

## Summaries: A Tale of Two Cities

### Book 3, Chapters 1-8

#### Chapter 1

- In 1792, traveling through France is pretty slow going.
- Okay: traveling in the 1700s was pretty slow all the time. We know that. But now it's extra slow. Even slower than before. Sloooooooooow.
- Darnay, of course, happens to be traveling in 1792.
- He's not getting too far.
- Everywhere he goes, he's stopped. People have to check his papers. Then they have to re-check them.
- Meanwhile, Darnay waits for several hours.
- This happens over and over. And over.
- Finally, in the middle of the night, he's taken prisoner by a group of patriots.
- They deliver him to the local authorities, who decide that he's an emigrant and must be sent to Paris immediately.
- When Darnay tries to protest, he gets smacked around for a while. Apparently, folks have figured out that he's an aristocrat.
- Needless to say, they're not too happy about the news.
- Bundled into a carriage, Darnay begins the halting, slow journey to the capital.
- The patriots force him to pay for an armed escort into the capital. After all, anything could happen to him on the road.
- On the way, a man screams out that a decree has been passed: the property of all emigrants can be confiscated by the Republic.
- Darnay begins to realize that his trip might just be a bit more complicated than he'd planned.
- The crowds aren't all that pleased to see him pass.
- Some even threaten to kill the aristocrat. Others mutter that he'll be judged when he gets to Paris.
- Friendly country, huh?
- At the gates of the city, a guardsman asks for the papers of the prisoner.
- Darnay isn't too excited about the fact that he's gone from being a traveler to an emigrant to a prisoner.
- Sure enough, he's taken to the prison.
- Defarge is there. He identifies Darnay as "Citizen Evrémonde."
- The officer holding Darnay's papers looks at him, nods, and condemns him to prison.
- Aghast, Darnay wants to know why.
- He's done nothing wrong—nothing against the law.
- The man smiles grimly. He informs Darnay that there are new laws now.
- In fact, under these laws, emigrants have no rights at all.
- As they walk away, Defarge quietly asks Darnay if he's Dr. Manette's son-in-law.
- Darnay says he is.
- Desperate, Darnay turns to Defarge and begs for help.
- Defarge refuses. It's not in his power.

- Darnay asks if he'll be imprisoned without trial or any attention to justice.
- Sniffing a bit, Defarge says that many people have been unfairly imprisoned before.
- Darnay responds, "But not by me."
- Defarge looks darkly at him for a minute, then walks in silence.
- Darnay asks for one favor: that Defarge will tell Mr. Lorry that Darnay has been imprisoned in La Force.
- Refusing, Defarge declares that he's a patriot. He can do nothing to help aristocrats.
- With that, Defarge turns Darnay over to the gaoler of La Force.
- The prison isn't that great a place to be. It's smelly and dark and all-around disgusting.
- Within the prison, Darnay is greeted by faded aristocrats who crowd against him in the small rooms.
- They're almost ghostly; their courtly manners are...just a bit creepy in this dismal location.
- Darnay ends up in a small tower. He begs the gaoler to sell him a pen and paper.
- The gaoler refuses. At present, the only thing Darnay can buy is food.
- Left alone in his cell, Darnay begins to pace frantically.

## Chapter 2

- Tellson's has set up temporary offices in the abandoned palace of an aristocrat.
- From this rather inauspicious location, Mr. Lorry has been making lots and lots of financial decisions.
- Riches have to be preserved (and shipped away), papers have to be saved, even more papers have to be burned...all in all, he's been a pretty busy guy.
- Fortunately, Tellson's seems to be in a safe space for now.
- Mr. Lorry looks out into the courtyard, where a large grindstone has been set up.
- The patriots use the courtyard as a space where they re-grind the edges of their weapons.
- Strangely enough, that makes the building a fairly safe place to be.
- As Mr. Lorry looks out the window, he receives a violent shock: Lucie and her father are coming in the courtyard door.
- Quickly, Mr. Lorry opens the door and rushes them inside.
- Lucie tells him that Darnay has come to the city.
- Immediately, Mr. Lorry realizes what this means. Darnay is in trouble.
- He tries to shield the Manettes from the windows, but the doctor coolly ignores him.
- Dr. Manette, you see, is something of a hero for the patriots. As a former prisoner of the Bastille, he's untouchable.
- In fact, he might even have some leverage in getting Darnay out of prison.
- That's why he and Lucie had come to Paris.
- Mr. Lorry actually agrees. He hurries Lucie up to his room, and then he and the doctor look out the window.
- Patriots are grinding weapons like mad.

