

**RESEARCH ARTICLE****Poverty, Virtue, Innocence, Adversities, Survival, Benevolence, Crime and Punishment: A Review on Charles Dickens' 'Oliver Twist'**

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**Abstract:**

The story of Oliver Twist follows Oliver from his birth in a workhouse in England, uncovering the contemporary systems that lead him to Mr. Brownlow and Mrs. Maylie at last. It takes a sharp turn taking Oliver back to Mr. Brownlow as an adopted son. Dickens gives the boy a full circle of reason from the birth of uncertainty to life of certainty by making good win over evil, of course with the sacrifice of Nancy. With the characters like Charley Bates, Jack Dawkins, Fagin, Bill Sikes, Old Sally, Nancy, Mr. Brownlow, Mrs. Bedwin, Mrs. Maylie and many, the author reveals the systems and influences that lead them to make certain decisions that have altered Oliver's life. When Oliver's mother dies after giving him birth, she disappears unidentified. Considering her death without a marriage ring on her finger, she is assumed to be unmarried and thus considered dishonored. As a baby boy, Oliver is seen as unworthy and is kept oppressed by the systems in place of helping him. As a child, Oliver Twist is accommodated in a children orphanage. The wording like, 'less-than, inhuman, subhuman,' alone reveals the way orphaned children are treated. Once he is old enough to work, at only nine years old, he is sent to a workhouse. These workhouses are meant to help the poor, but through Oliver's experiences, the readers can understand that they use the poor as bonded labour while greedily using and abusing them. Although Nancy is at first guilty in the crimes against Oliver, it is revealed that she has suffered in similar ways. She attempts to help Oliver and this sends Bill Sikes into an uncontrollable rage. Her murder reveals Bill's cruelty and draws sympathy for Nancy. Unlike her friends, Nancy tries to turn her life around, acting in kindness to save the boy. Although Oliver suffered throughout the book, his desire for to be good leads him to salvation with the honorable Mr. Brownlow. The unrestrained cruelty and corruption of Bill Sikes and Fagin led to their deaths. The author has martyred Nancy but punishes the characters that choose to continue to practice crime and violence. At the end, the good characters enjoy and the bad characters suffer.

**Key words:** treachery, destitute, parochial, gruel, pauper, avaricious, indifference, dilapidated, annuity

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In the workhouse of an unidentified place, on an unspecified date, a child is born to an unspecified mother in 1830s England. As the infant struggles for survival, the pretty young mother's life is on the brink of death. An old nurse has assisted the attending surgeon, supported by the contents of a green bottle. She explains to the doctor that the young woman is unknown and had been brought in the night before, after being found lying in the street. At the sound of the child's voice, the mother speaks faintly that she would like to see the child before she dies. The nurse finds no wedding ring on the mother's finger. The reader's heart is pinched when the mother dies on having a look at the child and a little talk with the nurse. Here is a child, an orphan of a workhouse, despised by all and pitied by none. Mr. Bumble, the beadle, who works there, has named the baby boy Oliver Twist. When the boy reaches ten months old, he is transferred to an infernal orphanage. Many children die there due to starvation. On his ninth year, Mr. Bumble appears there. He says that his efforts to discover the identity of Oliver's father or the origin of his mother have failed and so the authorities decide that the orphan is to be returned to his birthplace, the workhouse. The boy is promptly delivered to Mr. Bumble who takes him to the workhouse. That evening, the board that controls the workhouse affairs meets, calls Oliver Twist and tells him that he will be taught a trade, picking oakum from the next morning. Here the author exposes how the authorities make profits on the destitute. It resembles going from bad to worse. The children are given very small quantity of food. This reduced the number of inmates, some of them have found their places in the graveyard, some have escaped and those who survive stay there.

Several months pass off and the boys are desperate with hunger. Some of them are so hungry that they fear they can eat their fellow workhouse mates. Finally, they convene a meeting and select Oliver Twist to make a request, on their behalf, for some more gruel. That evening, the innocent Oliver Twist approaches the workhouse master and requests him very humbly for some more gruel. It terribly astonishes the master and he informs it to Mr. Bumble who rushes into the board room which is in session. The members are horrified and have sent the boy to confinement. The next day a display board appears on the gate offering five pounds to anyone who accepts Oliver Twist as an apprentice to any work. For one week, Oliver Twist remains a lonely prisoner. Besides, he has been flogged every other day before all the assembled boys; the boy has become a scapegoat. He is exhibited at the prayer time as an example of his wickedness and indiscipline. These are to terrorize all the other inmates and this cruel punishment is for the crime of asking for some more gruel. One morning, a cruel chimney sweeper, Mr. Gamfield, is passing by the way, catches sight of the notice hung to the gate of the workhouse. Mr. Gamfield is badly in need of five pounds and so he, at once, volunteers to take Oliver Twist as an apprentice for chimney sweeping. Mr. Limbkins of the board points out that it is a nasty trade and so the proposal is rejected, but with a bit of haggling, the members of the board dispose of Oliver Twist for three pounds and ten shillings. Legal papers are prepared to bind the boy to an apprenticeship of chimney sweeping with Gamfield and it is to be executed in the presence of the magistrate.

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Oliver is terrified at the very sight of Gamfield's cruel appearance. The magistrate looks at the boy and the chimney sweeper and asks the boy whether he is willing to go with the chimney sweep. The boy pleads desperately that he can be handed over to anyone rather than be given to the custody of the chimney sweep. The kind magistrate is moved by the boy's appeal and terminates the proceedings. As a result, Oliver goes back into the workhouse and the notice board continues to hang on the gate. There are efforts to be shipped out Oliver as a cabin boy on some vessel, but there comes a parochial undertaker and coffin maker, Mr.Sowerberry, who agrees to take the boy to use him do some menial work in his carpentry shop. The emaciated boy is presented as a hardened young rascal. When the boy arrives at the undertaker's establishment, Mrs.Sowerberry offers some leftover food, deserted by the dog, Trip. Oliver hungrily eats up the scraps and this horrifies the bad-tempered woman about the appetite of the boy. He is shown a place among the coffins to sleep. The surroundings are filled with the things related to coffins and it is like a grave without dead bodies. He is at the mercy of chance. Nobody understands the boy's frightened expressions, but the readers, this is the greatness of the storyteller. The author has presented the laws of 1834 London, being brutal and cynical treatment towards the helpless paupers, young and old alike. Even the individuals like Mr. Sowerberry, take advantage of the victims of poverty to exploit their labour. The readers feel empathy with the children in the workhouse, especially with Oliver Twist. Empathy is aware of sharing another person's feelings, expressions and emotions.

Oliver goes to sleep in a very miserable and depressed frame of mind. He feels like moving from darkness to darkness. The next day, the boy is awakened by the clatter of someone kicking at the outside door. He has found that the noise maker is a repulsive youth in yellow tight knee breeches. This boy is Noah Claypole, who informs Oliver that he is superior to him at the workplace. Noah is a charity-boy, but not a workhouse orphan; he has mother who is a washerwoman and father who is a retired soldier addicted to heavy drinking. After Oliver suffers the results for breaking a glass pane while struggling to take up the heavy shutters, the boys are served breakfast. All the boys who work at the workplace are provided food. Charlotte, the other working boy, treats Noah with the deference befitting his superior position, because he enjoys the distinction of being a boy with parentage. Mr.Sowerberry is a docile and henpecked husband. One day he cautiously and in a submissive way broaches to his wife that he has a plan to make use of Oliver Twist in a more beneficial way. When her irritation vents, she agrees to listen to him. He tells her now that Oliver's appearance is melancholy, he can serve as a muter at children's funeral. It means the boy is used a hired mourner at any child's funeral and the undertaker can get some money. Mr.Sowerberry's happiness finds no bounds when she approves. Meanwhile, there comes an opportunity the very next day to initiate Oliver into the mysteries of the trade of his undertaker. Mr. Bumble visits the coffin maker to ask him for a coffin and to conduct the funeral of a poor parishioner's wife.

When Oliver and his master arrive at the parishioner's dilapidated and insanitary house, they find the husband in a state of upheaval. He angrily says that his wife is left to starve to death in the cold and dark while he has been in prison for begging to eke out some food for his family.

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When he returns from the prison, she is on the deathbed. The terrified children are crying bitterly in a corner. Although the author has the greatest contempt for the privileged people whom he holds responsible for the oppression and exploitation of those underprivileged, he is aware of despicability on all levels of society. The same social structure can be found the novel 'The Prince and the Pauper' written by Mark Twain. The dead woman's mentally unbalanced mother is pleased with her own self for outliving her daughter and eagerly looks forward to the funeral as a festive relief from their grim existence though she knows that the burial is a dismal, unfeeling affair. She asks Mr.Sowerberry to provide her with a large cloak as it is bitter cold. She also expects cake and wine before they go to the burial ground. Right now she wants a loaf of bread. It tells about the misery of the have-nots in the Victorian era, England. The next day the dead body is taken to the Church yard and the formalities are done quite mechanically and the body is buried. The heartbroken husband collapses there and he is brought back to conscience with cold water. The mother also cries, not for the death of her daughter but for the undertaker has taken back the old black cloak. What a materialistic environment! The process is done quite automatically. Money has played its prominent role at every inch. The husband's raging and protesting make it necessary for the church officials to lock him out of the graveyard. He is the only person who really mourns for the death of his wife.

During the Victorian era, many people can't afford the rents that are being charged and so some people used to rent out the space in their rooms to one or two lodgers who have paid between two pence and four pence a day. The author says that great wealth and extreme poverty live side by side because the tenements, slums, rookeries are only a stone's throw from the large elegant houses of the haves. The name 'rookeries' is given to these poor dwellings because of the way the people live without separate living accommodation for each family. The analogy being that whereas other birds appear to live in separate families, the rooks do not. Thus the very poor people in the tenements of London are compared to rookeries. When his month's probation is over, Oliver is formally apprenticed. He is regularly in attendance at most funerals through which he has gained an insight into human avarice and hypocrisy. Mr.Sowerberry having pleased with his work, Oliver earns the jealousy of Noah Claypole. Because of his seniority over Oliver, Claypole believes he should be getting all the praise and accolade. On the other hand, the undertaker's consideration for Oliver automatically makes Mrs.Sowerberry his bitter enemy. The girl, Charlotte, in the team, is against Oliver because Noah is against him. One day Charlotte is out of the kitchen and so Noah takes advantages of the opportunity to insult and torture Oliver Twist who bears the maltreatment patiently. However, when Noah picks apart his mother, Oliver can't control his rage and he seizes the big boy by his throat and ducks him down. The cowardly tormentor who now lies crouching at his feet cries aloud.

