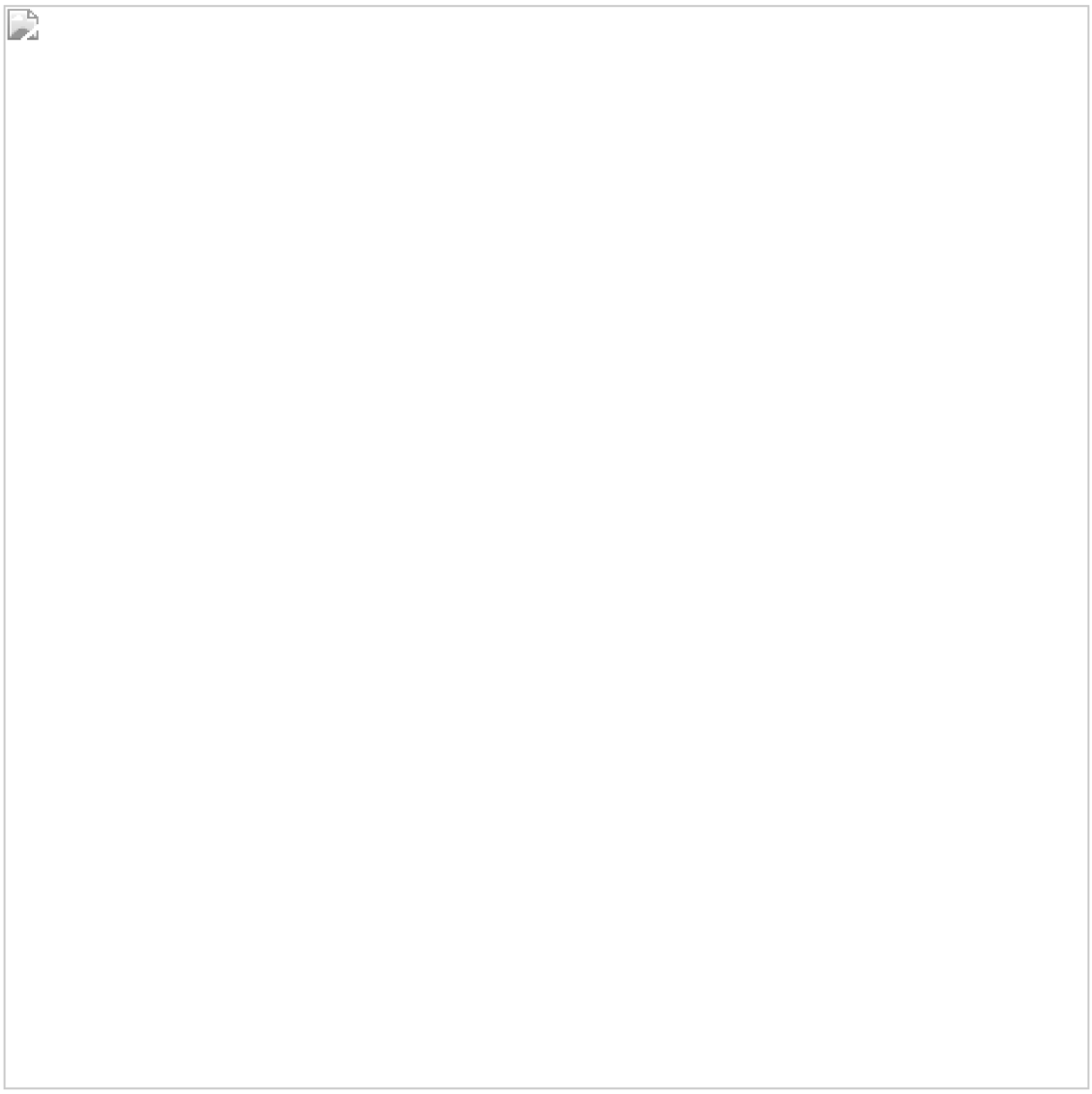
COLORING THE CLASSICS

A Tale of Two Cities

A Story of the French Revolution



“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.” It was long ago, in the year 1775, in two great cities, London and Paris.

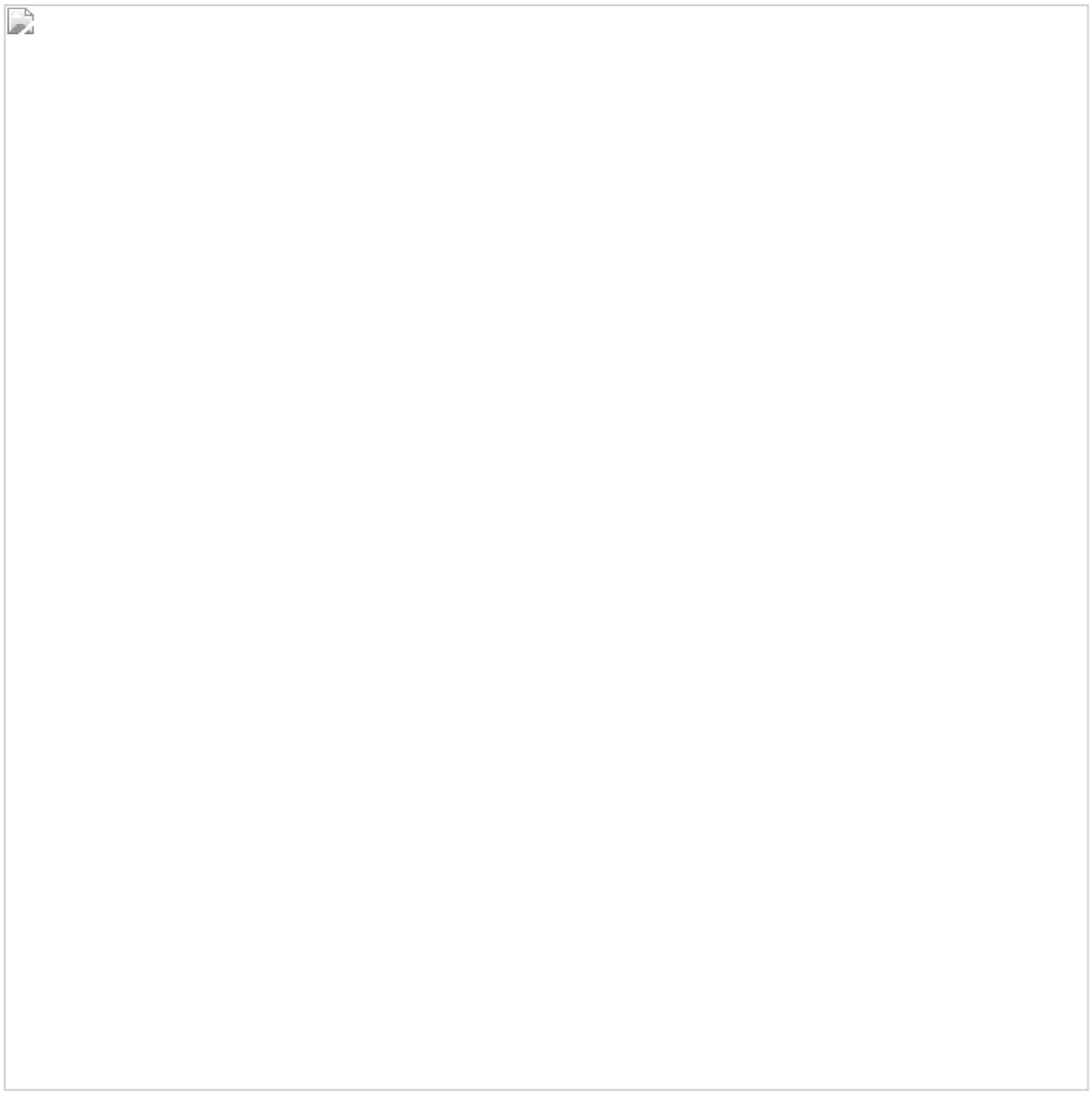
On a dark night in November, a coach called the Dover mail climbed a muddy hill in England. Inside, a quiet banker named Mr. Lorry was riding to the sea with a secret job to do.