- The entire courtyard has become stained with blood.
- Sparks fly off the grindstone, making the entire place look something like a hell on earth.
- Mr. Lorry whispers to the doctor that the patriots have begun murdering prisoners.
- Dr. Manette sighs and goes out into the crowd.
- Soon Mr. Lorry hears the crowd screaming, "Long live the Bastille prisoner!"
- He watches as Dr. Manette is carried out into the streets by the mob.
- Later that night, he and Lucie wait upstairs for Dr. Manette to return.
- Lucie listens, startled, as the grindstone works through the night.

### Chapter 3

- It's now noon of the next day. The doctor still hasn't returned.
- Mr. Lorry wants to be worried about the Manettes, but bank business must come first.
- At the moment, bank business also involves making sure that Lucie and her child aren't hanging out in the bank.
- If worse comes to worst, their presence could make trouble for Tellson's.
- We can't fault the guy's reasoning. It's a bit strange, maybe, but it's probably accurate.
- Accordingly, Mr. Lorry moves Lucie, her child, and Miss Pross into his own rooms.
- Back at Tellson's, he waits anxiously for the end of the day.
- Right as the business day is about to end, a man shows up at the door. He's accompanied by two women, one of whom is knitting.
- He waits for Mr. Lorry to recognize him.
- Mr. Lorry doesn't.
- The man prompts Mr. Lorry a bit: they last saw each other at the wine-shop he runs.
- That's right, folks, it's Defarge.
- Wait, didn't he say that he wouldn't help Darnay?
- Well, yes. But this is different. He comes with a letter from Dr. Manette to Mr. Lorry, asking Mr. Lorry to let Defarge see Lucie.
- In Lucie's room, Defarge hands over a letter from Darnay.
- It's short, but it lets them all know that he's still okay.
- Overwhelmed, Lucie reaches up and kisses Madame Defarge's hand.
- The hand doesn't stop knitting.
- Madame Defarge is a real piece of work.
- Lucie looks up at her, terrified. Something just doesn't seem right...
- Mr. Lorry quickly explains that Madame Defarge likes to look at those whom she may be able to help in times of crisis.
- Calling in Miss Pross and little Lucie so that Madame Defarge can see them, too, Mr. Lorry asks for her help in the future.
- Lucie pleads for mercy for her husband.

- Madame Defarge ignores this cry. She says that she's here for the daughter of Dr. Manette (and not the wife of Evrémonte).
- Frantic, Lucie asks her to protect her husband because he's the doctor's son-in-law.
- She begs for pity as a wife and a mother.
- Madame Defarge stares at her coldly and says that the wives and mothers of France have been suffering for a very long time.
- She leaves without ever promising to help.

## Chapter 4

- Dr. Manette doesn't return for four days.
- When he finally makes it back to the house, he tells Lucie a condensed version of what he's seen.
- Mr. Lorry, however, gets the full story: Dr. Manette went to the Tribunal that tries all the prisoners.
- He announced himself as a former prisoner of the Bastille, and was awarded special status in the Tribunal.
- From his seat, he saw Darnay brought before the court and *almost* released.
- At the last minute, however, the President of the Tribunal got some new information.
- He ordered that Darnay be held in prison. He won't be executed, but he won't be set free.
- Dr. Manette describes the Tribunals as madness. There's not any justice or even any attempt at observing any laws.
- Finally, however, he decides to use all the influence he has to save Darnay.
- In fact, for the first time since he was released from prison, he seems like a socially powerful man.
- The doctor becomes the head medical inspector of three prisons. In that position, he's able to bring back occasional news of Darnay.
- Strangely enough, Mr. Lorry observes that the doctor begins to take pride in his ability to do things for his family.
- For a long time, Lucie took care of him. Now he's able to return the favor.
- Nonetheless, despite all the doctor's efforts, Darnay remains in prison.
- Time passes without any real markers.
- And now, friends, we're introduced to the real star of this novel: the guillotine.
- Our narrator takes a good, long time to describe the ways that it influences and symbolizes the new Republic.
- It's actually a really good bit of the novel—we recommend that you check it out for yourselves.
- The doctor moves through all the madness of this time. The guillotine chops off heads right and left, Darnay remains in prison, and Lucie...waits.