On hearing the continuous cries, Charlotte and Mrs.Sowerberry rush to the place. Without knowing what has happened and why Oliver is angry, all the three have attacked the boy, threw him into a dusty cellar and locked it. Not knowing what to do, Mrs. Sowerberry asks Noah to go and bring Mr. Bumble. After hearing Noah's version of Oliver Twist's revolt, the gentleman decides to

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flog and starve Oliver. Meanwhile, Mr.Sowerberry has arrived at home to pacify his angry wife, he drags Oliver out and beats him black and blue mercilessly. Oliver is then shut up until Mrs.Sowerberry orders him to go to his bed among the coffins. When Oliver becomes alone, his helpless tears roll down, he looks into the still night, comes to a decision, packs his articles of clothing and sits down and wait for morning. No sooner does it begin getting light than he opens the door and walks away from the place of his troubles and tormentors. Meanwhile he takes an affectionate farewell from his childhood friend Dick. Oliver has been with him at the orphanage he grows up. Dick is a sickly and weak boy because he is constantly starved, and he knows that he is going to die soon. Despite this, he has a noble nature. As the first kind words Oliver has ever received from Dick in his life, he never forgets them. The awakening of pride is a new sensation for Oliver and it comes from the resolution to take positive action to escape from his oppressors. He tells his friend, Dick that he is running away, he is going to seek his fortune somewhere that he doesn't know. He thinks that he will meet only friend, Dick, but that doesn't happen. He feels no attachment with the town and so it leaves no sweet memories in his mind, except that of Dick.

Oliver takes every care while running away from the town of torture. He hides behind the hedges fearing that he may be pursued. He comes across a mile stone which says that London is seventy miles away from that place. The name of the city has awakened a new train of ideas and expectations in his mind. He also feels that no one, even Mr. Bumble can find out his whereabouts there. Oliver remembers what he has heard previously that there are many ways of livelihood in the vast city. There are some negative thoughts about it, never minding these, he heads towards London. What he has with him are a piece of bread, two pairs of stockings and a penny, given by Mr.Sowerberry after a funeral. When it becomes night, he decides to sleep at a haystack in a field. He is cold, hungry and alone, but sleep takes him into its fold. The next morning, he buys a small loaf of bread and walks on and four days have passed. The boy develops sore feet; he begs a ride from a bypassing coach in vain. In some villages there are boards warning against begging. At some houses, the women drive away the boy treating him a thief though a woman is a loving entity, quiet wife, good mother, sweet unselfish sister and embodiment of compassion and empathy. But at a village, a toll collecting man and a kind woman take pity on Oliver Twist and give him a square meal with amiable and gentle words. Their treatment remains at the bottom of his heart.

Early on the seventh morning after he has left his native town, Oliver reaches the little town of Barnet with his bleeding feet and sits upon a door-step. There is splendid beauty in the rising sun, but there are lonesomeness, desolation, hungry and pain for Oliver. People have started passing that way, but no one has paid any attention to the orphan. His courage and determination seem to be on their edge. Meanwhile, Oliver sees a boy crossing him carelessly, but after some minutes he returns and asks him what the matter is. This unattractive boy is four and a half feet tall and is wearing a man's coat much too large for him. The incongruity of his costume is consistent with his adult-like behaviour. Quite unexpectedly, the stranger, Jack Dawkins offers Oliver food and drink and says that he provides free food and lodging for the homeless refugees. On observing the other boy's actions

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and words, Oliver suspects the boy altogether, but decides to accompany him to win his favour because there is no other and better option. However it is a wrong decision he has taken and it takes him into a mire of crime. After the nightfall, Dawkins leads Oliver into the great city London. The area is indeed a slum with densely populated with a number of children, packed housing units of weak built quality. The smell is stinking and noisome suggest the foul or disgusting, at once Oliver feels like running away, but follows Dawkins like a shadow. Dawkins catches Oliver's hand and takes him into a dilapidated house whose walls and ceilings are black with age and dirt. They go into a room in which there is an old Jew with villainous-looking and is repulsive at that time.

Jack Dawkins introduces Oliver to others as his new friend. Besides the Jew, there are four to five boys whose ages are less than Dawkins and they are all smoking and drinking like elders. Oliver takes some edibles and a little hot drink and falls into a deep sleep on one of the sacks on a floor, among four walls and under a ceiling above, after a long time. The dog-tired boy doesn't wake up till the next day and while he is hovering between slumber and full consciousness, he observes the old Jew taking out a box hidden under the wooden floor and looks at the valuable things and gloats over them. But the Jew, now a merry old gentleman, is alarmed at the discovery that Oliver is watching him. For a couple of minutes he is caught in confusion, but he recovers quickly and tells Oliver that those are the things he has been saving for his old age and diverts Oliver's attention and hides the box somewhere. As soon as Oliver washes his face, Dawkins comes in with Charley Bates who is notorious for laughing immoderately for any or no reason. The two boys present two pocket books and four handkerchiefs to the Jew, Fagin; Oliver understands that the two are pickpockets. After their breakfast, the three persons start playing a game, the Jew has played the role of a gentleman and Charley Bates and Dawkins as pickpockets. When the game has been played for many times, a couple of young girls, Bet and Nancy, enter the room and they are all underworld characters. These two women are the victims of society, poverty and men, and the author has criticized the cruelty of Victorian society and people's view of fallen women. The misery is that the fallen women don't get a second chance in life, but men have that opportunity. For the fallen women have had a particularly hard time in making a living in a dignified way. Once a woman is a victim, she can't come out of the victimization.

The Artful Dodger is the nickname of Jack Dawkins. He is ambidextrous at pick-pocketing, and he is the indisputable leader of Fagin's collected gang of child thieves. After sometime, the four young people leave the room on their business. Fagin advises Oliver to take Dawkins and others as his special models and gives the boy his first lesson in picking pockets. Jack Dawkins and all the other boys are characteristic of an obvious middle-aged manner. It is as though their lives of baseness and crime have robbed them of their childhood and youth, and making them old in the experience of evil. The two girls: Nancy and Bet, have same description, suggesting that they are common types of abasement. In short, they are all at the dirty bottom rung of the criminal ladder. Oliver Twist has moved from the darkness of humiliation and exploitation to the darkness crime and delinquency. Fagin praises Oliver when he takes out the handkerchief without his feeling. By now, the readers of

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the novel understand that Fagin is an old Jew in London who teaches young and homeless boys how to pickpocket with practical demonstration and then takes care of their stolen goods. Although he is a miser and exploiter, he shows a certain loyalty and solicitude toward the boys because they are his business investment. This is a commercial angle. Oliver remains in Fagin's room for many days, picking the marks out of handkerchiefs so that they can be sold out. Sometimes Oliver plays the curious game of extracting objects from the old man's pockets. When the other boys return empty-handed, they are denied supper or rewarded the successful boys. These actions of Fagin are motivated by a worthy respect for diligence in pick pocketing.

Oliver is bothered under restrictions and he craves for sunlight because he stays within the four walls for a long time. At last, after his repeated entreaties, one day he is granted permission to go out with the Dodger and Bates. At first he is puzzled by their erratic behaviour, but at the sight of a gentleman being absorbed in reading a book in front of a book stall, the two boys swiftly go into their rigorous professional action. The Dodger steals the man's handkerchief, hands it to Bates and the pair take to heels. The whole thing happens in seconds. In a flash of disclosure, Oliver understands all he has witnessed out of his experience in the Fagin's den. Being frightened and bewildered and not knowing what to do, he too begins running. The gentleman shouts 'stop thief' and Dawkins and Bates unscrupulously repeat the shouts and run after Oliver. The ability of Dawkins and Bates in inciting the mob to hunt down their innocent fellow is an example of true criminal morality at work. The hue and cry spreads rapidly and the crowd becomes bigger and chases the hapless boy, old and young desert their normal occupations for the thrill of the pursuit. Oliver's strength starts diminishing and his running speed decreases. When one of the pursuers delivers a blow, Oliver falls down on the pavement. Meanwhile, the old gentleman and a police officer reach the place. The actual pickpockets, Dawkins and Bates, have disappeared leaving Oliver to his fate.

The police officer takes Oliver into custody and takes him to a nearby police station which is attached to a court. The old gentleman, whose handkerchief has been stolen, is sympathized with the boy, follows them carrying the book he has picked up in a book stall. His common sense tells him that the boy is innocent, in addition to it his face seems to be familiar, but he can't understand how it is familiar. There is something about the boy that impresses him. That's the reason; he sits outside though the boy is locked up in a dirty cell till the magistrate arrives. The gentleman is still pondering over where he has got acquainted with the features of the boy's face. He brings to his memory the faces he has seen, met and known through the years. His efforts are in vain as he gets no countenance out of the past bears a resemblance to Oliver's. Meanwhile, the magistrate, Mr. Fang has arrived at the court and the old gentleman is called in, by then Oliver is already in the pen trembling and pale with fright. The proceedings are conducted by the merciless magistrate. He is short tempered as he is reading a series of news reports urging that he should be subjected to investigation on account of his wrong decisions. Mr. Fang tries to intimidate Mr. Brownlow, the old gentleman, but he is strong on the side of the case. Oliver is so terrorized that he is unable to utter his own name. A kind officer tells the magistrate that the boy's name is Tom White and his parents have died in his infancy. He

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also conveys the magistrate that the boy is very ill. But the heartless judge avoids others to support Oliver. Soon, the boy falls in the pen and becomes unconscious.

Criminal justice in the Victorian era shows that whether a particular action is defined and handled as a crime depends on several factors, of which the written law is often the least important. The assurances of due process makes it highly unlikely that an innocent person would be convicted, but the discretionary powers given to police personnel, justices of peace, trial judges, and juries make it possible for law violations to be considered non-criminal. The criminality of a wrongdoing is determined according to the age, gender, and social status of both the victim and the accused. Depending on the circumstances, identical acts might be punished with a heavy sentence, considered a minor violation or totally ignored. Although socioeconomic class has a significant role in judicial decisions, explanations usually focus on respectability and community. A sense of tradition and continuity are overshadowed in the criminal justice system and the men who operate it. The Victorians also have clear ideas about what these prisons should be like. They should be unpleasant places, to discourage people from committing crimes. Once inside, prisoners have to be made to face up to their own faults, by keeping them in silence and making them do hard and boring work. Walking a tread wheel or picking oakum, separating strands of rope, are the most common forms of hard labour.

The heartless judge, notwithstanding the boy being unconscious, pronounces a sentence of three months imprisonment with hard labour. At that very instant, the book stall owner forces his way into the courtroom. The judge becomes more irritated, but the book stall owner gives his testimony saying the boy is innocent and he is the eyewitness. The judge changes his sentence and exonerates the boy. As the boy is unable to move, Mr. Brownlow calls a coach and drives off with the sick boy and the owner of the book shop. Although the meeting of Oliver and Mr. Brownlow seems to be a mere chance, the old gentleman's interest in the boy clearly hints at some mystery. Brownlow's prolonged and concentrated effort to revive an association between Oliver's appearances with someone from out of his past is too pronounced to reflect a mere passing fancy. Mr. Brownlow brings Oliver to his house and provides a doctor and sets his housekeeper as his caretaker. For many days, Oliver remains unconscious with fever. Eventually he becomes conscious and finds Mr. Brownlow's housekeeper Mrs. Bedwin, a motherly woman, beside him. Following a visit by a doctor and after some food, the boy is on the way of recovery. The author with his beautiful language and his insight into human life says 'Oliver would be roused again to all the struggles and turmoil of life; to all its cares for the present; its anxieties for the future; more that all, its weary recollections of the past.'