TALK ABOUT IT

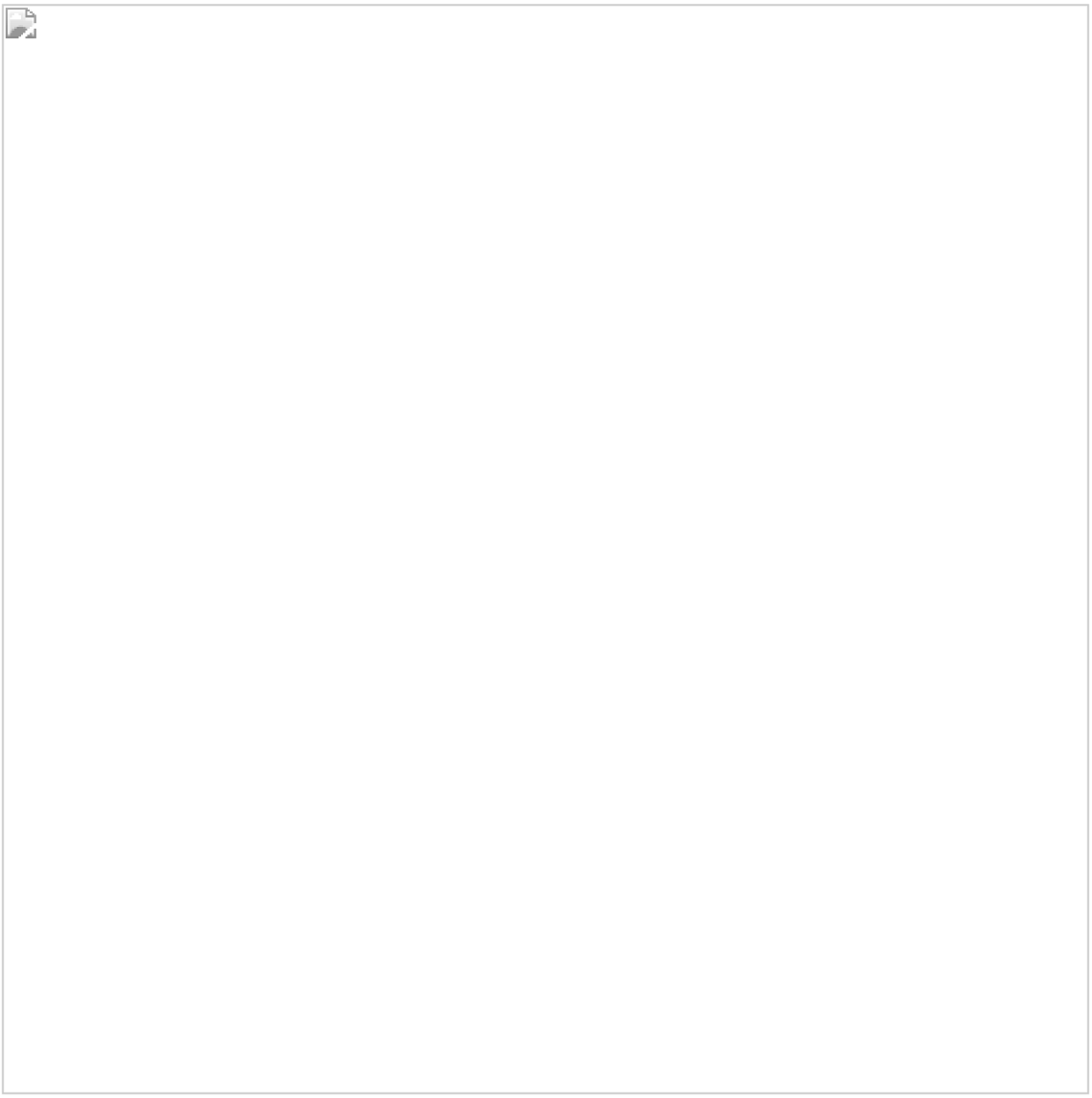
Mr. Lorry is riding alone in the dark with a secret job. What do you think the job might be?