## Chapter 5

- A year passes. Then another three months pass. Nothing's changed.

- Lucie, in particular, seems to have weathered the calamity pretty well.
- She's not wearing bright, fancy clothes, sure, but otherwise she's cheerful.
- Only occasionally does her grief break through. Then she cries on her father's shoulder all night.
- He remains confident that he can save Darnay and tries to reassure his daughter as much as he can.
- One day, the doctor comes home with some news: every now and then, Darnay can make his way to a little window that looks out onto the street.
- He usually manages to be there at three in the afternoon. It's not every day...in fact, it's only about once a week.
- Nonetheless, he asked if Lucie would be willing to come stand in front of the window at three o'clock so he could see her.
- From that time on, Lucie goes to the street next to the window every afternoon.
- Whatever the weather's like, she stands outside for two hours.
- Talk about devotion, huh?
- We're not the only ones who notice how devoted Lucie is.
- A woodcutter happens to realize that she's standing on his street every day.
- At first, he greets her and she returns the greeting.
- After a bit, though, he begins to make jokes about the guillotine. Unsurprisingly, Lucie doesn't find them very funny.
- He thinks it's a riot, though. He even makes a miniature version of the guillotine and hangs it outside his window.
- Honestly, we think the guy needs some hobbies of his own.
- One day, he's not in his shop.
- Lucie's relieved—until she sees him dancing with The Vengeance and a mob of hundreds of other people.
- They're dancing a wild, bloody, violent dance. Apparently, it involves lots of teeth-gnashing. It's called the Carmagnole.
- Lucie stares at them, frightened. Her father comes up to lead her away, and she asks him about the horrible dance.
- He tries to calm her, although he's seen it several times before.
- Suddenly, Madame Defarge appears right beside them.
- She disappears as quickly as she came.
- As they walk home, Dr. Manette tells Lucie that Darnay has been summoned to the Tribunal. He's supposed to have a trial tomorrow.
- In the distance, they hear the guillotine chopping off three heads.
- We sure hope that this isn't foreshadowing.
- The doctor leaves Lucie at home and heads off to see Mr. Lorry to make plans for the next day.

## Chapter 6

- It's the morning of Darnay's trial.
- Five judges sit at the Tribunal bench. The audience hall is packed with people here to see a show.
- One woman sits in the front row, knitting. Beside her, Darnay sees Defarge.

- Dr. Manette sits right beneath the president of the Tribunal, ready to testify.
- Darnay's charges are read: he's an emigrant, and all emigrants are subject to death.
- It doesn't matter, of course, that this law was instituted *after* Darnay came to France.
- The crowd seems to agree. They immediately call for his death.
- Darnay testifies that he's been living in England and earning his own money there. He even married a woman in England.
- When asked, Darnay announces that his wife is Lucie, the daughter of Dr. Manette.
- The crowd gasps in astonishment. This is an even better show than they'd anticipated.
- The president asks why Darnay chose to return to France.
- Darnay explains that he felt a moral obligation to return, even though he'd given up any claim to his own lands long ago.
- He'd come back to save a citizen's life. How could this be criminal?
- The audience now agrees with Darnay. They shout pretty loudly to save him.
- Audiences are pretty fickle, in case you haven't noticed.
- The president reads Gabelle's letter to Darnay aloud.
- Now Dr. Manette takes the stand. When he testifies that Darnay had actually been on trial in England for being a foe to England and a friend of the United States, the crowd goes crazy.
- The French helped the U.S. in the American Revolution, remember?
- Therefore, Darnay must be a good guy!
- The jury adds its voices to the choir: Darnay is set free!
- Crying "Long Live the Republic!" the crowd hoists Darnay on people's shoulders and carries him out of the courtroom.
- He's like a football hero: no one can get enough of him.
- Soon, though, the Manettes manage to get him home.
- Lucie and Darnay fall onto the floor, praying in thanks for Darnay's release.
- Dr. Manette enters and Lucie runs to him, trembling.
- Smiling, the doctor tells her to be strong. He's saved Darnay.

## Chapter 7

- The Manettes have been living pretty frugally, as they've had to pay for all of Darnay's food and lodging in prison. It hasn't been cheap.
- Nonetheless, they decide to have a little feast to celebrate Darnay's return.
- Miss Pross and Jerry Cruncher have been taking care of the shopping for the past few months.
- It's actually a harder job than it might seem.
- See, since everyone is now suspicious of anyone who has money, Miss Pross and Jerry have to go around buying things in really small quantities.
- They buy one thing at one store, then go across town to buy another thing at another store.