Mrs. Bedwin carries the boy down to the housekeeper's room. There, he is fascinated by the portrait of an attractive lady that adorns the wall. He thinks that the picture has a look of surprise as he feels the lady in the portrait is looking at him. Mr. Brownlow comes and enquires the boy, how his health is and he also understands that his name is Oliver Twist. Again his old ideas of resemblance



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between his features and some familiar face come upon him so strongly that he is not able to withdraw his looks from the face of Oliver. However he tries, he is unable to get over the feeling that Oliver's features are somehow very much familiar. Then with a sudden exclamation he looks at the lady portrait on the wall and then at the boy's face. There is its living copy, the eyes, the head, the mouth every feature is the same and precisely alike. From here, the author comes back to throw light on what has happened to Dawkins and Bates. After the hue and cry in pursuit of Oliver, Dawkins and Bates drop out of the chase and come back to Fagin's quarter in a roundabout way. Fagin becomes angry on learning that Oliver is caught, but he becomes silent on seeing Bill Sikes, a ruffian about thirty-five. Dawkins presents a modified account of Oliver's misadventure. At last, Nancy takes the responsibility of the situation of Oliver at the police station. Posing as Oliver's sister, Nancy finds out everything what has happened and also the location of Mr. Brownlow's residence. Sikes leaves the place without a word and Fagin asks others to get Oliver into their fold; when they leave, he hides his treasure in another hideout.

After the calamity of his arrest, Oliver is now in a haven at Mr. Brownlow's house, and his fortunes seem to be rising. The boy has no doubts to suspect that Fagin would take steps to have him kidnapped, so he is quite unaware of the impending danger. Keeping bad company is like being in a germ-infested area; one doesn't know what one catches. Meanwhile, Mr. Brownlow is amazed to discover the likeness between the picture and Oliver raises suspense to a high pitch. The readers can understand that there is no doubt that the lives of Mr. Brownlow and Oliver Twist are somehow linked. They also don't know whose portrait it was. Back at the thieves' hideout, some facts are revealed that Bill Sikes doesn't care Fagin and he expresses high opinion of Nancy and takes for granted a considerable right authority over her who loves him. The scene changes to the residence of Mr. Brownlow. One day Oliver goes into the house keeper's room and looks at the wall for the portrait but it is missing. He is utterly disappointed and when he asks Mrs. Bedwin about it, she replies that it is removed to spare him from any kind of disturbance and when he is completely healthy, the portrait can be arranged there. The recovery of the boy, from his illness, is fast. He spends happy days in clean, calm, affectionate and orderly surroundings which he has never seen in the past.

One day, Mr. Brownlow provides Oliver with a fine outfit and the boy gets rid of his old dress. The old dress is sold out to someone who deals with secondhand clothes. The boy has never had a brand new dress in all his life. If all is well, that ends well, but the past life of Oliver with Fagin doesn't leave him therefore he can't start a new lease of life. Human life is filled with manifold uncertainties and worries and many things remain outside and they are not in the control of man. One has to accept the difficult circumstances and confidently face the unexpected conditions and Oliver Twist is no exception. One evening Mr. Brownlow invites Oliver into his elegant study room with full of books. There is an affectionate conversation between them. In a certain context, the boy entreats his benefactor not to turn him out, almost with tears in his eyes, to let him be in the house as a servant. The old gentleman assures the boy that such thing no longer happens. Meanwhile, Mr.

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Brownlow asks the boy to tell him about his past; like where he has come from; who has brought him up; and how he has fallen into the bad company in which Mr. Brownlow has found him. He wants truth. This makes the boy emotional and when Oliver begins, there comes Mr. Brownlow's friend Mr. Grimwig who is a loud and outspoken gentleman. He has cultivated an aggressive affectedness. His mannerism is to say 'I will eat my head' with a thump of his heavy walking stick. Oliver's interview with Mr. Brownlow is postponed until the next day because of the intervention of Mr. Grimwig.

While Mr. Brownlow and Mr. Grimwig are talking about something, the matter of a parcel of books has crept into their conversation. The books ought to be returned to the familiar bookshop and pay the bill. Mr. Grimwig has no good opinion on Oliver, he is in the opinion that Oliver won't deliver the books, pay the bill and come back. There are some tempting things like a new suit of clothes on him, a set of valuable books under his arm and a five pound note in his pocket and these things lure Oliver to run away and join his old thievish friends instead of returning. Mr. Brownlow wants to disprove what Mr. Grimwig thinks about Oliver and so he asks the boy to deliver the books and pay the bill. Oliver gaily takes the responsibility and leaves the house. Mrs. Bedwin gives the boy several suggestions and she is anxious for the return of the boy. The two gentlemen think that the task would take twenty minutes and they sit gazing at the watch between them. Meanwhile, Mr. Bill Sikes is seen sitting at a low public house with his dog. Mr. Fagin comes there on their old business and gives the hard thief his share of some sovereigns. But there comes news that Nancy is in the same place eating something. Mr. Sikes asks him to call her and later, he and Nancy leave the place. Now, Oliver is on cloud nine, he is in a contented mood as he proceeds towards the bookstall. Being unaware of his walk, he takes a wrong way and is halfway down the wrong street before he realizes his mistake. But it's already late.

All of a sudden, Nancy throws her hand around Oliver's neck and cries that he is her brother and leaves his house because of his bad company. She thus has created a scene in the street; meanwhile Bill Sikes also arrives at the place, snatched the books from the boy and beat the boy with the books. The people who have gathered there agree with the words Nancy and Bill Sikes who have overpowered the boy. On the way, Sikes snatches the five found note from the boy. The boy is dragged away by his captors. During this time, Mrs. Bedwin is waiting for the boy anxiously and the two old gentlemen wait for the boy in the dark parlour. The boy is walking between Nancy and Mr. Sikes and the dog is following them. If the boy escapes, the dog will attack him. Like the heart of the boy, the night is dull, bleak, foggy and dark. They enter a ghetto and at last, the trio stops before a dilapidated house in a narrow street and they are admitted into it by Jack Dawkins. Fagin and Bates greet Oliver with ridicule and mockery; Dawkins searches Oliver's pockets. Oliver Twist begs them to send the books and the five-pound note to Mr. Brownlow otherwise he would think that the boy is a thief. But no one pays any attention to the entreaties of Oliver. While they are talking, Oliver makes a deliberate attempt to escape and Nancy shuts the door to save the boy from the ferocious

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dog. At last Oliver is dragged back and Fagin starts beating the boy with a club, Nancy grows kind and snatches it and throws it into the fireplace.

The agitated Nancy turns against Fagin and curses him and even Sikes can't control her hysterical fury. When she is about to attack the old Jew, Fagin, Sikes catches her wrists and she collapses on the floor and becomes unconscious. The merciless thieves take the fine clothes of Oliver and give him the tattered remnants which he used to wear. Fagin finds the old clothes from the dealer who has purchased them and thus he finds out the exact whereabouts. Oliver is sent into a room and it is locked. Thus Oliver returns into the thieves' den even before he has a chance to tell about his history to Mr. Brownlow, his benefactor. Here the author directly speaks to the readers. In dealing with humans as social beings, all great comic artists, no matter whether they are dramatists, novelists or short-storyteller, have known that they are in the presence of a contradiction: that behind the social being lurks an animal being, whose behaviour often grants very ill with the rules dictated by society. Comedy, from its customary beginnings, has renowned creative energy. The primitive enjoys out of which comedy arises frankly acknowledged man's animal nature; the animal pretends to be someone and the resembling processions are the obvious witnesses to it. Comedy witnesses physical vitality, delight in life, and the will to go on living. Comedy is at its merriest, it's most festive, when this rhythm of life can be affirmed within the civilized context of human society. In the absence of this sort of harmony between creaturely instincts and the dictates of civilization, sundry strains and discontents arise, all bearing witness to the contradictory nature of humanity, which in the comic view is a radical dualism; efforts to follow the way of rational moderation are forever being interrupted by the frailties of the flesh.

The duality that tragedy views as a fatal contradiction in the nature of things, comedy views as one more instance of the inappropriate reality that everyone must live with as best they can. The Danish existentialist, Søren Kierkegaard says that wherever there is human life, there is contradiction, and wherever there is contradiction, the comical is present. He goes on to say that the tragic and the comic are both based on contradiction but the tragic is the painful contradiction, comical is painless contradiction. Comedy makes the contradiction apparent along with a way out, which is why the contradiction is painless. Man is the only animal that laughs and weeps; because he is the only animal that is struck with the difference between what things are, and what they ought to be. In most of the cases, man sees the things not as they are, but as he wants them to be. Thus comedy and tragedy are the two sides of a coin. The author here discusses the ways tragedy and comedy which follow one another in close succession in human life, just as it happens on the stage. It is said that life is like a pendulum which oscillates between joys and sorrows. It is very customary on the stage that all good melodramas in order to present the tragic and the comic scenes in a regular alternation. For example, the hero sinks on his straw bed and being weighed by fetters and misfortunes, but the next scene, his faithful squire treats the audience with a comic song. Such changes like tragedy and comedy may appear absurd, but they are not unnatural. The transitions in real life, from well-spread boards to death-beds, from mourning-weeds to holiday garments and these

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are not strange things and all humans are not just passive onlookers, but they are busy actors and that makes a vast difference.

With these words, the author takes the readers back to the place where Oliver has been born and bred. Mr. Bumble visits the workhouse supervised by Mrs. Mann and gives her stipend for keeping the paupers and tells her that he is going to London the next day with two paupers to appear in a court. The keeper of the paupers expresses her unhappiness, openly, on little Dick and Mr. Bumble wants to see the boy. Little Dick is presented before the beadle. The boy is in a quite miserable position, on asking what he wants, the boy says that before he dies, he would like someone to write for him a message to Oliver Twist his love and good wishes and he would like to die as young and join his sister who has died and is in heaven. If there is delay, she may forget him. This heartfelt appeal melts the hearts of the readers, but enrages the heard-hearted beadle, Mr. Bumble and Mrs. Mann. Treating it a crime, the boy is thrown into a coal cellar. The next day, Mr. Bumble taking the two paupers in his carriage, leaves for London. In his abode, he has his drink and food and while he is reading a newspaper, he finds an advertisement stating anyone who knows the whereabouts or the history of Oliver Twist will be given five guineas. He immediately rushes to the Pentonville and meets Mr. Brownlow and his friend Mr. Grimwig. Mr. Bumble says that Oliver Twist is a low-class origin with immoral behaviour and shows the papers in his support. Mr. Brownlow is dejected and disappointed by the story of Mr. Bumble and he believes it. He calls Mrs. Bedwin asks her not to take up the name of Oliver Twist though she says that Oliver is an immaculate boy. Oliver's only generous protector is deeply hurt by Mr. Bumble's account and believes it without reservation. The night is sad indeed.