This book belongs to _____

A Tale of Two Cities · another picture



The Message



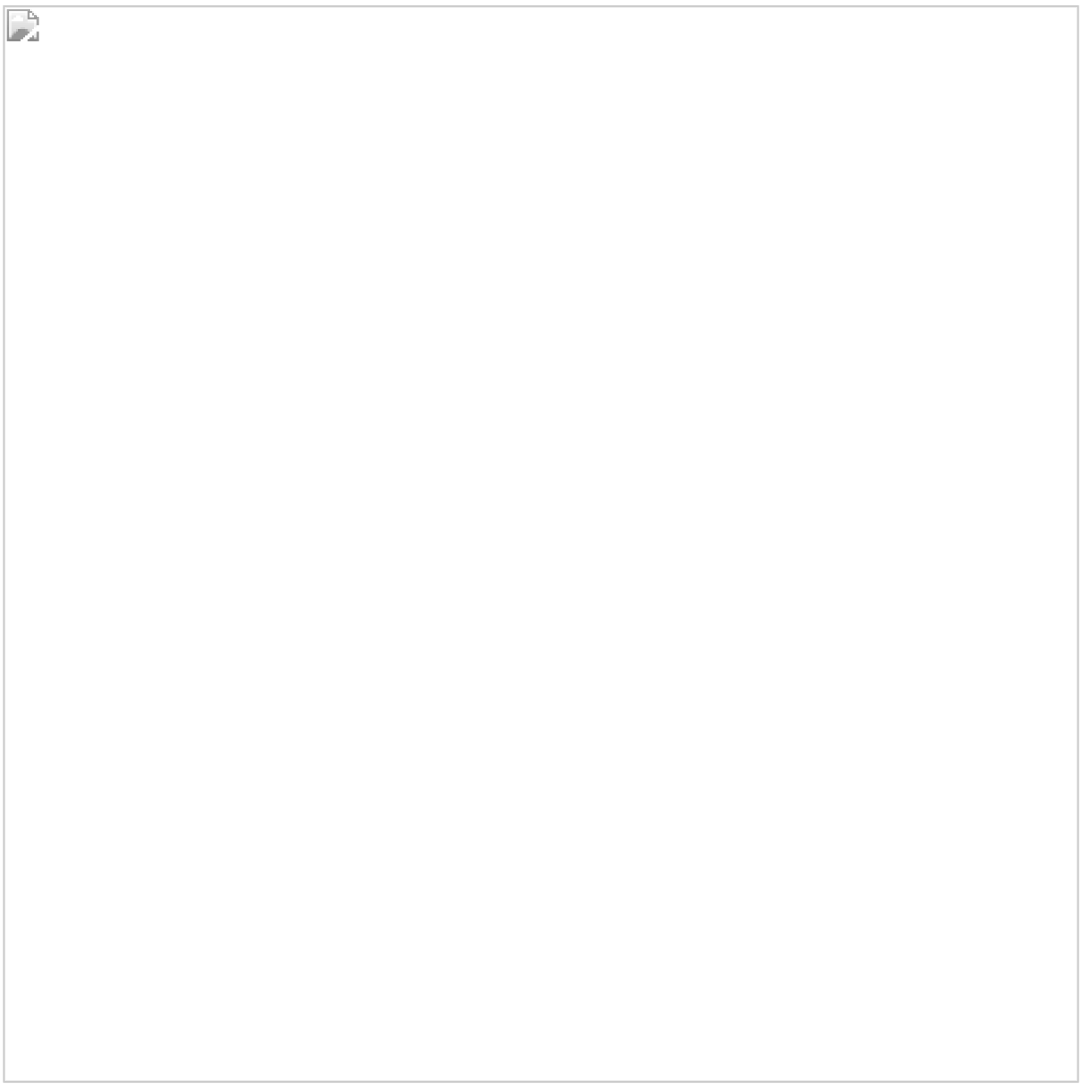
In the middle of the night, a rider caught up with the mail and gave Mr. Lorry a message: wait at Dover for a young lady. Mr. Lorry sent back an answer of just three words: “Recalled to Life.”

As the coach rolled on, Mr. Lorry dozed, and dreamed of a pale, thin face rising out of the dark. “Buried how long?” he asked it. “Almost eighteen years.” And then: “I hope you care to live?” “I can’t say.”

In Dover he met Lucie Manette, a young lady with golden hair and a worried face. Long ago, she had been told that her father had died.

TALK ABOUT IT

The face in the dream said, “I can’t say” when asked if it cared to live. What do you think it was like for that person?



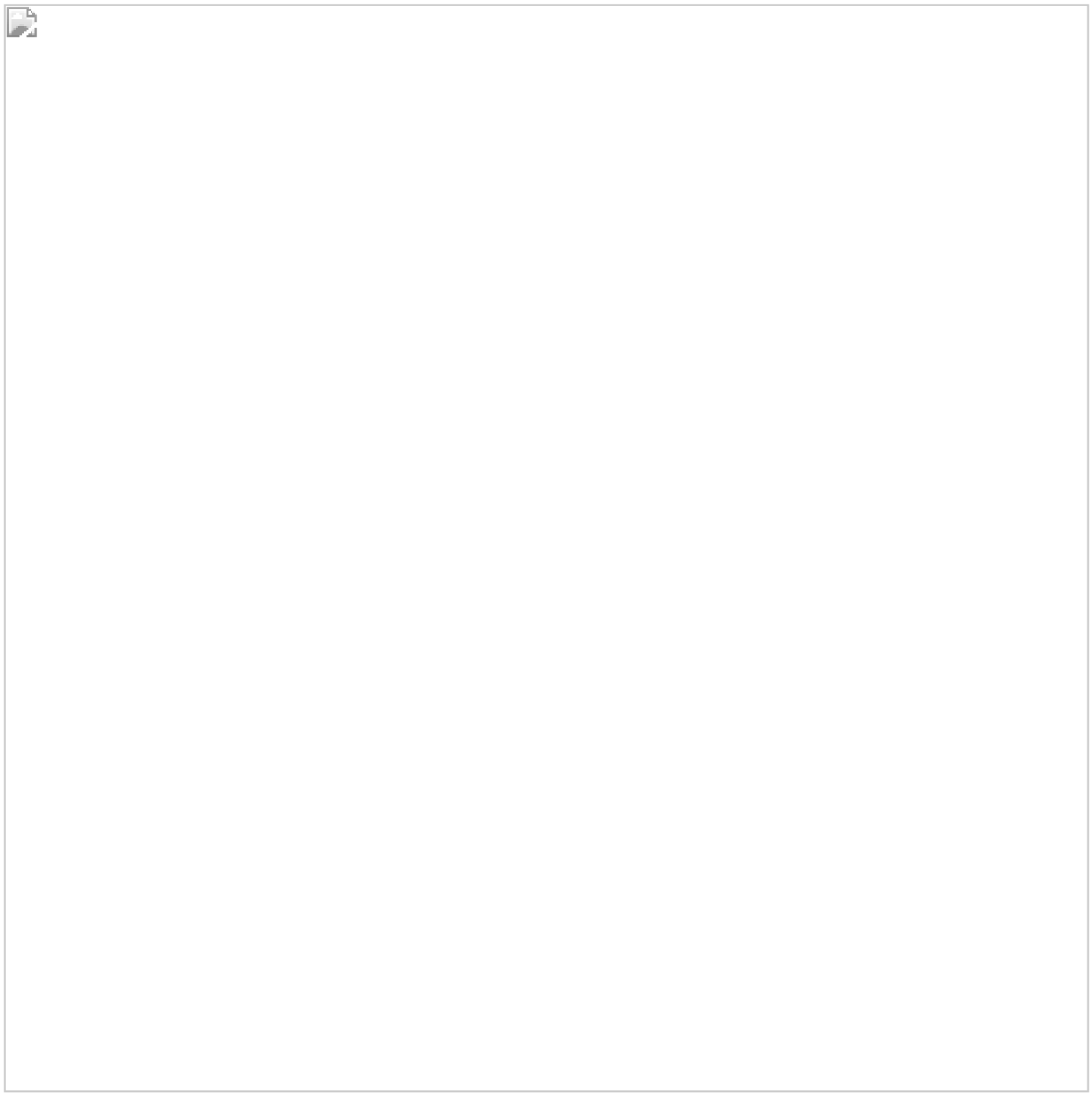
Think about it

1. Who was waiting for Mr. Lorry in Dover?

- ○ A young lady named Lucie Manette
- ○ A sea captain
- ○ A king

2. What do you think Mr. Lorry might say to Lucie to be gentle with her?

Her Father Is Alive



Mr. Lorry told Lucie the news very gently. Her father, Doctor Manette, was alive. He had been kept in a prison in Paris for eighteen years, for no reason at all, and he had been forgotten.

