the reading because it is not needed.
63. Detail about the action omitted in the reading because it is possible to understand it from the context.
64. Emphatic statement that does not appear in the reading since it is not essential.

Lights gleaming below, voices in loud and earnest talk<sup>51</sup>, hurried tramp of footsteps on the<sup>52</sup> wooden bridges over Folly Ditch<sup>53</sup>, a beating on the heavy door and window-shutters of the house, a waving crowd in the outer darkness like a field of corn moved by an angry storm<sup>54</sup>!

‘The tide was in, as I come up. Give me a rope. I may drop from the top of the house, at the back<sup>55</sup> into the Folly Ditch, and clear off that way, or be stifled<sup>56</sup>. *Give me a rope!*’

No one stirred. They<sup>57</sup> pointed to where they kept such things<sup>58</sup>, and the murderer hurried with a strong cord<sup>59</sup> to the housetop.

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51. Synonym used in the novel. It is a stylistic change.
  52. Scrambled order of the phrase, but with identical meaning. It is a stylistic change.
  53. It does not appear in the novel because it is already described in the omitted parts of the fiftieth chapter where the island and the ditch around it are well portrayed. In the reading it is added because it is a needed specification to let the audience understand the surroundings and the situation.
  54. It does not appear in the novel. Added details that give more emphasis to the action. The underlined phrase is part of an omitted paragraph that appears in the novel (p. 125 it is also underlined). It is a very emphatic phrase and, for this reason, the author has decided to include it in the reading in a paragraph where it could best fit.
  55. Details about how the action was going to develop. It does not appear in the novel because Sikes’s plan is explained in the omitted parts so the reader is already informed about it.
  56. Added element that does not appear in the novel, it gives more emphasis to the action.
  57. Expressed differently in the novel, the meaning is the same. It is a stylistic change.
  58. In the novel this statement is written in an inverted order compared with the reading. It is a stylistic change.
  59. Summarization of an ampler description that appears in the novel.

[All the windows in the rear of the house had been long ago bricked up...]<sup>65</sup>

Of all the terrific yells that ever fell on mortal ears, none could exceed the cry of the infuriated throng. Some shouted to those who were nearest to set the house on fire; others roared to the officers to shoot him dead. Among them all, none showed such fury as the man on horseback, who, throwing himself out of the saddle, and bursting through the crowd as if he were parting water, cried, beneath the window, in a voice that rose above all others, 'Twenty guineas to the man who brings a ladder!' The nearest voices took up the cry, and hundreds echoed it. Some called for ladders, some for sledge-hammers; some ran with torches to and fro as if to seek them, and still came back and roared again; some spent their breath in impotent curses and execrations; some pressed forward with the ecstasy of madmen, and thus impeded the progress of those below; some among the boldest attempted to climb up by the water-spout and crevices in the wall; and all waved to and fro, in the darkness beneath, like a field of corn moved by an angry wind<sup>67</sup>, and joined from time to time in one loud furious roar<sup>66</sup>.

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65. Detailed description of how Sikes gets to the top of the house. Omitted in the reading because it is not essential.

66. Detailed description of the situation outside the house where Sikes took shelter. Omitted in the reading because all this information is not essential.

67. It is a particularly emphatic phrase that appears at an earlier time in the reading (p 124). It is underlined to make it readily recognizable in the text. Its position has been changed by the author because the paragraph, where it is placed in the novel, has been omitted in the reading.

*Of all the terrific yells that ever fell on mortal ears, none could exceed the furious cry when he was seen*<sup>60</sup>. Some shouted to those who were nearest, to set the house on fire; others adjured<sup>61</sup> the officers to shoot him dead; others, with execrations, clutched and tore at him in the empty air<sup>62</sup>; some called for ladders, some for sledgehammers; some ran with torches to and fro, to seek them.

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60. Detail added to specify the action. In the novel, the order of paragraphs has been change. As a matter of facts, this phrase appears, before Sikes goes to the housetop, in the context of the description of the crowd. In the reading, it describes the crowd's reaction when the see Sikes on the roof.