Oliver Twist is put under lock and key in the thieves' den. The next day, Dawkins and Charley go out on their usual business and the Jew, Fagin, gives him a long lecture on ingratitude especially towards those who believe him. Besides he narrates the stories of other boys who have run away and at last they all have ended up getting hanged for the crimes they haven't committed at the Old Bailey, London. Oliver is shocked and alarmed. He spends the rest of the day all by himself, being locked up in the room and looking at the spiders and mice. One day, the Jew, leaves the door unlocked and so Oliver Twist gets an opportunity to see the nook and corner of the house, but there is no way to go out of the house. Days are passing heavily and one day Dawkins and Charley decide to spend some time with Oliver and it is afternoon. Dawkins gives Oliver an opportunity to polish his boots without removing them and the boy obliges it. The Dodger and Charley say that Oliver is a prig, a person with pretensions to high social status and who looks down on other people he thinks they are beneath him. They tell him that his thoughts are wrong and he is a dependent on someone or the other and therefore, he ought to make his own money and to be free to do what he wants. They feel that Oliver is contemplating on nonsensical matter and wasting his valuable time. Fagin arrives at that point of time and feels happy at Oliver being taught at the importance being a thief. Meanwhile, there comes a new guy named Tom Chitling; he is about eighteen years old and has just got out of jail. So he is also the bird of the same feathers. Chitling understands the concept of the conversation and asks

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Oliver not to worry about it and he will find his own way to enter the field of stealing sooner or later. Ever since then, Oliver is rarely left alone. He is almost with one or the other boys who play the old pick-pocketing game with Fagin for Oliver to watch. Meanwhile, Fagin tells him funny stories about thefts he has committed in his younger days.

It is a chill, damp and windy night and the Jew, Fagin, comes out of his den and is found walking through many winding and narrow streets in a sordid locality of London. His movements are suspicious and at last, he walks up the steps to a house there. He knocks at the door and Mr. Bill Sikes opens the door with his growling dog. He feels a little nervous on finding Nancy there as he thinks she is still in favour of Oliver Twist. As it is cold, Sikes asks Nancy to offer Fagin a drink. But Fagin touches the glass to his lips and places it back on the table because he would like to avoid any kind of intoxication at the time of talking about business. Fagin wants to know about the progression of robbing a house in Chertsey, a beautiful village just outside of London. As there is a negative response from Sikes, the Jew is shocked because he has great expectations on the robbery. Fagin thinks that the prospects of the robbery are not studied properly. But, Sikes explains that his associate Toby Crackit has been spending around the place for two weeks wearing different dresses, trying to lure one of the servants to get some details, but it hasn't worked. He even poses as a military man, yet he fails. The house at Chertsey belongs to Mrs. Maylie, a wealthy older woman. After some conversation, Sikes says that there is some possibility to break into the house from outside and it is suggested by Toby Crackit. The suggestion is to let Sikes in from the outside, but he needs centre drill bit and a small boy as there is a panel which can be opened from outside. The plan is to open the wooden panel from outside and small boy has to be sent inside the house and he would open the doors from inside for the men.

Fagin has understood the method Sikes and Crackit have in their minds. The Jew has the name Oliver on the tip of his tongue, but remembers how Nancy has been upset last time and throws the club into the fireplace when the Jew starts beating the boy. Fagin signals Sikes to send her away as he wants to tell him something in her absence. Mr. Bill Sikes tries to send her away, but she is adamant to move from there and takes a glass of brandy. She sits at the table and drinks the glass of brandy and laughs loudly. There is no Oliver in Sikes' mind as the boy is inexperienced, but he agrees that the boy is just the size the need requires and Dawkins and Charley are too big for the purpose. When Fagin hesitates, Sikes asks him whether he is thinking of Oliver. The Jew responds positively and says that if Oliver is involved in the crime, he is theirs forever because he will become a criminal. The great relief for Fagin is Nancy agrees to involve the boy in the robbery and she doesn't find any objection as she thinks, if not today, he has to become a criminal tomorrow. She feels that it is a natural way of earning his bread. Nancy asks when the plan of robbing will be executed and Sikes says that it will be the night after the next day. Fagin asks Sikes a few more logistical questions about how they are going to carry out the plan. Sikes reassures him that he will take care of everything and nothing to be worried about. It is decided that Nancy would be the one to pick up Oliver before the

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right time as the boy is more likely to trust her and it is Sikes who takes control of Oliver during the robbery with every right on him.

The Jew takes leave of them and heads home. He finds Oliver sleeping deeply and doesn't want to disturb him. Nancy's willingness to involve Oliver in the robbery is not unnatural from her point of view as she views the boy entering her way of life to earn a living. Oliver wakes up the next day as usual, but the day looks different to him as he finds a new pair of shoes beside his bed. For some time, the boy thinks that he may be released from the den and there may be brighter days for him, but when he sits for breakfast; Fagin dispels his expectations and says that he is going to be handed over to Mr. Bill Sikes and warns the boy not to ask for any details. He tells the boy that Sikes is a tyrant and would not tolerate any kind of disobedience in the operation. These warnings scare Oliver and he is caught between the devil and the deep sea. Fagin gives Oliver a book to read in his leisure time. The book is about the history of the lives and trials of great criminals. There are dreadful crimes, mysteries of murderers and burials of the dead bodies in pits and wells. The boy falls upon his knees and prays to God earnestly to keep him away from such activities. He tells himself that it is better to die than indulging in such criminal activities. Meanwhile Nancy enters the room to take him to the residence of Sikes. She tells him that she has already been punished in the hands of Sikes for saving him once and he has to follow her obediently and she doesn't give him any details like, what the boy should do and where.

After a while, Nancy takes the boy into the streets where a small carriage is waiting for them. She gets into it and pulls Oliver after her. The carriage takes them both to the house where Sikes lives. Oliver feels a strong impulse to shout for help, but Nancy warns him against doing any such nasty efforts. She leads him into the house and Sikes feels happy on seeing him there. Sikes shows the boy a pistol and loads it. He tells the boy that the loaded bullet will be fired into his head if he does any disruption. After supper, Sikes sleeps and Oliver, being tired also falls asleep. When he wakes up early in the morning, Nancy is preparing breakfast and Bill Sikes is getting ready for the robbery. When it is half past five in the morning, they have their breakfast and Oliver bids farewell to Nancy. The boy would like to have a look at her, but she is looking in other direction. Thus Nancy's character becomes more complicated. She is scared of her master, so she doesn't give Oliver an opportunity to escape. In fact, there is a chance that both can escape from the thieves, but something stops her from doing it. She doesn't speak a kind word to Oliver, except showing her bruises she has received for saving him previously. The person who has punished her is none other than Sikes. Why does she bear such cruel treatment and lives with him? It is because of infatuation?

It's a damp, windy and rainy early in the morning as Bill Sikes and Oliver Twist set out. There are overflowing drains and pools of water on the roads. The author has given a picturesque description of the waking up city. At first, the city is enveloped by quietness, but it gradually comes to life. Oliver is astounded by the pandemonium in Smithfield, where it is a market day, bringing together a jostling crowd of unwashed, unshaven, unclean, and dirty people to sell and buy things.

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Farmers are bringing their vegetables and things and labourers are going to work. But Sikes and Oliver hurry westward through London towards Hyde Park. Meanwhile, Bill Sikes convinces a horse cart driver and gets a ride for him and the boy who passes as his son. Oliver begins to wonder as they pass beyond a succession of suburbs and he doesn't know even the direction they are moving towards. In case Oliver has any thoughts about seeking help, Sikes periodically draws attention to the pocket holding his loaded pistol which stops Oliver's escaping thoughts. He cuddles in the corner of the cart. After a long time, the cart stops at some place and they get down. Then start walking. After lurking in the fields around Hampton, they enter the town and have had their dinner in an old public house. Sikes makes friends with one of the carriage drivers who gives them a lift in his cart. The night is very dark and cold. They get down at a certain point and they are on foot again, Sikes leads the boy through Shepperton and in order to catch up Sikes, the boy has to pace into a kind of trot between a fast walk and a run. At last, near a flowing stream, where the boy thinks that Sikes will kill him there and throws him into the water, they come upon their target. It is a dilapidated old house, apparently deserted, but they enter it.

When Bill Sikes and Oliver enter the old and deserted house, they find Toby Crackit and Barney inside and the boy understands that everything is well planned. Barney is a younger Jewish man and he has to do what is told, that's all, he is unlike Fagin. After some food and drink, the men sleep asking Oliver to do the same as there is time for the robbery. They wake up when it is about 1'O clock at night and get prepared for the burglary. Crackit, Sikes and Oliver make their way through the town of Sunbury in the night which was dark and foggy. They arrive at a farmhouse near Chertsey. All the three jumped over the compound wall. Oliver understands that he is going to become a part of a robbery. Crackit and Sikes are prepared to use their firearms they have brought along. Bill Sikes removes a small frame of a window above five and a half feet on the back side of the house and he will drop Oliver through the hole with a small lantern. Oliver has to go silently straight to the front door and open it for the robbers. Sikes warns that the entire way is within his gun range and he will shoot the boy if he goes against the instructions. Oliver determines that he would wake up the people in the house even at the risk of his life. Sikes drops Oliver carefully into the house through the hole. Once he is inside with lantern, Oliver decides to run up to the stairs and alert the family, meanwhile two men appear at the top of the stairs and start firing, Sikes asks Oliver to come to the window. Oliver moves towards Sikes who pulled the boy out through the window hole and understands that the boy is wounded. Oliver falls down and becomes unconscious. Leaving Oliver in a small ditch, Sikes and Crackit take to heels from that place.

The author shifts the scene from the countryside, Chertsey to the workhouse where Oliver has been born and bred. A woman named Mrs. Corney, who is the new matron of the house, is preparing a cup of tea for herself and in the process, a bit of hot tea falls on her fingers. She laments for her circumstances as a poor mistress of a miserable workhouse. She has lost her husband twenty five years ago. She replaces Mrs. Mann who now works in a farm-house, next to the workhouse. Meanwhile, she hears a knock on the door and Mr. Bumble arrives simply to pay a friendly visit.

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Mrs. Corney feels embarrassing to be along with Mr. Bumble who begins his conversation with his complaining about the behaviour of the poor people who always demand food to feed their families and their terrible conditions. Mrs. Corney understands what Mr. Bumble is speaking is false as the people in the workhouses can't give voice to their miseries and then she offers a cup of tea and he readily agrees. Mr. Bumble while taking his tea flirts with Mrs. Corney and she warns him that she will cry. Suddenly an old woman from the workhouse comes there and informs that Old Sally, a pauper, is very sick and about to die. Old Sally would like to speak to Mrs. Corney before she dies. It is an escape from Mr. Bumble and Mrs. Corney goes to speak to her, cursing her along the way and leaving Mr. Bumble to his tea. Yet, she thinks that Sally would give some important information. Feeling good riddance to Mr. Bumble, Mrs. Corney moves with the old woman, who is withered and ugly, leads the former upstairs into a small attic where Old Sally is lying in her dying bed.