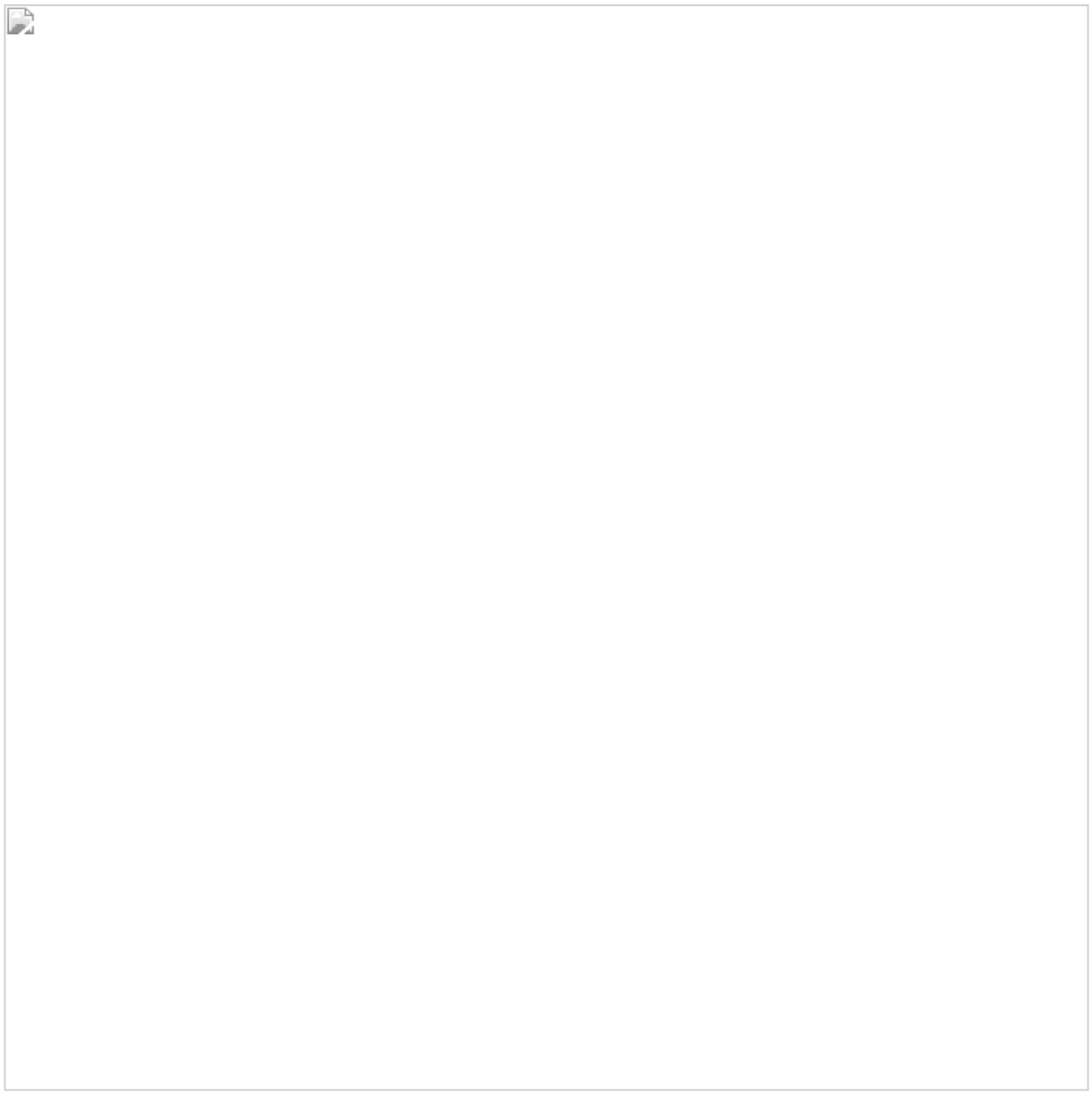
Now he had been found. Lucie was shaking, but she said she would go with Mr. Lorry and care for him, and help him remember who he was.

They crossed the sea together and went to a poor part of Paris, to a wine shop kept by a man named Monsieur Defarge. Long ago, Defarge had been the Doctor's servant, and now he was keeping the Doctor in a room upstairs.