61. Another verb is used in the novel, it is a stylistic change.

62. Specification that does not appear in the novel. Added to give more emphasis to the action.

‘I will give fifty pounds,’ cried an old gentleman from the same quarter, ‘to the man who takes him alive. I will remain here, till he comes to ask me for it<sup>68</sup>.’

[There was another roar. At this moment the word was passed among the crowd that the door was forced at last...]<sup>69</sup>

Roused into new strength and energy, and stimulated by the noise within the house which announced that an entrance had really been effected<sup>70</sup>, he set his foot against the stack of chimneys, fastened one end of the rope tightly and firmly round it, and with the other made a strong running noose by the aid of his hands and teeth almost in a second. He could let himself down by the cord<sup>71</sup> to within a less distance of the ground than his own height, and had his knife ready in his hand to cut it then and drop.

At the very instant when he brought the loop over his head previous to slipping it beneath his arm-pits, and when the old gentleman before-mentioned (who had clung so tight to the railing of the bridge as to resist the force of the crowd, and retain his

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68. Specification that does not appear in the reading since it is not essential.

69. Omitted paragraph which describes the crowd outside. After the door was forced, the crowd moved from the back of the house, where they were looking at Sikes on the roof, to the front of the house to see the police arresting him. Seeing that the crowd was going away and the police was in the house, Sikes decided to try to escape by doing what he had planned previously, that is to say, to drop himself down from the roof of the house on to the ditch.

70. Detailed description of Sikes’s feeling about the sudden change of direction of the crowd. Omitted in the reading since it is not essential.

71. Specifications that do not appear in the reading since they are not needed.

*'I promise<sup>63</sup> Fifty Pounds,'* cried *Mr. Brownlow* from the nearest bridge<sup>64</sup>, *'to the man who takes that murderer<sup>65</sup> alive!'*

He set his foot against the stack of chimneys, fastened one end of the rope firmly round it, and with the other made a strong running noose by the aid of his hands and teeth. *With the cord round his back<sup>66</sup>*, he could let himself down to within a less distance of the ground than his own height, and had his knife ready in his hand to cut *the cord<sup>67</sup>*, and drop.

*At the instant that<sup>68</sup>* he brought the loop over his head *before<sup>69</sup>* slipping it beneath his arm-pits,

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63. Expressed differently in the novel. The meaning is unchanged as they both refer to the same intent. It is a stylistic difference.

64. Specification of who the person was and where he was located. In the novel it is used a generic name: "the old gentleman" since this information had been already explained in a previous omitted paragraph.

65. Substitution of the personal pronoun with: "that murderer" which provides more emphasis to the lecture.

66. Specification to let the audience understand better how the action was going to occur. It does not appear in the novel because there are many prior pages explaining it.

67. Explication of the personal pronoun. Substitution made to clarify and to give more emphasis to the action.

68. Expressed differently in the novel but, with identical meaning. It is a stylistic change.

69. In the novel, a synonym of this word is used. It is a stylistic change.

position) earnestly warned those about him that the man was about to lower himself down - at that very instant the murderer<sup>72</sup>, looking behind him on the roof, threw his arms above his head, and uttered a yell of terror.

‘The eyes again!’ he cried in an unearthly screech.

Staggering as if struck by lightning, he lost his balance and tumbled over the parapet. The noose was on his neck. It ran up with his weight, tight as a bowstring, and swift as the arrow it speeds. He fell for five-and-thirty feet. There was a sudden jerk, a terrific convulsion of the limbs; and there he<sup>73</sup> hung, with the open knife clenched in his stiffening hand.

The old chimney quivered with the shock, but stood it bravely. The murderer swung lifeless against the wall; and the boy, thrusting aside the dangling body which obscured his view, called to the people to come and take him out, for God's sake<sup>74</sup>.

A dog, which had lain concealed till now, ran backwards and forwards on the parapet with a dismal howl, and collecting himself for a spring, jumped for the dead man's shoulders. Missing his aim, he fell into the ditch, turning completely<sup>75</sup> over as he went; and striking his head against, a stone, dashed out his brains.

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72. Description of the situation outside the house. Omitted in the reading because it provides non essential information.