Along with Old Sally, there is a young gentleman, an apprentice of an apothecary. An apothecary is one who prepares and sells drugs or compounds for medicinal purposes. When Mrs. Corney goes into the room, they exchange pleasantries and he complains about cold and leaves after a short while. There is another woman already in the attic along with Old Sally. She tells Mrs. Corney about Old Sally's condition. The old woman who has gone to bring Mrs. Corney learns from the other woman in the attic that Old Sally has been talking and behaving irrationally. She is unable to take any food or liquids and it shows that she is on the verge of death. Mrs. Corney sits on the foot of the bed to wait it out. Mrs. Corney gets bored of the situation as Old Sally doesn't speak to her. Being bored, she asks the other two women not to bother her for everything. She is just about to leave, Old Sally sits up in her bed and grabs hold of her arm and says that she has to tell something in Mrs. Corney's ears alone. The two women mutter something and at last they leave the room. Old Sally reveals that many years ago she has attended a sick pretty young woman who has given birth to a male baby and she died. At that time, Old Sally robs a gold ornament which has been hanging around the young mother's neck. The young mother tells Old Sally that someday might come when her baby wouldn't be ashamed to hear her name and find some friends in the world. Mrs. Corney asks Old Sally what the name of the baby and she replies Oliver and she tries to say about the gold she has got by catching the bed sheet, but she dies. Mrs. Corney leaves the room with a feeling that Old Sally has said something important.

The story reverts to the Fagin's old den of thieves from the countryside workhouse where Oliver's mother has given him birth. The Jew is found sitting in front of the fire pondering over something. The Artful Dodger, Jack Dawkins, Charley and Chitling are playing a card game in which Dodger wins every time. Chitling is amazed at Dawkin's luck and after killing their time in that way Dodger asks Fagin and Charley for their opinions. Fagin declines to answer as his mind is elsewhere, but Charley says that Chitling is in love with Betsy, the other girl in the gang. Fagin says that Betsy is a fine girl and if he does what she tells him to do, he will be a successful thief and make his fortune. Charley makes a comment which infuriates Chitling and he runs across the room to strike him, as Charley escapes, the blow is delivered on Fagin's chest. Meanwhile, the bell has rung repeatedly



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downstairs. The Dodger, Dawkins, takes a candle and runs down to see who it is and quickly comes back. He whispers to Fagin that somebody has come back alone. It means only one has come back from the robbery gang. It startles Fagin and he feels that it is a bad omen. He becomes nervous and Charley and Chitling leave the room to make way for incomer. Then Toby Crackit enters the room like a symbol fear. He is so enervated that he is unable to speak anything until he eats something. Finally he asks them how Bill Sikes is, but Fagin and others think that Toby Crackit knows about him. He tells them that the robbery has failed; the two have to leave Oliver at the house, as many people come to catch them, and Toby and Bill have to run for their lives in different ways. Fagin pulls his hair in distress and runs away from the den.

Fagin runs out in utter frustration, helplessness, distress and apprehension; and what suffers him more are, one is the failure of the robbery and the other is the missing of Oliver. The pace of his walk slackens when he crosses a street and heads towards another neighborhood where there are a lot of shops of selling second-hand stolen goods. It seems that Fagin has very good acquaintance with the place. He meets a vender of the goods and enquires whether anyone he knows is seen there. It is Sikes he is enquiring about and the answer is negative. Fagin moves ahead into the bar named, The Three Cripples, where a man is playing the piano and a woman is singing in the upstairs and the place is full of some crafty characters. The landlord sees Fagin and asks him to join them. Fagin, in return, asks a waiter if he has seen Sikes and Barney. The answer is negative and Fagin asks the landlord if someone will be there later on. The landlord inquires if someone means Monks, but Fagin silences him and says yes. Edward Monks Leeford is actually the criminally-inclined half-brother of Oliver Twist, but he deliberately hides his identity. On hearing that Monks is soon coming there, Fagin asks the landlord to send Monks to see him the next day, then he takes a cart to Sikes' house to see what information does Nancy has. He finds her who asks him if he knows anything about Sikes and he tells her what Toby has told him. After a little talk, Fagin rushes towards home and as he is about to open his door, Monks meets him. When they go inside the house, Monks says that the whole robbery plan is a mistake and Fagin should have made Oliver a pickpocket as he has made many other boys. Fagin says that it is very difficult to turn Oliver to corruption and so he wants him to be involved in the robbery. At that time, Monks says that he has seen the shadow of a woman outside the in the hallway. Fagin goes up and inspects the upper rooms; there is none except Charley, the Dodger and Toby who are asleep. Monks is still scared and leaves the place.

The readers are taken to the scene at the workhouse. Mrs. Corney, leaving Mr. Bumble in her room, has gone to see old Sally who is an elderly pauper and has served as a nurse at Oliver's birth and now she is dead. Waiting for Mrs. Corney is testing Mr. Bumble's patience. He counts the teaspoons, the sugar-tongs, inspects the milk-pot, the seats, the chairs and he looks at the chest of drawers. He finds neatly folded clothes and a locked box chinking of coins. He is pleased very much says to himself, 'I will do it' but the readers don't understand it. Meanwhile, Mrs. Corney comes in being hot and bothered and collapses into a chair. Mr. Bumble, while blaming the paupers, tries to calm down her by giving some peppermint that has some other thing which gives her some

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intoxication. She tells him that she is troubled by old Sally who has passed away. Mr. Bumble takes a cup of peppermint and draws an opportunity to flirt with her. He calls her an angel and she can't resist his advancement and allows him to kiss her on her nose. He gives her the information that Mr. Slout who is the master of the workhouse is on the verge of death and Mr. Bumble will be able to take his place after him and then he will marry Mrs. Corney and lives with her there in comfortable rooms. Here the marriage is fixed between Mrs. Corney and Mr. Bumble. At last Mr. Bumble moves towards Mr. Sowerberry's residence to make arrangements for the funeral of old Sally the next day. On reaching the house, Mr. Bumble understands that Mr. and Mrs. Sowerberry are out for dinner. Noah Claypole drunk in the parlor and is eating oysters as fast as Charlotte can scale them for him. Noah offers to kiss Charlotte and Mr. Bumble's anger finds no bounds and he flies into rage. Noah is terrified and just blames the entire thing on the girl Charlotte, saying that she kisses him whether he wants it or not. Mr. Bumble exhorts them of evils of kissing and what it leads to and leaves a message of keeping a coffin ready for old Sally funeral. With this, Mr. Bumble goes home.

Readers are back with Oliver Twist again. Sikes tries to carry the wounded boy along with them, but Toby is worried about the people after them. At last, both leave the place in different ways throwing a cloak over Oliver. It is dark, cold and misty and so the pursuers pause together to discuss their plan as to what should be done. Mr. Giles feels that they go home and call the dogs back. All of them want to turn back; no one is willing to take the responsibility of making a decision so the arguments continue. They are all scared, but they accuse one another. Here the readers come to know three names: Mr. Giles who is the steward at the house of Mrs. Maylie, Brittles is another servant and the third man is a tinker who is a traveling repairman and lives in an outhouse. Meanwhile, Oliver is still in the ditch. Slowly he becomes conscious and finds that there is wound on his senseless left hand. He rises and falls again, but he thinks that he would die if he continues to be there. So he gets up and starts moving. He doesn't know where he is going to and his sight is dull. At last he reaches a road which leads him to the front portion of the house. He understands that it is the house he has entered through the window hole. His first instinct is to run away from there, but he can't do it in that condition. He staggers at the front door, gives two hard knocks and then he collapses at the doorstep. Mr. Giles is explaining the story of the robbers and his chase, to the female servants while Brittle and tinker are nodding their heads. In the meantime, they hear the knock on the door and are frightened to answer it. At last, Mr. Giles convinces Brittle to go and open the door and they would follow him. As the door opens, there is a half dead little boy. Mr. Giles realizes that it is the boy he has shot. At last, the boy is taken inside and Mrs. Maylie is called to see. The two women, Mrs. Maylie and Ms. Rose become kind and so the boy is taken upstairs.

It's a handsome room with old fashioned but comfortable furniture. Two ladies are seen sitting at the breakfast-table. The elder lady is Mrs. Maylie, the owner of the house and the young lady is Ms. Rose Maylie who is passing as Mrs. Maylie's niece. She is seventeen years old. Rose is an orphan and Mrs. Maylie adopts her from a poor family, but she is related to Oliver, the author reveals it later. There is Mr. Giles dressed in a full suit. They are talking about Brittles; in the

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meantime, Dr. Losberne arrives with his medical box and asks Mrs. Maylie and Ms. Rose how they are doing after the attempt of robbery. Ms. Rose asks the doctor to have a look at a wounded boy upstairs. The doctor and they go up; Oliver is on the bed with bandaged hand. He is in his deep sleep, when Ms. Rose bends on the boy, her tears fall on his forehead that makes the boy smile in his sleep. The author says that these marks of pity and compassion have awakened some pleasant dream of affection that the boy has never known. Leaving Dr. Losberne upstairs, Mrs. Maylie and Ms. Rose come downstairs and start waiting for the doctor to come back. They don't know if the thief is just the boy, but the doctor feels that the boy is a partner in crime, but Ms. Rose refuses to believe it and begs her aunt to protect the boy from the police authorities. Mrs. Maylie promises to save the boy, but the doctor thinks that the police authorities have already been informed and it is very difficult to keep the boy from being arrested. When it is evening, Oliver wakes up and tells them his story. They believe him and put him to bed for the night. Just then, all the inmates hear a coach reaching the house and they are police officers with a local constable and they come there to inquire the attempt of robbery.

The officers named Blathers and Duff speak to those in charge of the house and the doctor. They ask for the boy who is shot, but the doctor says that it is not true as Mr. Giles and Brittles just believe the person they have shot is a boy, yet the officers want to see the boy. Dr. Losberne is apprehended if Oliver tells his true story, they may take him into their custody and the only way is to mislead the officers into thinking that Oliver is not the person who has entered the house the previous night. The officers tell them a long, strange and complex story of a robber they have caught once named Conkey Chickwee. Dr. Losberne says that Oliver is wounded by a spring gun earlier that day. He also shows a broken gun of Mr. Giles to the officers. All these things stand a proof that Oliver is not the boy the officers are looking for. They leave the house on hearing a rumor that another two men and a boy have been caught somewhere. By and large, Oliver is free of suspicion officially. Though all the inmates of the house are in favour of the boy, it is Dr. Losberne plays an important role in freeing Oliver from the clutches of the officers and the boy begins to grow stronger in a pleasant environment though he has to face two illnesses: one is the wound of the gun shot and the other is fever and ague. The days can be compared to the days of Oliver's short stay at Mr. Brownlow with the great service of Mrs. Bedwin. But on one side, Oliver is troubled by a thought that he may cause any detriment to Mrs. Maylie and Ms. Rose, indirectly. In a roundabout way, the boy's presence is a gift for the family and Maylies are overjoyed to have a young boy among them.