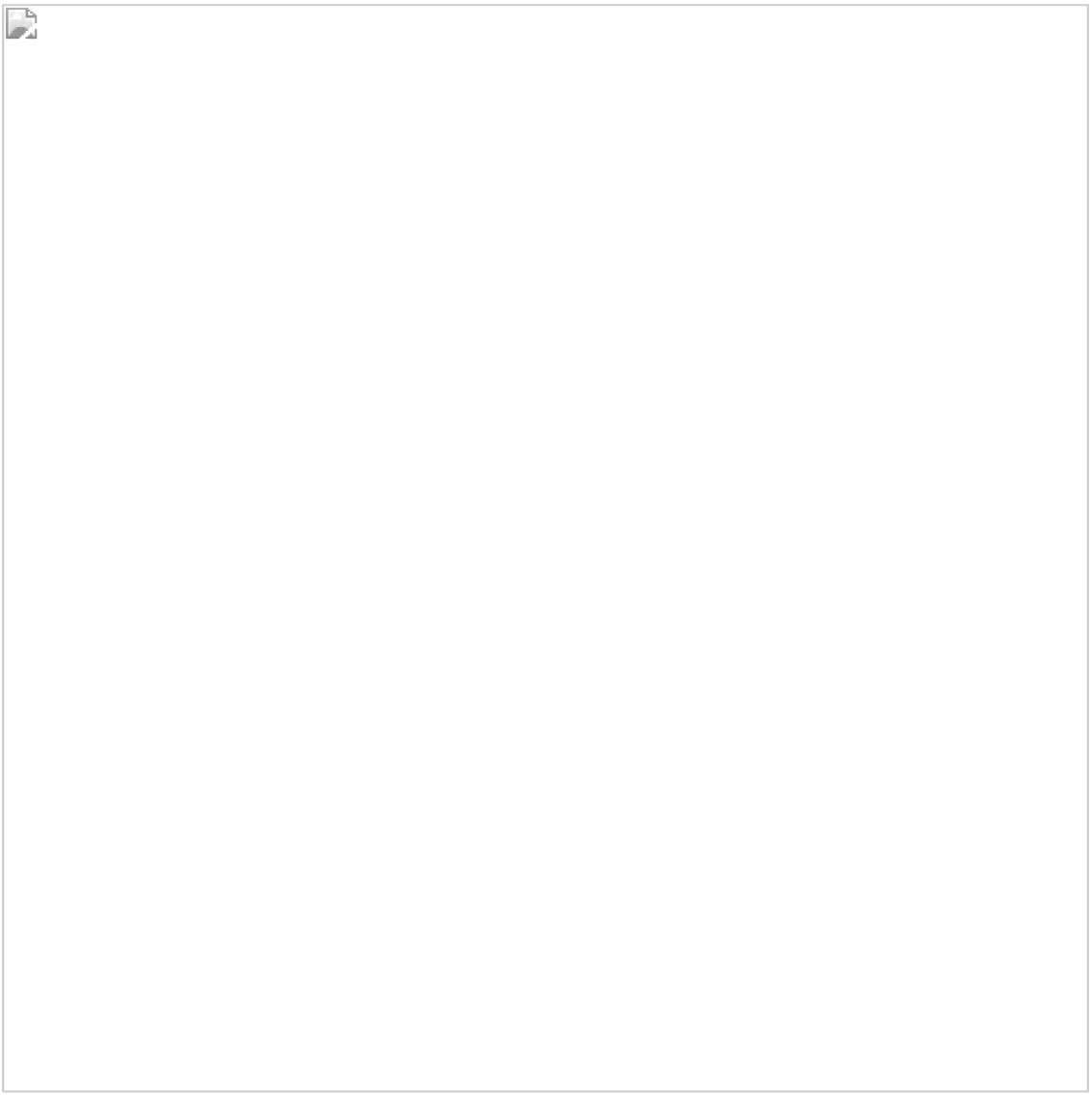
TALK ABOUT IT

Lucie was frightened, but she went anyway. What helped her be brave, do you think?

Her Father Is Alive · another picture



The Shoemaker



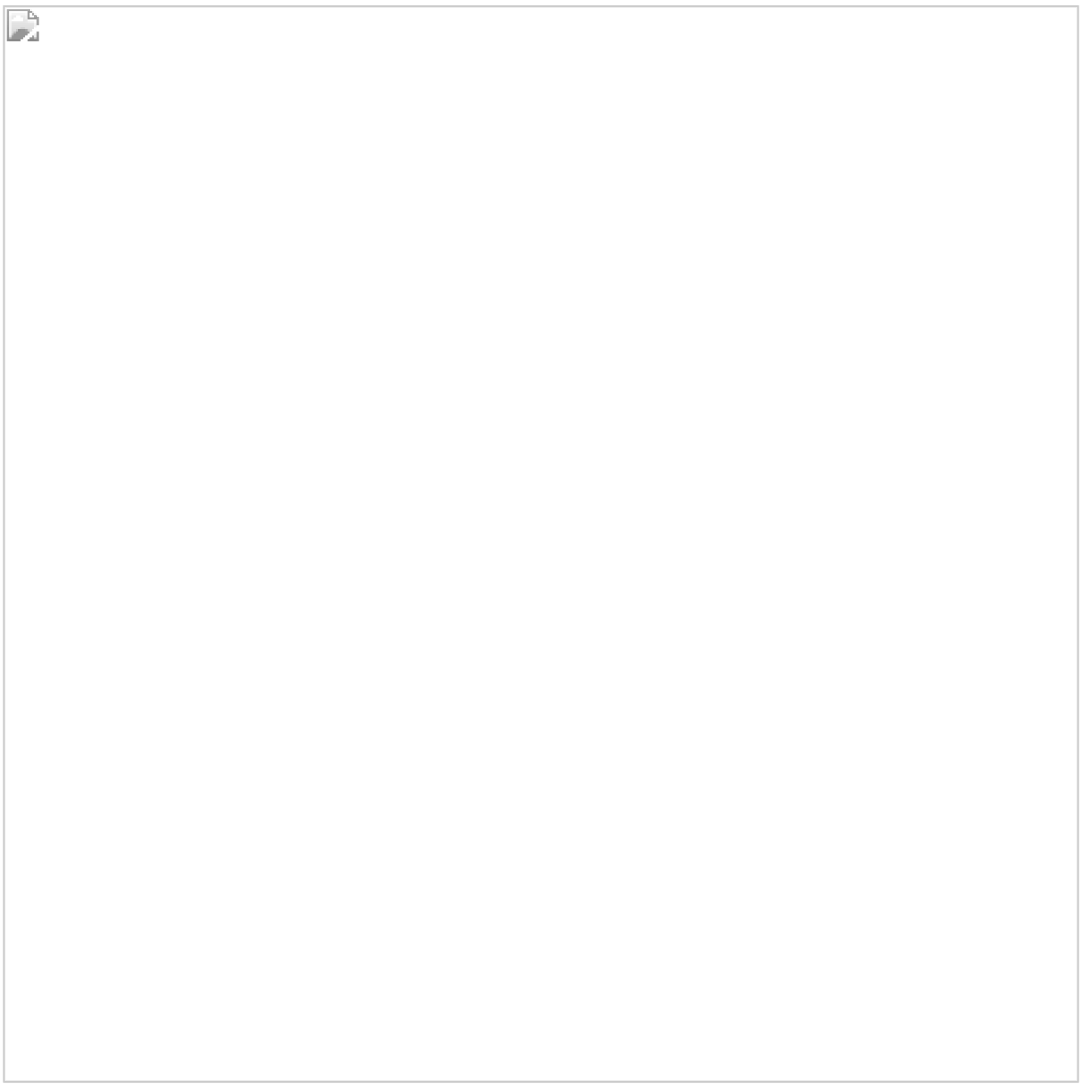
Up a dark stair, in a bare room, a white-haired man sat on a low bench, making shoes. He had learned to make shoes in prison, and it was the only thing he could remember doing.

Asked his name, he said, “One Hundred and Five, North Tower.” That was the number of his cell. He had been called by it so long that he had forgotten his own name.

Lucie came and knelt beside him. He had kept a few long golden hairs, just like hers, on a bit of rag. Slowly he began to understand. Lucie held him close and said that he was safe now.

TALK ABOUT IT

The Doctor had forgotten his own name. What do you think helped bring him back?