- As they set out that night, Miss Pross expresses her opinion of the patriots of the new Republic.
- She doesn't like them all that much. In fact, she thinks that they're a bunch of hooligans.
- Before they leave, though, Miss Pross has one question for the Manettes: when will they be able to leave?
- Dr. Manette thinks that they should stay in Paris for a few days, just so that no one gets suspicious.
- With that, Miss Pross and Jerry set out on their errands.
- Lucie and her father stay downstairs for a minute.
- Suddenly, Lucie starts. She thinks she hears footsteps on the stairs.
- The doctor assures her that nothing can be wrong now. He's saved Darnay.
- Sure enough, though, soldiers appear at the door.
- They ask for Darnay. He's been denounced by Saint Antoine.
- The doctor demands to know why.
- The soldiers reply that the doctor shouldn't ask questions.
- If the Republic needs him to sacrifice his son-in-law, then he should do it happily. After all, it's for the good of the Republic.
- Sound a little creepy? We think so, too.
- Finally, though, the soldier relents. Darnay has been denounced by Monsieur and Madame Defarge...and one other.
- When the doctor asks who the other person is, the soldier stares at him for a minute.
- He doesn't know?

## Chapter 8

- While Darnay is being arrested at home, Miss Pross and Jerry are still out shopping for his feast.
- All of a sudden, Miss Pross sees a man and starts to scream.
- The man jumps in awkward embarrassment.
- Miss Pross runs up to him, calling out his name.
- Soloman, the man, drags her into an alley and tells her to shut up.
- Jerry follows them into the alley. He's a bit confused.
- Angry, Soloman wants to know what Miss Pross wants.
- Miss Pross, teary-eyed, introduces Soloman to Jerry as her beloved brother.
- Of course, our narrator is quick to tell us that Soloman stole Miss Pross' money and then pretended to be dead...but she doesn't know that yet.
- Suddenly, Jerry takes an interest in Soloman.
- As he remembers it, however, Soloman wasn't his name back in England.
- In fact, he thinks that Soloman used to be a spy. He was supposed to have died.
- What was the name Soloman used to use?
- While Jerry thinks, a new voice breaks into the conversation.
- It's Sydney Carton. He informs Jerry that Solomon's old name was Barsad.

- Carton reassures Miss Pross that everything is all right. He showed up a day ago; he's been to see Mr. Lorry and he's now trying to be of some help to the Manettes.
- Now, though, he's here to see Barsad.
- Apparently Soloman/Barsad has become a spy in the French prisons.
- Carton explains that he'd like to have a conversation with Barsad at Mr. Lorry's.
- When Barsad seems inclined to say no, Carton gently tells him that he has information that could make life pretty sticky for Barsad.
- That changes Barsad's mind!
- Miss Pross, however, is worried. She begs Carton to protect her brother.
- Carton promises.
- At Mr. Lorry's, Carton introduces Barsad.
- Next, he breaks the bad news to Mr. Lorry: Darnay has been arrested again.
- Not to worry, though: Carton has a plan.
- To make the plan work, though, he needs Barsad's help.
- As we may have mentioned, Barsad isn't exactly the helping sort.
- In fact, he needs quite a bit of convincing.
- Luckily, however, Carton has some dirt on Barsad.
- Barsad has been spying on the prisoners for the French revolutionaries, but he's *also* been spying on the French for the English.
- No one likes a double-crossing spy.
- Moreover, Carton knows that Barsad's friend is passing as a Frenchman—but he's really an Englishman, Roger Cly.
- Jerry suddenly pays close attention. He wants to know why Roger Cly never got properly buried.
- In fact, he asks Barsad.
- Barsad can't figure out how Jerry would know this...until Jerry informs them that he tried to dig Roger up. In Roger's place, however, he found an empty coffin.
- Barsad knows that Carton's managed to beat him in this particular game.
- Now that he gets the point, Barsad wants to know what Carton wants from him.
- As it turns out, Carton doesn't want much. Barsad is a keyholder of the prison. He can pass in and out at will, right?
- Barsad agrees. He's able to go into the prison whenever he likes.
- Carton nods, then asks Barsad to step into the next room so they can have a word together in private.
- ...and, unfortunately, we don't get to read about that particular conversation.