One day, Oliver shares his strong desire to see Mr. Brownlow and Mrs. Bedwin to let them know that he is not a criminal and he is safe. Mrs. Maylie readily agrees to send him to London along with Dr. Losberne. Once Oliver Twist is strong enough to make a journey, Mrs. Maylie arranges a wagon and Dr. Losberne to take the boy to London in order to meet Mr. Brownlow and Mrs. Bedwin. The long cherished dream has come true for the boy. On the way, Oliver spots the old house in which he, Sikes and Crackit have stayed before the attempt of robbery. The doctor goes into the house where he finds a humpbacked old man who says that he has been living there for 25 years and he

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doesn't know any robbers. The author leaves it to the readers to decide whether the house is the right or the wrong one from Oliver point of view. The journey continues and they reach London and Oliver spots the house and rings the bell. A server appears and tells them that Mr. Brownlow has sold his house and moved to West Indies with his friend and servant six weeks before and he would stay there for some time. Oliver is crestfallen at this and he bursts into tears. He requests the doctor to go to the bookseller, but he says that it is enough disappointment for the day and they come back to Chertsey. The weather grows warm and Oliver has a wonderful time and now he goes to a tutor to study. He spends three months in a neighborhood. The author for the first time describes the beautiful natural surroundings of the countryside. Though Oliver has lived in countryside, he has lived in workhouse, so he hasn't had time to enjoy the green grass, trees, sunlight etc.

An evening that summer, Ms. Rose is seen sitting down to play the piano for Mrs. Maylie. But her aunt notices some change in Rose and asks her what the matter is. Ms. Rose replies that she has been hiding some illness for some time, she doesn't feel well and she believes she is growing ill. The author adds some twists in the storyline related to the ill health of Ms. Rose as to how she becomes ill and how she becomes well. But the illness destabilizes Mrs. Maylie's family. His idea is to tell the readers that man should learn how to bear with uncertainties in life. Oliver is very much worried about Ms. Rose. As the days pass on, her health declines. However, Mrs. Maylie determines to face the uncertainty and writes a letter to Dr. Losberne and gives it to Oliver asking him to post it at an inn at the Market Town which is four miles away from there. This incident adds another dimension to the storyline. She also writes a letter to her son, Mr. Harry Maylie, but she doesn't give it to be posted. Oliver runs all the way to the market and gives it to the man concerned. While running back home, he crashes into a strange gentleman, who curses Oliver and wonders whether the boy has come out of a marble coffin and the boy has not understood the words. He continues his running home. Later it is explained that the person Oliver has dashed is Monks who is the half brother of Oliver. It is already stated that the boy resembles his mother and Monks remembers his aunt when he sees Oliver. Ms. Rose's health is on the downtrend; in the meantime Dr. Losberne comes and attends the patient. But he doesn't give any hope. Neither Oliver nor Mrs. Maylie has proper food or sleep. Both have felt that they have lost Ms. Rose. But to their utter astonishment and joy, she recovers and fills the members of the family with colours. The author brings this episode Mr. Rose's illness into the novel to display the true human relations too.

It's a great relief for Oliver to hear that Ms. Rose is out of danger so he takes a walk outside to collect some flowers, and while he is returning, he sees Mr. Giles and a gentleman, who is about 25 years old, in a horse-cart. The gentleman asks Oliver how Ms. Rose is and on hearing that she is better, he introduces himself as Harry Maylie, the son of Mrs. Maylie. They send the cart ahead with the luggage and walk to the house. Mr. Harry Maylie asks his mother why he is not informed about the illness of Rose sooner. By his conversation with his mother, the readers can understand that he would like to marry Rose, but there are two obstacles: one is the age difference and the other is Rose is an orphan. But Mr. Harry Maylie doesn't treat them to be obstacles and he would like to talk to

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Rose about it before he leaves. Mrs. Maylie feels though Rose likes Mr. Harry Maylie, she will show her unwillingness to marry him being an orphan. All go to bed late and Oliver wakes up late the next day. He doesn't like to go on long walks without Ms. Rose and so he spends his time on his schoolwork. He sits in his little study at the back of the house with the window open behind him. He falls asleep over his work and he has a bad dream in which he is back in Fagin's house and shut him up there. He half wakes up and he feels being watched by some from the window. When he turns back, he sees Fagin and the stranger whom he has dashed after posting the letter at the market place. Readers know that it is Monks, the half brother of Oliver. The boy is terrified to see them at the window and runs out of the room calling for help. Fagin and Monks also disappear from the place.

Oliver is shaken to the bone on seeing Fagin and the stranger on the other side of the window and alerts the house. Mr. Harry, Mr. Giles and Dr. Losberne go in search of them, but can't find the two. Even there are no rumours about the two men in the neighborhood. After a few days, when Ms. Rose is better, Mr. Harry Maylie meets her and tells her that he wants to marry her, but she refuses the alliance as he holds high esteem in the society as a lawyer and interested in politics, so she doesn't want to spoil it by marrying him being an orphan. She has no clear parentage and a family name and passing as Mr. Harry Maylie's cousin and in Victorian England marrying a cousin is legally and socially acceptable. At last Mr. Harry tells her that he will propose her to marry him after one year, if she still sticks to her opinion, he will take a decision. As Rose agrees to it, Mr. Harry leaves her with a faint hope and he asks Oliver to be in touch with him through letter correspondence, writing about things at home. Mr. Harry and Dr. Losberne leave to their places. The author turns to the story of Mr. Bumble and Mrs. Bumble (Mrs. Corney). He has not any upper hand at home. He goes into a room where some women are doing laundry work and Mrs. Bumble insults him there. He becomes upset and walks out the room in a fit of anger. He goes into a pub and starts taking some drink, meanwhile a stranger meets him and tells him that he knows about Oliver Twist and the old nurse, old Sally who has a package from Oliver's mother. Now the package is with Mrs. Bumble, with this the stranger gives Mr. Bumble some money. Mr. Bumble feels that he would get more money from the stranger and agrees to take Mrs. Bumble with the package to the address given by the stranger that next day night at nine o'clock. At the end, the stranger leaves his name, Monks.

As it has been fixed in a pub the previous day, Mr. Bumble and Mrs. Bumble go to meet Monks in a shabby old building on the bank of the river Thames at night. It is a dilapidated structure and Monks leads them into a room. He says that he knows that Mrs. Bumble has received something from Old Sally. Mrs. Bumble demands 25 pounds for the thing and the secret will be revealed. Mr. Bumble remains silent and nervous during the business transaction. At last, Monks produces the money and Mrs. Bumble takes the 25 gold coins and she tells him what has gone between her and Old Sally. She also gives him the package which she has redeemed from a pawnbroker. In the packet, there is a locket engraved the name Agnes and a blank for the last name, a marriage ring and two locks of hair. Monks says that he will not use them against anyone. With those words, he opens a trap door which leads to the water of the river and then he drops the package into the river and closes

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the door. Mr. Bumble and Mrs. Bumble leave the place as early as possible. Here the readers come to know that Oliver Twist's mother name is Agnes and what they don't understand is why Monks buries the secret. Now, the scene is shifted to Sikes flophouse where he lives with Nancy in poor condition having little money and appears weak and starved. They are about to fight but neither is strong enough to fight with each other.

As Nancy faints due to starvation, Fagin, Bates and Dodger enter the house and Sikes asks them as to what has brought them there all of a sudden. Besides, Sikes tells Fagin that he is in dire need of money and he would send Nancy with him for it. They give some food to Sikes and Nancy follows them to their old den. While they are speaking to one another, Monks comes there and goes upstairs with Fagin to speak something privately and secretly. Nancy follows them stealthily and listens to them and this secret hearing plays a very important role and fetches danger to the listener in the novel. She is surprised to understand Monks' involvement in the life of Oliver Twist. She also comes to know that Ms. Rose Maylie is in London at present and the author doesn't tell the readers why Maylies are there at that time. Nancy gets some money from Fagin and comes to Sikes. That evening, she mixes some opium powder into Sike's beer and comes out on a particular mission. She goes into a gentle area and stops at a nice hotel and enquires about Ms. Rose Maylie to a footman hoping to have a conversation with her about Oliver. On hearing that someone wants to speak to her, Ms. Rose Maylie allows Nancy to come upstairs for a talk.

Nancy does a great thing for eavesdropping on the secret conversation between Fagin and Monks. Through the conversation, she gets very important information and a kind of conspiracy against Oliver Twist. Nancy tells Ms. Rose Maylie that she herself is responsible for dragging the innocent boy into the crime bound Fagin's den while the boy is going to the bookstall to return some books. Ms. Rose feels astonished to hear that Nancy has been living a life of crime ever since she has been a child. Nancy tells her that Monks, the half brother of the boy, has spoilt the evidence which can reveal Oliver's parentage. Monks plan is to kill Oliver to get the entire property, of which the boy doesn't know. If Fagin or Monks comes to know of her meeting with Rose, she will be killed. Ms. Rose asks Nancy to stay at the hotel and be protected; she says that she has to take care of Sikes as she is in love with him. It can be called infatuation as she is steadfast in her love with Sikes though she is badly beaten by him. Nancy is ready to be killed by him but not to betray Sikes. The greatness of Nancy is understood when Rose offers to give her money, she politely refuses to take. Before leaving the hotel room, Nancy tells Ms. Rose that if she wants to see her, she can be found on London Bridge at every Sunday midnight. After Nancy leaves the place, Rose decides to write to Mr. Harry Maylie about the position of Oliver; meanwhile Oliver arrives with great news that he has seen Mr. Brownlow and gives her the address. Rose, without any delay, meets Mr. Brownlow with Oliver. It is a great and hearty meeting.

The author switches the scene to London focusing on the associates of Oliver Twist at Mr. and Mrs. Sowerberry. They are Noah Claypole and Charlotte who have been the trustworthy workers

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of Mr. and Mrs. Sowerberry at the coffins making shop and the burials of paupers at cut-rate costs. Now the teenage boy and the girl, having robbed their master, Mr. Sowerberry's lockers, are on their way to London in search of better prospects. It is all Noah's plans and Charlotte meekly follows him as she is submissive and unassertive. On reaching London, they enter a public-house named The Three Cripples to stay there temporarily and the readers have sound knowledge of this public-house and it is a frequent place for criminals such as Bill Sikes, Fagin, Barney etc. The place also works as a recruitment place into criminal world. Meanwhile, Fagin observes the two teen-agers and understand that they are strangers to the city. He makes up his mind to take them into his fold and involve them into thieving and robbery. Noah introduces him as Mr. Morris Bolter and Charlotte as Mrs. Bolter, but the cover blows out as she calls him Noah. Noah pretends himself as a clever man by striking a hard bargain and the readers know that Fagin is no longer a fool. It is like befooling each other. Noah gives the money they have stolen from Mr. Sowerberry to Charlotte to keep it with her, his plan is if he is caught, he can blame the girl. The author connects the workhouse and London through the migration of Noah and Charlotte.