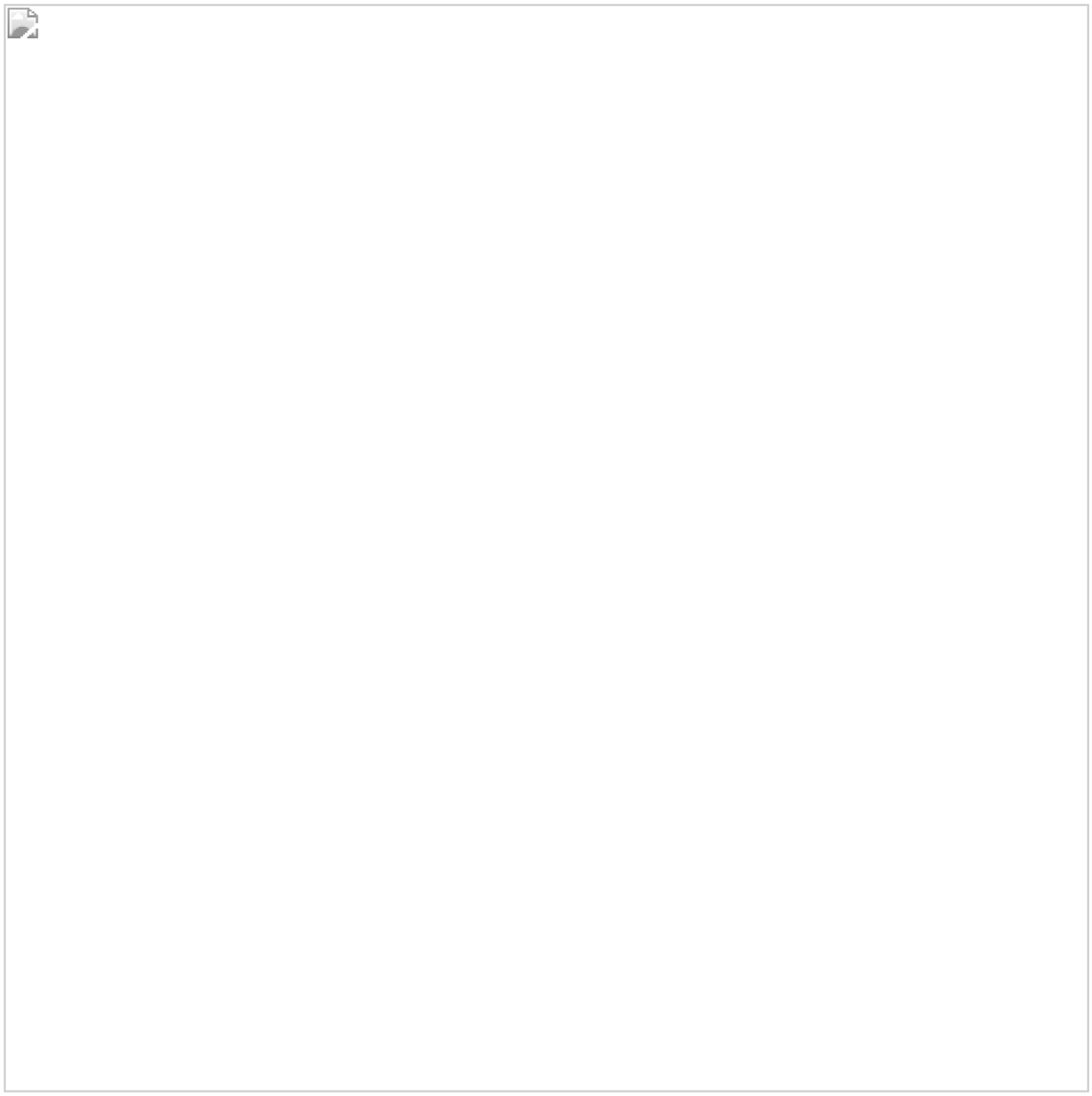


Think about it

1. What did the Doctor keep that was like Lucie's hair?

- ○ A golden ribbon
- ○ A few long golden hairs on a rag
- ○ A gold coin

The Golden Thread



Lucie took her father home to England in a coach, and Monsieur Defarge waved them off with a loud “Adieu!” In a quiet house in London, the Doctor got better, a little at a time.

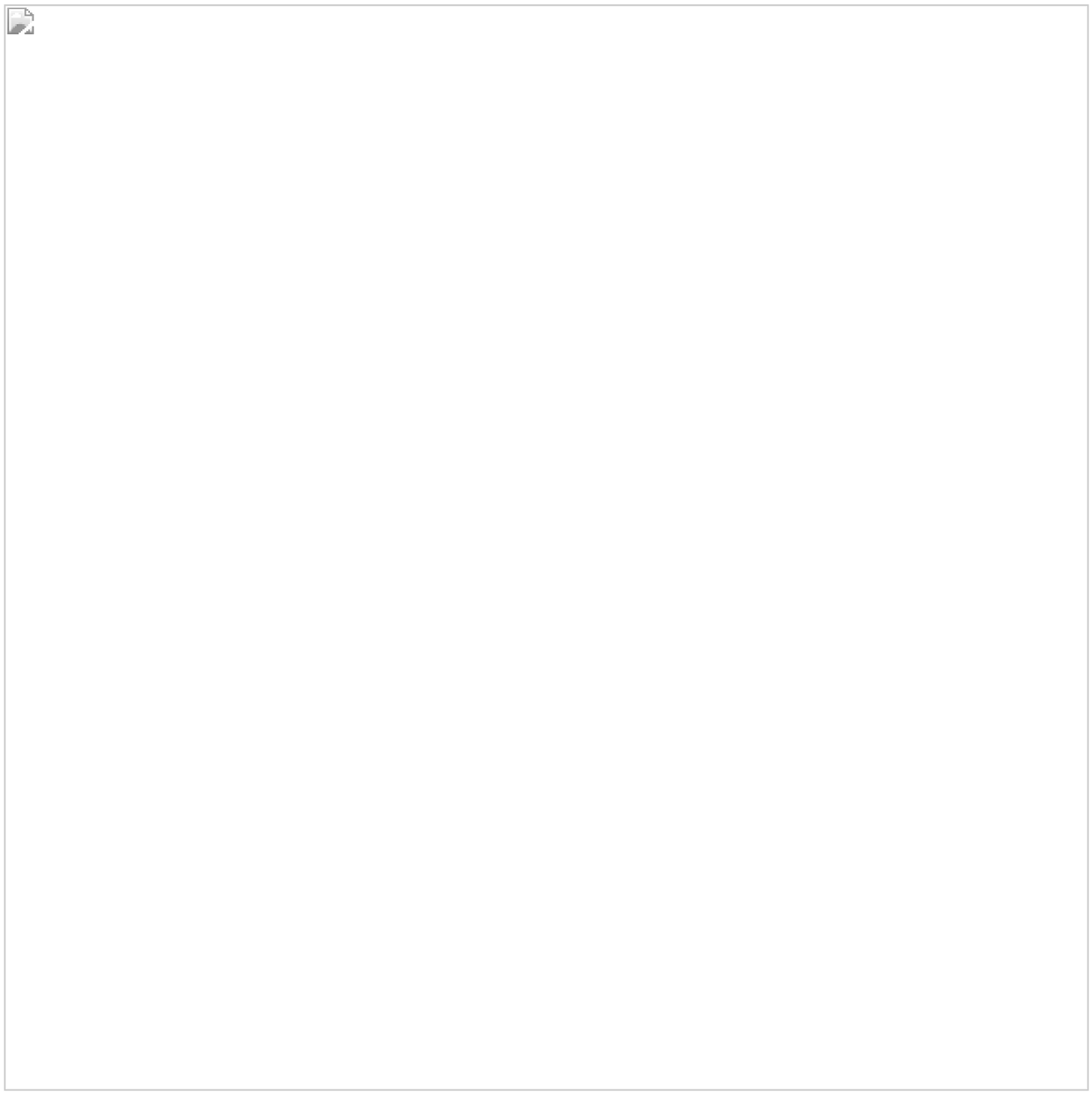
He still had bad days when he went back to his shoemaking bench. But Lucie was patient. She was the golden thread that held the family together, and her father learned to trust the world again.