73. Description of Sikes's death. Omitted in the reading since it provides non essential details.

74. Detailed description of the situation. This segment also contains references to characters not previously mentioned in the reading therefore omitted from it so as not to confuse the audience.

75. Specification omitted in the reading since it is not essential information.

*looking behind him on the roof he threw up his arms, and yelled<sup>70</sup>, 'The eyes again!'*

Staggering as if struck by lightning, he lost his balance and tumbled over the parapet. The noose was at his neck; it ran up with his weight; tight as a bowstring, and swift as the arrow it speeds. He fell five-and-thirty feet, and hung with his<sup>71</sup> open *knife clenched in his stiffening hand!!!*

The<sup>72</sup> *dog* which had lain concealed 'till now, ran backwards and forwards on the parapet with a dismal howl, and, collecting himself for a spring, jumped for the *dead man's shoulders*. Missing his aim, he fell into the ditch, turning over as he went, and striking against a stone, *dashed out his brains!!*

#### THE END OF THE READING

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70. Summary of an ampler description that appears in the novel.

71. In the novel, the definite article is used. In the reading it has been substituted with the possessive adjective to clarify the action.

72. Different article used in the novel: "A". Substitution made to specify, to the audience, that the dog was Sikes's.

### 3.2 METHODOLOGY OF COMPARISON BETWEEN DICKENS'S TWO TEXTS

#### INTRODUCTION

In this chapter of my thesis I have conducted a detailed examination focused on a specific section of one of Dickens's major works, *Oliver Twist*. In particular, I have looked at the chapters in which Sikes kills Nancy, and a public reading of them, entitled *Sikes and Nancy*.

*Oliver Twist* is one of Dickens's *written* masterpieces. It is the classic tale of a boy, of unknown parentage, born in a workhouse and brought up under the cruel conditions to which pauper children were exposed in the Victorian England. He had to face a lot of controversial situations in order to grow up and not to let others corrupt his good heart and soul. The story is an adventure and therefore, it is full of all kind of different episodes, characters, and jumble of emotions, which make it an interesting and captivating reading. The public reading of *Sikes and Nancy* is one of Dickens's *performed* masterpieces, taken from a particular episode of the novel and adjusted to fit performing needs. It is on these adjustments that my research centred on.

These two texts can be seen as, one a sort of summary, of the other. The three chapters of the public reading are, actually, equivalent to the 45<sup>th</sup>, 46<sup>th</sup>, 47<sup>th</sup>, 48<sup>th</sup> and 50<sup>th</sup> chapter of the novel. To analyse them I have put the two texts opposite to each other so that their comparison would be clearer and more detailed. I have put in evidence all the stylistic, grammatical and conceptual diversities highlighting them

with different colours depending on the reasons for which they were modified. I have explained these reasons in the numbered notes below the texts.

## **ANALYSIS OF THE TWO TEXTS:**

### **THE USE OF COLOURS**

For the analysis of the two texts I have used three highlighting colours: Grey, Green and Yellow.

- **GREY:** I have highlighted with this colour all those parts that appear in the public reading and differ from the novel. I have given the explanation of these changes in the notes below the text.

These parts are:

- all the added phrases that summarize wider concepts expressed in the novel.
- phrases used to adapt the text of the reading to theatrical needs.
- words or phrases used to connect different paragraphs. In fact, many paragraphs in the novel were left out from the reading as they provided information, details or descriptions that were not essential.

Also, it is possible to find parts highlighted in grey in the text of the novel. The aim of this is to provide an instantly visible confirmation of

the differences pointed out in the reading. In this case, there are no notes below the text since their clarification is found in the notes of the reading.

Example: The public reading begins with: “*Fagin, the receiver of stolen goods.*” This phrase is highlighted in grey because the forty-fifth chapter of the novel begins with: “*The old man.*” In its turn, this phrase was also highlighted in grey with the aim of making the change immediately visible and verifiable to the reader.

- **YELLOW**: This type of highlighting was used only in the novel. Its purpose is to point out all those parts that do not appear in the public reading. Every phrase highlighted in yellow has a note below the text explaining the reason for its omission.