The author mixes suspense in his storyline keeping the readers on the edge of their seats craving to read further. He creates uncertainty and tension that keep the audience eager to discover what happens next and for this, the author skillfully sketches his narratives using multiple elements of suspense. When it comes back to the story, the next morning, Noah Claypole considers Fagin his friend and is ready to work for the gang. Fagin opines that the union of thieves is heavily dependent on their sense of mutual protection. But it is hard to Noah to understand as he is a sheer selfish man. Fagin further adds that the best hand in the gang, the Dodger, has been caught the day before while he is stealing a snuff-box. He feels that the Dodger may be driven out of the country. Charley feels disappointed that his friend, the Dodger is unable to get his name incorporated into the Newgate Calendar, the biographies of criminals. Fagin consoles Charley and they should wait what show the Dodger present in the court hall. He wants someone to go to the court to find out what will happen there. He decides to send Noah, but he is reluctant to go there, but at last all have forced him to go there as he is a stranger to London. At the court, the Dodger ridicules all the magistrates and judges and he demands special privileges for him. Noah waits till the Dodger locks up himself, and then he comes back and reports the matter to Fagin and others.

Jack Dawkins who gets the nickname Artful Dodger because of his dexterity and shrewdness in criminal and thieving occupation makes his trial one of the major themes of the novel. He questions the judges as to what the poor and the destitute do against the oppressive and the suppressive government. His intelligence achieved far ahead of normal developmental domains, his heavy-handed irony of conversation, his reasonableness, his monsters urbanity, his resourcefulness, his tremendous vitality all are presented without false grief and sorrow, but unfailingly with an effect of immense profundity. He skillfully mixed humour in his speech which makes some courtiers laugh. He boldly calls the court is not a shop of justice. The Artful Dodger is important here not for his oddity, but his normality and down to earth, not his inability to adjust with the world, but his ability

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to survive in the world in his own way. He mentions that Oliver thinks that he would like to give the good in him, instead of treading the survival instinct.

Nancy is restless and disturbed though she has not betrayed either Sikes or Fagin. But she has given the information related to Oliver and Monks. The whole thing is like spider web, if one thread moves, the whole web moves. She is scared because if the information she has given to Ms. Rose Maylie leaks, there will be a disaster and Fagin and Sikes hold her responsible for the whole thing. These thoughts mentally torture her days and nights and she thinks that she is in mire. Consequently, she has become pale and feeble. One Sunday night, Fagin comes there to talk to Sikes and Nancy is sitting aloof from them being lost in her own thoughts. When the Church bells shows eleven o' clock, she prepares to go out and Sikes questions her where she wants to go. She refuses to answer his question just by saying she is going nowhere. After a little conversation, Sikes gives her a good thrash because he feels she is stubborn and obstinate. In the meantime, Fagin gets up to leave the place and Nancy has to show light to him on the staircase. When they reach the door at the ground floor, Fagin asks Nancy not to bear the cruel treatment of Sikes anymore. He adds that his doors are always open to her. Fagin's plan is to take Nancy into his fold even by facing the wrath of Sikes. Nancy responds positively to his advice. Sikes and Fagin don't like each other, but they join hands with each other by the force of circumstances. By and large, Fagin is devilish and Sikes is inhuman. If Fagin and Sikes become enemies, Monks will become more dangerous towards Oliver.

The scene is at Fagin's den of thieves, Noah Claypole (Morris Bolter) is taking his breakfast and Fagin comes there and flatters him of his ability to go to the court and getting the information about what happened there. He also praises him about sealing tinkles of a baby. Later Fagin tells Noah that he wants him to take up a mission and it is to follow a woman and report back to Fagin about where she goes, who she meets and what she speaks. Noah finds out how much he will be paid for it and Fagin pays a pound. Fagin says that the lady is not an outsider, but she is one of their gang members, but she finds new friends and he wants to know who the new friends are. The next Sunday, Fagin takes Noah near Sike's house at The Three Cripples, as he has expected, Nancy comes out. Noah gets good look at her and says that he can remember her at any time and at place and follows as she moves on. It is eleven o' clock at night. Nancy walks towards London Bridge and Ms. Rose and Mr. Brownlow arrive at the place a little later. Noah stealthily reaches the place and hides himself in an alcove, just below the three. He is able to listen to them and escape detection. Nancy says that she has been stopped at home by Sikes last week. This week she has drugged him to come to that place. Mr. Brownlow understands that Nancy is honest and says that they have to formulate a plan to save Oliver from the mysterious man, Monks.

Mr. Brownlow says that if they are not able to detain Monks, she can handover Fagin to them, but Nancy shows her honesty and tells them though Fagin and Sikes are despicable men, she can't betray them. As she doesn't know Monks, she need not be loyal to him. Nancy repeats thrice that there should be no detriment to either Fagin or Sikes because of the information she has given them.



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Mr. Brownlow and Ms. Rose promise that there will be no harm to Fagin and Sikes in the process of protecting Oliver without Nancy's consent. This promise gives Nancy a lot of relief and assurance. Readers get astonished how impossible it is to have such true bonds of love and loyalty among criminals. Nancy describes Monks who has a scar on his face, and tells them how he can be found at the pub, The Three Cripples. Mr. Brownlow gives a start on hearing a scar on the face and he believes that he has seen Monks somewhere. Though the two earnestly request Nancy to go with them instead of going to such dangerous place, she says that she can't leave Sikes and his criminal friends. They offer her money, but she declines politely. She tells Mr. Brownlow and Ms. Rose that her life will be ended someday abruptly and it will be a forgotten soul. In this way, Nancy foresees her bitter end. It is pathetic to note that she is in a life-threatening place, but she is unwilling to leave it. The two go in one direction, Nancy in another direction and Noah sneaks back to tell Fagin what he has heard. If Sikes and Fagin have even a speck of humanity, they do no harm to Nancy. The central mystery of the novel is not figured out yet.

It is Fagin's den and Noah is seen asleep on the floor and the Jew is contemplating on the information given by Noah. Fagin is partially upset as Nancy hasn't followed the way he has suggested and no way is left to blackmail her. He searches for a way to turn the events in his favour. In the meantime, Sikes enters the house and on seeing him, a plan to blackmail Sikes is formulated in Fagin's mind. His plan is to make Sikes obliterate Nancy and cause Sikes to be chased after by police. Sikes put a bundle of papers on the table and says that he has got them facing a lot of difficulty. Fagin locks them in his cupboard and tells Sikes, with the help of Noah, what has happened on the London Bridge among Nancy, Ms. Rose and Mr. Brownlow, mixing fact and fake. The anger of Sikes finds no bounds as he feels that Nancy has betrayed him, in fact, she hasn't done it. He immediately leaves the den of Fagin and reaches home. Nancy, innocent of all these developments, is sleeping at that time. He rouses and drags her into the front room by her throat. She struggles for breath and pleads him not to kill her. She rests her head on his chest and says that she has a plan for both of them to go to some foreign country and live there peacefully. Sikes takes out his pistol and hits her forehead with its butt twice with all his might, blood gushes out and Nancy takes out the handkerchief, given by Ms. Rose as a token of her memory on the London Bridge, and prays to God. Sikes takes out a fat club and attacked her and she dies. This is the dreadful scene in the novel. When it is early dawn, Sikes leaves his house with his dog locking the door.

On killing Nancy, Sikes has lost his peace of mind and wanders all day long and sleeps in a shed for the night in the fields. The dog is following him. At last, he ends up his walking in a nearby town where a hawkers is selling stain removers. The hawkers sees a stain of blood on Sikes's hat and offers to remove it, but Sikes moves on. He overhears people talking of a murder. He tries to kill his dog by drowning, but it finds his intension and runs away from him. He continues his aimless journey with no affection, no friend, no aim, nothing, his life is empty. Mr. Brownlow who has been in search of Monks, at last finds him at The Three Cripples and with the help of his servants takes him to his house in a carriage. He cautions Monks that if he yells, he will call the police immediately. Monks

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becomes calm and docile. He reveals that Mr. Brownlow is his father's oldest friend and Monks name is Edward Leeford. Mr. Brownlow has married the sister of Monk's father, Ms. Leeford, but she has died the very next day of the wedding. It is revealed that Monks has relation with Oliver's father, Mr. Leeford. The fathers of Oliver and Monks are same, but mothers are different. Mr. Brownlow says that Monk's grandfather has brought his mother and father together in marriage with half hearted consent of his father. Monks is the only child for them. When Monks is a boy of ten, his parents get separated and the lady goes to Europe and Monks father stays in England. Meanwhile, Mr. Leeford becomes friends with a retired naval officer, Captain Fleming, whose wife is dead, but has two daughters, one is about nineteen and the other is only two or three. Mr. Leeford gets engaged to the elder daughter, Agnes.

In the meantime, Mr. Leeford, Monk's father, hears that he has inherited a good deal of money from a relation in Europe and so goes there to get it, but in Rome he meets his first wife, he becomes ill and dies without a chance to marry the mother of Oliver who has been pregnant by that time. All the money of Mr. Leeford has gone to Monks' mother. Mr. Fleming has abandoned his daughter Agnes and died. It is because of her pregnancy before marriage which is a stigma upon the family reputation, as a result, she decides to die anonymously, but before she dies, she gives birth to Oliver in the workhouse. However her younger sister, Ms. Rose also becomes an orphan and she is adopted by Mrs. Maylie. Ms. Rose is haunted by the thought that she may be an illegitimate child and so she refuses to marry Mr. Harry Maylie. Through Mr. Brownlow the readers understand that Mr. Leeford has written a will and a letter but the will is destroyed by Monks' mother and Monks has become a criminal. The author comments that a single act of criminality forces most people into an inescapable life of crime. It is like crime begets crime. Mr. Brownlow says that Mr. Leeford has met him before going to Europe and at that time, he has given his friend, the portrait of Oliver's mother. The readers remember that the boy is very much attracted by the portrait at Mr. Brownlow's house. Accidentally, Mr. Brownlow comes across the boy and brings him home, but Nancy and Sikes take him back to Fagin's den. Mr. Brownlow understands who the boy is and makes many efforts to get him and as a part of his efforts, he goes to West Indies with an idea that Monks can be found there, but he doesn't find him. So he comes back to London.

Monks is stubborn and says that Mr. Brownlow can't prove that Oliver is the son of his father and Agnes Fleming. Mr. Brownlow smiles at him and says that he has found out that Monks' mother has destroyed a will that has a mention of a possible child of his union with his betrothed girl, Agnes Fleming. He adds that he can prove that Monks has destroyed bits of evidence he has got from Mr. and Mrs. Bumble in the dilapidated house on the bank of the river Thames. This information is enough to establish Oliver is the son of Mr. Leeford and the next step is to divide the property between Monks and Oliver Twist and Mr. Brownlow can become the adoptive father of Oliver. Apart from it, Mr. Brownlow also declares that the murder of Nancy has taken place on account of the secret that Monks has feared that Nancy would surrender Monks, Fagin, Sikes and the others to the police at anytime. The gathering of this information and the systematic presentation surrender Monks

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to Mr. Brownlow and agrees to swear to it in a signed legal document. On that condition, Mr. Brownlow will protect Monks who also realizes that Nancy is killed as a part of this affair; he finds there is nothing more he can do to escape, the authorities will soon discover his plot and things and everything will get worsened. In the meantime, Dr. Losberne comes there and declares that the police have found Sikes' dog and have used it to locate the whereabouts of the murderer. The doctor also says that the authorities are on the lookout for Fagin. With the lengthy conversation between Mr. Brownlow and Monks, many of the loose ends of the plotline are connected.