Years went by. Mr. Lorry, the Doctor's loyal friend, and a fierce, loving servant named Miss Pross, became part of the family.

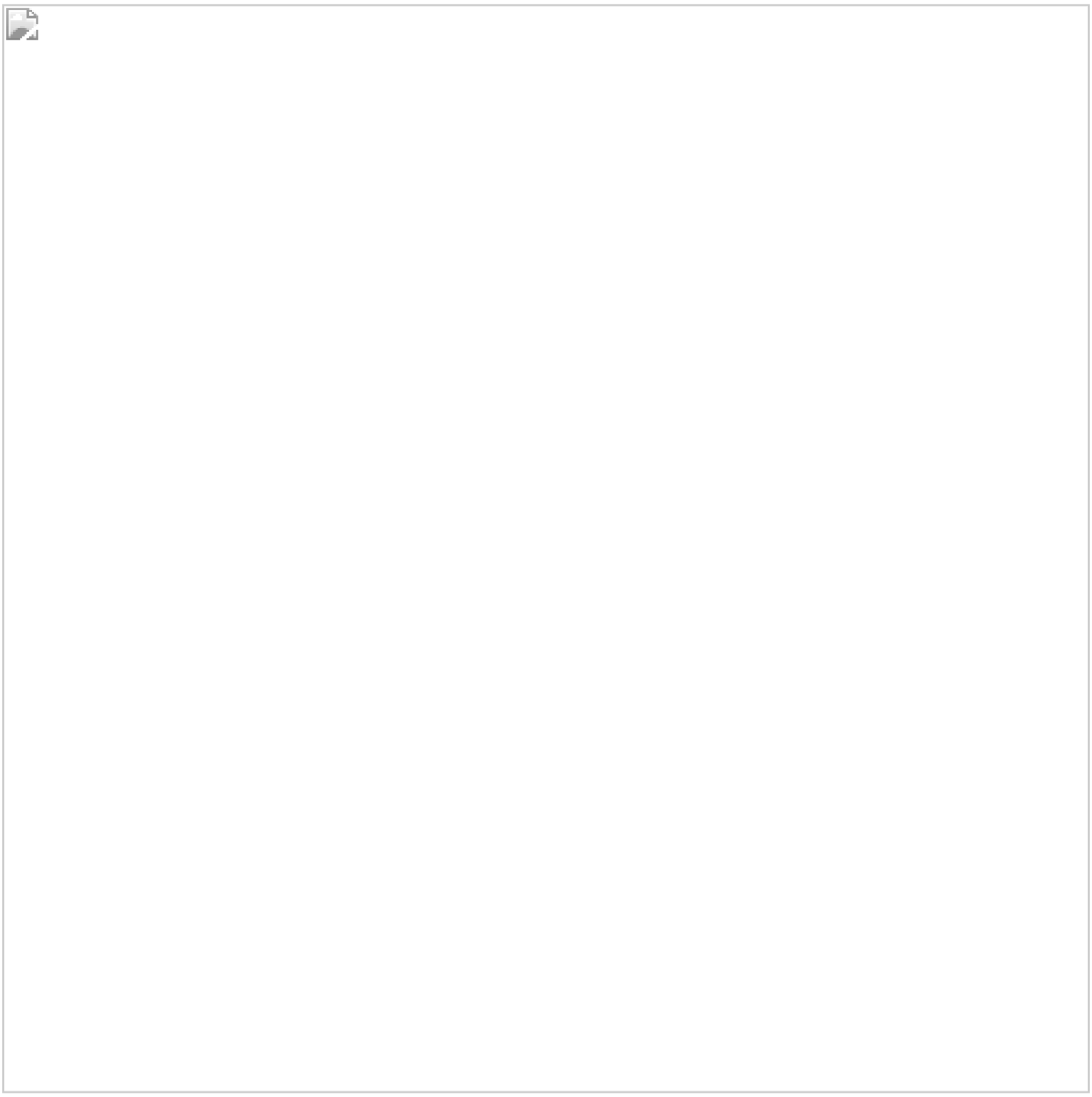
TALK ABOUT IT

Lucie kept being patient with her father on his hard days. When has someone been patient with you?

The Golden Thread · another picture



Two Men Who Look Alike



One day, a young Frenchman named Charles Darnay was put on trial in London. People said he was a spy. He had been kind to Lucie and her father on a boat years before.