The parts of the text highlighted with this colour are mostly clarifications about the situations. The yellow highlights provide:

- more descriptive information regarding the emotions, aspects and actions of the characters.
- information about the settings such as detailed descriptions of places and atmospheres.
- information that clarifies the situation to the reader, such as specification of the time or how an action occurs and develops.

- information about characters or events that are not mentioned in the public reading because related to other chapters of the novel. Example: In the 45<sup>th</sup> chapter of the novel, when Noah meets Fagin, they begin their conversation talking about Charlotte. There follow details about Noah's first day of work as a thief. Charlotte's character and the dialogue, do not appear in the public reading as they are linked to other chapters of the novel that are not crucial as the reading is only focused on Nancy's murder. If all this information had not been omitted, the author would have risked confusing the audience who may not have read the novel.

- **GREEN**: This type of highlighting appears only in the text of the novel. Its aim is to highlight parts of dialogues that do not appear in the public reading. They are understandable from the context as they only indicate who is talking.

The green highlight points out:

- who the person talking is.
- what he/she is doing.

The first green highlighted phrase of the novel has a note below the text explaining the purpose of this type of highlighting. The following highlights have no notes, as they are repetitions of the first one.

Example: 'Bolter,' **said Fagin, drawing up a chair and seating himself opposite to him.**

'Well, here I am,' **returned Noah.** 'What's the matter?'

In this fragment of Noah and Fagin's dialogue, taken from the forty-fifth chapter of the novel, the green highlighted phrases can be left out without changing the meaning or compromising the comprehensibility of the dialogue.

## **THE PUBLIC READING and THE NOVEL**

The public reading of Nancy's murder is one of Dickens's most touching works. This reading is made up of three chapters, adapted from five chapters of the novel:

- **1<sup>st</sup>:** Corresponds to the 45<sup>th</sup> chapter of the novel.

This first chapter of the reading explains how Fagin was able to discover Nancy's treason. He had put a spy, Noah Claypole, to watch her and bring him back all the information.

This chapter maintains the same structure of the novel. It has no substantial variations, if only few stylistic changes. The few parts omitted concern characters (Charlotte, Barney) or events (Noah's first day of work and parts

related to Noah's previous visit to a police station) that are linked to previous chapters. The remaining omitted parts, which are the majority, are clarifications of the person talking.

**2<sup>nd</sup>:** Corresponds to the 46<sup>th</sup> chapter of the novel.

This second chapter of the public reading tells of how Fagin pointed out Nancy to Noah, Noah's surveillance of her movements, Nancy's meeting with a lady and a gentleman on London Bridge, and their conversation.

Even though the novel appears more descriptive and explanatory, there are no substantial alterations compared to the public reading.

The omitted parts of this chapter are:

- clarifications of the person talking in the dialogues. They are not essential as it is possible to understand them from the context.
- few descriptive segments of the text of the novel which provide details about the setting of the action or the protagonists' thoughts and fears.
- entire paragraphs talking about Monks, such as his aspect and details about how he could be captured. This character is hardly mentioned in the public reading: he is linked to Oliver's story and the audience unfamiliar with the book might not know anything about him. He is not essential for this chapter. Therefore, all the paragraphs related to him were omitted.

- **3<sup>rd</sup>**: Corresponds to the 47<sup>th</sup>, 48<sup>th</sup> and 50<sup>th</sup> chapter of the novel.

The initial part of the third chapter of the reading is taken from the 47<sup>th</sup> chapter of the novel. It tells of Fagin's revelation to Sikes about Nancy's treason, Sikes's reaction to it and Nancy's murder.

This first part, maintains the same structure of the novel, even though the novel is more descriptive. The omitted parts are:

- clarifications of the person talking in the dialogues.
- descriptive segments which provide details about Fagin's aspect and considerations.
- descriptions of the environment where the actions take place.
- parts related to any character that does not appear in the reading.

The second part of the reading is taken from the 48<sup>th</sup> chapter of the novel. It tells about Sikes's reaction after the murder, his flight from London and his final decision to go back and take shelter at Jacob's Island.