The scene sets on an area named Jacob's Island on the Thames. The locality is much filthy and there are several decayed old houses and some are deserted. In one of such decayed houses, there sit three men in a gloomy silence. They are Toby Crackit, Tom Chitling and an old robber named Kags. The last man is sent away from the country, but he has somehow managed to enter England. The house belongs to Toby, but he feels bad when Tom Chitling comes there to have a shelter as Fagin is arrested and Sikes may be nabbed by the police. Their conversation tells that Fagin and Mr. Bolter have already been arrested and Bet is hospitalized because she becomes mentally upset on seeing the dead body of Nancy. In the meantime, Sikes' dog comes into the house through the window and sleeps under the table. Somebody knocks at the door and on opening, Sikes comes in. He is totally changed and like a living dead body. After a while, Charley Bates also reaches place and on seeing Sikes, he becomes furiously angry with him as he has killed Nancy. Bates has sympathy for the girl. He cries aloud saying there is a murderer in the room and attacks Sikes. In the fight, Sikes, who is stranger, throws the boy on the floor, but the boy is crying for help. This commotion attracts a big crowd with a police man on the horse back. There are continuous knocks on the door. Bates asks the crowd to break the door. Sikes takes a big rope and climbs upon the top of the house. Tying the rope to a chimney, he slides down the rope to be landed in water and to escape. But while sliding, his neck entangles in the noose of the rope and dies. His plan is to cut the rope when he touches the water, but before he would cut the rope, the noose kills him. His dog tries to jump towards its master, but in that effort, it hits a rock dies too. The readers have a rush of events that generate a lot of excitement. The author hurries to the end of the novel.

After two days of the incident at the Jacob Island in the Thames where the cold blooded murderer and his dog have died, two carriages are travelling towards Oliver's birthplace, the workhouse. Oliver, Ms. Rose Maylie, Mrs. Maylie and Dr. Losberne are in the first one and there are Mr. Brownlow, Mrs. Bedwin and another person in the second one. The journey seems to be a determined one as they are silent most of the time. Mr. Brownlow's systematic approaches are known to Oliver and the other ladies, there are some loose ends that have suspense. But at the same time, some dreadful developments that have occurred in the last few days are kept secret. Oliver begins to recognize the familiar spots he has seen while he is going from Mr. Sowerberry house to London. The boy remembers his friend Dick and expresses that he would save his friend, however he doesn't know that Dick has passed away. Meanwhile, the carriages enter the town; many places are familiar to Oliver. Mr. Grimwig has received the two carriages at the best of the hotels. The arrivers are

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comfortably provided for. Even by the time of dinner, the air of mystery and tension still prevails because Mr. Brownlow hasn't joined them and Mr. Losberne and Mr. Grimwig are very busy. Mrs. Maylie is called out and she returns in an hour with swollen eyes due to weeping. On seeing this, Ms. Rose and Oliver are nervous and uncomfortable. They don't know what is happening.

It is nine o'clock at night; Mr. Brownlow comes into the room with Monks. The boy Oliver Twist is shocked as he has already seen Monks twice at the Market Town, later through the window of Mrs. Maylie's house. Mr. Brownlow has papers and tells Monks although procedures have been started in London, it is necessary to review the details at present. He introduces Oliver to Monks and says that he is his half-brother as their father is same. Monks reveals that his father, Edwin Leeford, has left two papers, addressed to Mr. Brownlow, when he has been very ill. The first paper is a letter about Agnes Fleming who has been pregnant and mentions about his gift of a locket and a ring with a blank after her name, Agnes. Oliver bursts into tears when Monks pauses his version. Later, Mr. Brownlow takes up the subject of the will by Edwin Leeford. Their dying father has written that he is troubled by his troublesome first wife and the wicked nature of his son who is trained to hate him by his mother. Yet, he leaves an annuity of eight hundred pounds and thus the whole property is divided between his wife and Agnes Fleming and their expected child. If the child is a boy, he would get his share when he gets adulthood and he should not be dishonest and mean, but if the child is a girl, she would inherit the property unconditionally. There is a last mention in the will where he expresses his confidence that a son of Agnes would follow her honest goodness. If anything happens to the child of Agnes, the whole property goes to Monks.

Monks adds that his mother has burnt the will, but keeps the letter so that it can be used as a document to show her husband's illegal relation with Agnes and her child is an illegitimate one. Later Agnes father shifted his family to Wales and has changed his name because his daughter is pregnant without marriage. Meanwhile, Agnes runs away from home as she feels that she is a mole on the family reputation. Her father has searched for her in vain and he thinks that she might have committed suicide. Later he dies and his younger daughter becomes an orphan who is taken care of by Mrs. Maylie. Years later, Monks' mother who is ill has met Mr. Brownlow and complains that her son, who is at the age of eighteen, has robbed her and fled to London where he has spent two years with the persons who have criminal background. Later Mr. Brownlow has heard that Monks joins his mother in France. In the meantime, Monks continues the narration that his mother passes away, but before she dies, she has told him the secrets. She has not believed that Agnes has taken her life and there must be a male child who is living somewhere. Monks promises that he finds out the child and started hunting him down. Mr. Brownlow adds that Fagin is a former associate of Monks and is paid to find out Oliver and as a part of their search, the two have gone to Mrs. Maylie's house.

Mr. Brownlow questions Monks as to what he has done with the locket and the ring that belong to Agnes. When Monks mumbles, Mr. Grimwig produces Mr. and Mrs. Bumble but they deny any knowledge of the locket and the ring. Next, two old pauper women are produced and they

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have been with Old Sally. They say that they have heard what Old Sally has told the matron (now Mrs. Bumble) and they have seen the bit of pawnbroker paper. Being implicated by this strong testimony, Mrs. Bumble admits everything. This makes Mr. Bumble lose his parochial position. Now, Mr. Brownlow hints that there is something about Mr. Rose and he questions Monks who says that after the naval officer dies, the child has been cared for by some local country people. On hearing the death of the naval officer, Mr. Brownlow has searched for her but he is unable to locate the girl child, but Monks' mother who is a revenge minded woman, says that the younger sister is also an illegitimate child, but at last, it so happens that she has been adopted by Mrs. Maylie. Mr. Harry Maylie addresses Rose that his offer to marry her still exists and he is ready to sever all ties of rank and power to become a clergyman. But the news of the death of Dick makes Oliver feel sad. Here all the significant gaps in the novel are filled and what the readers want is where and how Oliver Twist is accommodated finally.

It is Saturday; the courtroom is packed with people who fix their looks at Fagin who is in the pen. At last, the jury delivers its verdict that Fagin is guilty. The spectators approve the judgment through their applause. Capital punishment is given to Fagin and it is implemented on Monday. When asked if he has anything to say, Fagin mumbles that he is an old man and stands dumb and motionless. He mechanically follows the jailers while the spectators greet him with taunts and shouts. In the Newgate Prison, Fagin is counting his last movement in a delirious state of mind. Meanwhile, Mr. Brownlow comes with Oliver Twist. They are conducted through the prison to Fagin's cell where Mr. Brownlow asks Fagin about some papers Monks has given to him. Fagin whispers the hiding place to the boy. As the visitors depart, Fagin behaves insanely and outside the prison, there is a vast crowd to enjoy Fagin's hanging. There is no human to sympathize with him, everyone wants to see his end. The author feels that the final price of roguery is degradation and death. Within three months, Ms. Rose Fleming and Mr. Harry Maylie are wedded and they take up their country parsonage and Mrs. Maylie comes to be with them. The property which is under Monks is divided between him and Oliver and each has got three thousand pounds a year. Though Oliver is entitled to everything, Mr. Brownlow allows Monks to keep his half and thus he gives an opportunity for him to live a dignified life.

The tail of a dog can't be straitened. Monks goes off to a remote place under a pseudonym. There he has wasted his wealth and returned to crime, gone to prison and died. All the Fagin's gang members are either wiped out or shattered. Mr. Brownlow adopts Oliver Twist as his son and by this the author completes the boy's happiness by settling him with the good old gentleman. Dr. Losberne is deprived of Mrs. Maylie at Chertsey, sets up a bachelor establishment outside the village and relishes his life to the rural pursuits. Mr. Grimwig makes friends with the doctor and he frequently visits him and takes active part in his activities. For giving alibi against Fagin, Noah Claypole receives a full pardon and he and Charlotte become police informers. Having lost their positions, Mr. and Mrs. Bumble are in utter poverty and at last, they become inmates of the workhouse of which they have been dictators once. Giles and Brittles remain in their old positions at Mrs. Maylie and

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their services are extended to the homes of Mr. Brownlow and Dr. Losberne. In the old village church, near the altar, there stands a white marble tablet, which bears one word: AGNES. It is an empty tomb. The novel comes to an end with the traditional dramatic distribution of rewards and punishments and the triumph of good over evil. The author reaffirms his conviction that the exercise of benevolence and mercy is indeed a precondition for true happiness. Though Oliver Twist is treated with cruelty and surrounded by clumsiness for most of his boyhood, he remains a pious, innocent and immaculate boy, and these traits in him draw the attention of several wealthy benefactors. His true identity is the central secrecy of the novel.

**Conclusion:** The novel ‘Oliver Twist’ is of Oliver, by Oliver and for Oliver. It is definitely a character to be hailed for its honesty and loyalty. The boy has strong morals and a strong loyalty to anyone that befriends him, like Little Dick and Nancy. Though there is modern criticism about Oliver’s goodness and speaking ability, the readers have to understand that Charles Dickens has purposely made him this way so that his criticism of Victorian society would be easier to be accepted by Victorian readers. One of Oliver’s most remarkable qualities is his capability to survive without swerving from the way of rectitude. Despite his age, size and sensitivity, he always finds a way out of tough emplacements. For example, he runs away from Mr. Sowerberry’s funeral parlor. His attitude and willingness to believe in the best of people are an advantage. He is twice caught committing a crime willy-nilly and both times the victims of the crime take him into their home, even nursing him back to health. Nancy appreciates Oliver’s good nature to the point that she risks her life to warn Oliver’s protagonists: Mr. Brownlow, Ms. Rose, etc of Bill Sikes, Fagin and Monks. In the novel, the story ends with Oliver and his new family living happily. His long and hard journey is through the classes experiencing the differences between the upper and lower classes of London. Oliver finds his true identity and becomes a part of dignified society he always wanted to be. His misfortunes with criminals are put to an end and he leads a peaceful life as he is adopted by Mr. Brownlow. Benevolence, honesty and mercy are the foundation on which the building of happiness stands firmly. The predicaments in his boyhood would certainly make Oliver Twist a better man as Shakespeare says, ‘Sweet are the uses of adversity.’

*‘The sun,--the bright sun, that brings back, not light alone, but new life, and hope, and freshness to man--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.’*

**-- Charles Dickens (Oliver Twist)**

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