Only few paragraphs of this chapter are taken from the novel. There are many omitted parts:

- description of Sikes's indecision about what to do after the murder.
- a detailed description of his flight: the road to leave London, the countryside where he stopped, his pause at a small public-house where a man sold a composition that was able to remove all sort of stains.

- a detailed description of Nancy's eyes that followed him everywhere.
- a detailed description of a fire broke out near his hiding-place and the help he gave to the people who were trying to extinguish it.
- Sikes's attempt to kill his dog after the decision to go back to London.
- clarifications of the person talking in the dialogues.

The final part of the reading is taken from the 50<sup>th</sup> chapter of the novel. It tells about Sikes's arrival at Jacob's Island, his chase and death.

This last section of the reading is totally different from the novel. The few paragraphs taken from the novel are rephrased and placed in a different order in the reading. Example: "*his dog at his heels covered with mud...*" appears in the reading when Sikes arrives at the hiding-place at Jacob's Island. In the novel, the dog is already there when Sikes arrives. Sikes had attempted to kill him, in the previous chapter. The dog had run away and had gone to the hiding place. It is at this point that its description is given.

There are many omitted parts:

- a detailed description of the road taken to get to Jacob's Island and the ditch around it.
- the three men who were in the house and their dialogues about Fagin's arrest, the arrival of the dog, and the dialogues after Sikes's arrival.
- detailed descriptions of what was occurring outside the house.

Only the very last part of the reading is pretty similar to the novel. It is the part that describes Sikes's death.

## **THE ITALICS**

The italics is a significant textual effect used in a variety of situations. Its main purpose, in literature, is to distinguish certain words from others because they are particularly meaningful within the text and for the story itself. It is also used to visualize, on the text, imitation of sounds and, most of all, to give more emphasis to single words and short phrases.

In the past, the italics was an editorial substitution of the underlining made by the novelists on their works. Computers did not exist so novels were hand-written or typed. If the authors wanted to put some words in evidence from others, they would underline them. When the hand-written works were printed, the underlined words were put in italics<sup>1</sup>. This technique is evident in Dickens's public reading. In my dissertation most of the words in italics have a note below the text. Example: 'There's not the smallest danger in it—not the very smallest; it's only to *dodge a woman*'. This is a fragment of Fagin and Noah's first chapter dialogue. The note about the italics explains that the author double underlined the word *woman* in the non-printed text. The reason was to put more emphasis and give more attention to this woman

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<sup>1</sup> <http://owl.english.purdue.edu> Consultato il 25-03-2008

who was not an ordinary woman, but Nancy, a member of their gang. Dickens also, used to underline important words that were italicized when printed.

The general use of the italics is connected to the author's specific demand for his text. In Dickens's public reading there is a large use of the italics whereas, in the novel, it is less frequent. The reason is that a theatrical text is a text made to be performed and acted. It needs to follow specific rules to maintain the interest and attention of the audience. Consequently, the phrases put in italics were those that were particularly emphatic, and needed more stress or a different pitch of the voice when read out in order to reproduce the atmospheres and emotions on paper. Few sounds, such as, laughs were also put in italics because they had to be acted out.

### **DIFFICULTIES OF REGISTER**

The term register simply describes the various styles of language available for writing or speaking, from the informal register, to the formal one. To convey the meaning does not equate with an accurate translation: It is absolutely crucial to pay attention to the register to make sure the tone is also kept. I found it very difficult to keep Dickens's register when I translated *Sikes and Nancy*.

The register used for *Nancy and Sikes* is very informal since the people speaking are of low social rank. Therefore, their dialogues are very colloquial and the terminology used belongs to the poor classes and the world of crime. In translating it into Italian I tried to recreate the effect that the writer wanted to give. In order to do this I have

carried out a research of words and their meanings to find the one that could more appropriately fit in that precise context. Example: In Dickens' text the word *lad* is often used to describe a kid or a boy. In English this word is informal and commonly used, while its Italian translation "giovinetto" is very formal and belongs to an old style now in disuse. I had to research among the many possible ways of translating this word, to find one, with the same meaning, that would be more appropriate for the situation and rank.

An additional difficulty for my translation was Dickens's use of slang. Every language, especially in verbal expression, has a code, sayings and idioms, which often do not have an equivalent translation in another language. In these cases, I had first to fully understand the meaning and then find a similar or equivalent expression in Italian. Example: In the dialogue between Sikes and Fagin where Fagin asks what Sikes would do if he discovered that someone betrayed him, he says: '*Suppose that lad was to peach—to blow upon us all. Suppose that lad was to do it, of his own fancy—not grabbed, tried, earwigged by the parson and brought to it on bread and water*'. The literal Italian translation of the underlined phrase makes no sense because there is not a saying that expresses its meaning. In this case it had been necessary to add words to make the statement clearer.

Furthermore, the register changes when the interlocutors belong to a different rank. This is the case of the dialogue between Nancy, the young lady (Rose Maylie) and the gentleman on London Bridge. These latter characters belong to a higher class so

the register they use is more formal compared with the one used in the other parts of the reading. Example: *'The past has been a dreary waste with you, of youthful energies misspent, and such priceless treasures lavished, as the Creator bestows but once and never grants again, but, for the future, you may hope'*.

Dickens lived and wrote in the nineteenth century; in an age in which the English language presented many grammatical and lexical differences compared with the current one. Many constructions and many words belong to that period and it has been difficult to translate them into a current Italian while trying not to modify the register.

## **CONCLUSION**

The analysis that I have conducted on *Nancy and Sikes* and *Oliver Twist* brought me to the following conclusions:

- Dickens summarized some of the most attractive chapters of his novel extracting from them the key information and all of the most significant events. He used these to create a performable text, more concise and explicit, able to capture the audience's attention. He omitted all the irrelevant parts and all those parts that were understandable from the context and he kept only what seemed essential to him.
- All graphic marks, such as the italics, are useful and sometimes indispensable for a reader who wants to transmit emotions to his spectators. Dickens used them to

recognize certain words that had to be pronounced with a different or higher emphasis.

- The register used is crucial in order to convey a sense of reality and it is for this reason that Dickens puts particular attention to it. Register marks a character and helps the audience realise who is talking with no need of further specification.

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## SITOGRAFIA ANALITICA:

[-http://arts.guardians.co.uk](http://arts.guardians.co.uk)

Network d'informazione digitale del quotidiano "Guardian". Principalmente focalizzato in ambito culturale, fornisce informazioni su manifestazioni culturali, teatrali e letterarie. Da questo sito ho reperito informazioni inerenti alla rappresentazione di *Sikes and Nancy*.

[-http:// charlesdickenspage.com](http://charlesdickenspage.com)

Sito interamente dedicato a Charles Dickens. È possibile reperire informazioni biografiche, notizie riguardanti la sua carriera di romanziere, giornalista e lettore pubblico, dati relativi alle sue opere e critiche di altri autori. Riporta un articolo di Charles Kent, con informazioni riguardo le *performances* di *Sikes and Nancy* fatte da Charles Dickens.

[-http://www.ciao.it](http://www.ciao.it)

Sito dedicato ad acquisti online, tra cui numerosi libri connessi a Charles Dickens e alla sua vita. Da alcune recensioni di libri ho reperito informazioni generali sulla vita dell'autore.

[-http://en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org)

Enciclopedia multimediale, libera e multilingue dove è possibile rinvenire informazioni riguardanti più discipline come la letteratura, la storia, la scienza ecc.

Da questo sito ho reperito tutte le informazioni inerenti alla biografia di Charles Dickens e alcune informazioni sulla sua opera, *Oliver Twist*.

[-http://www.univirtual.it](http://www.univirtual.it)

Sito dedicato all'insegnamento che permette di apprendere online tramite l'utilizzo percorsi d'istruzione, di enciclopedie multimediali e articoli di giornale. Da questo sito ho reperito informazioni riguardo alla situazione storica in cui nasce e si sviluppa il romanzo vittoriano.

[-http://owl.english.purdue.edu](http://owl.english.purdue.edu)

Sito dedicato all'apprendimento di tecniche di scrittura: "The Purdue Online Writing Lab". Da questo sito ho reperito informazioni riguardo alla nascita e l'utilizzo del carattere corsivo.