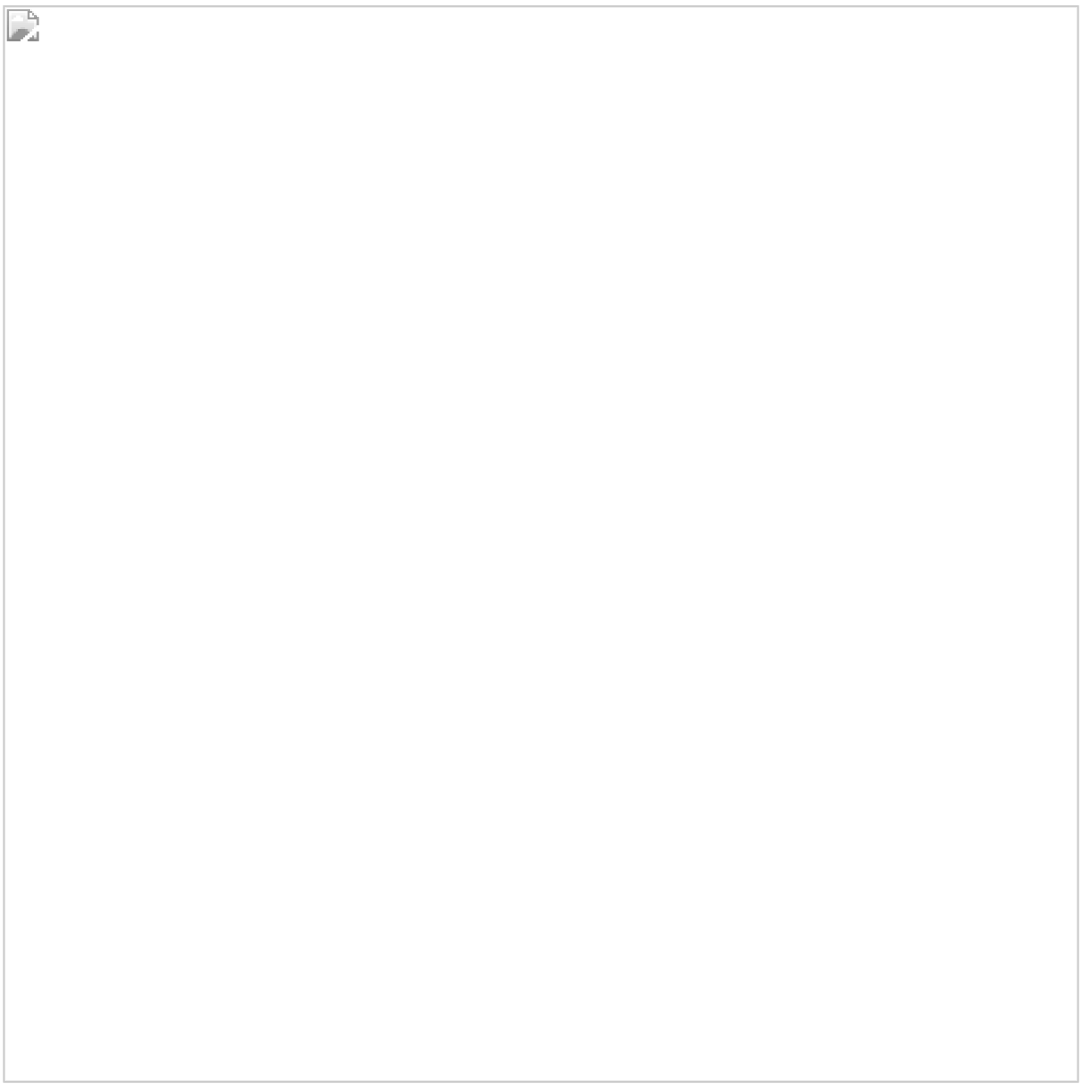
A clever, lazy, sad lawyer named Sydney Carton sat at the back of the court. He looked almost exactly like Charles. When someone pointed this out, the court saw they could not be sure the witness had seen the right man, and Charles went free.

Afterwards, Sydney said, quite plainly, “I care for no man on earth, and no man on earth cares for me.” He felt he had wasted his life.

TALK ABOUT IT

Sydney said that nobody cared for him and he cared for nobody. Why might someone say that about themselves?

Two Men Who Look Alike · another picture



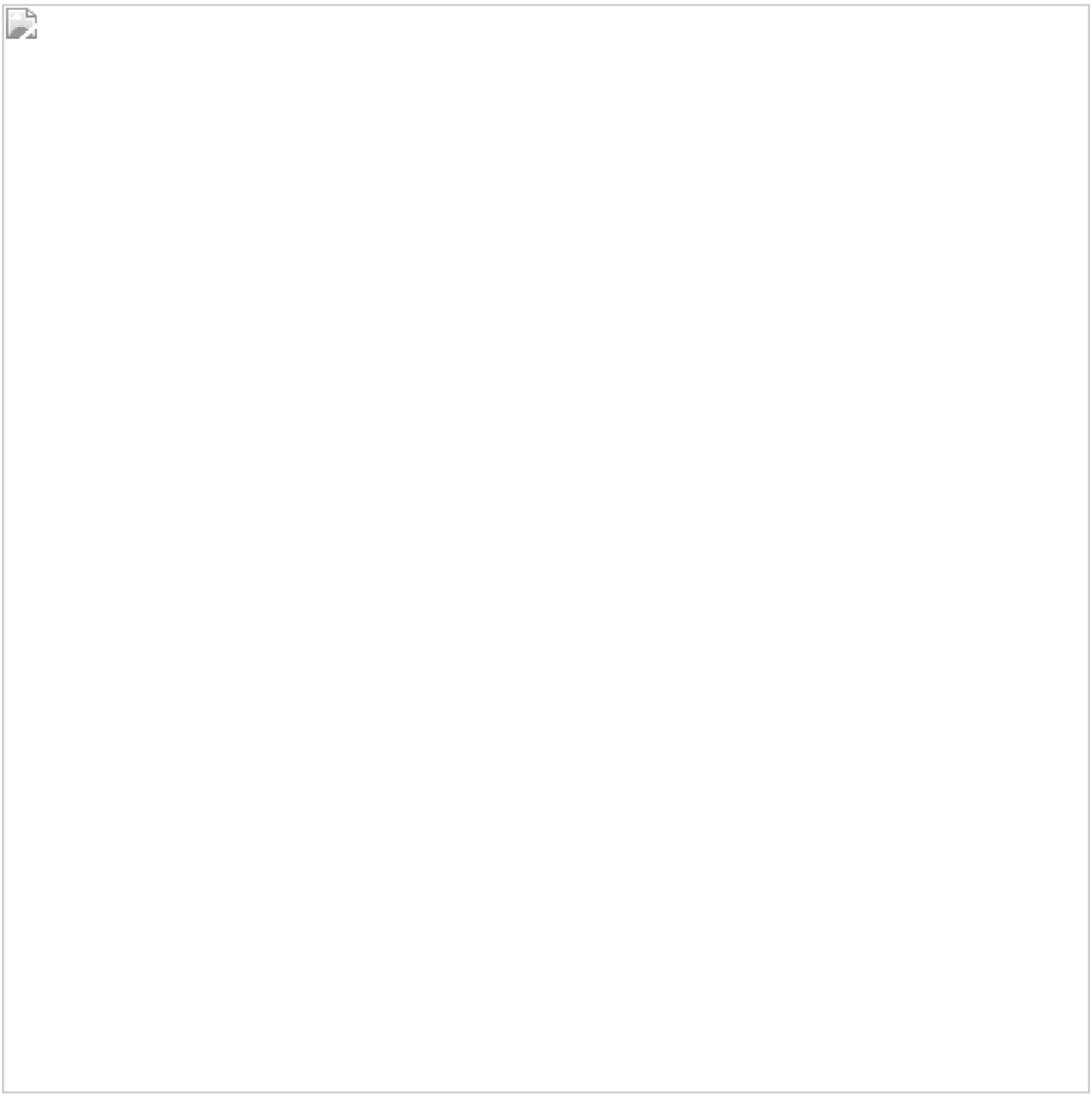
Think about it

1. Why was Sydney Carton important in the trial?

- ○ He looked just like Charles
- ○ He was the judge
- ○ He was Charles's brother

2. How might Charles have felt toward the stranger who looked like him?

The Carriage in the Street



In Paris, poor people were hungry and angry. The Marquis, a proud nobleman, drove his carriage fast through the narrow streets, and it ran over a little child. The child died, and his father, Gaspard, cried out in grief.

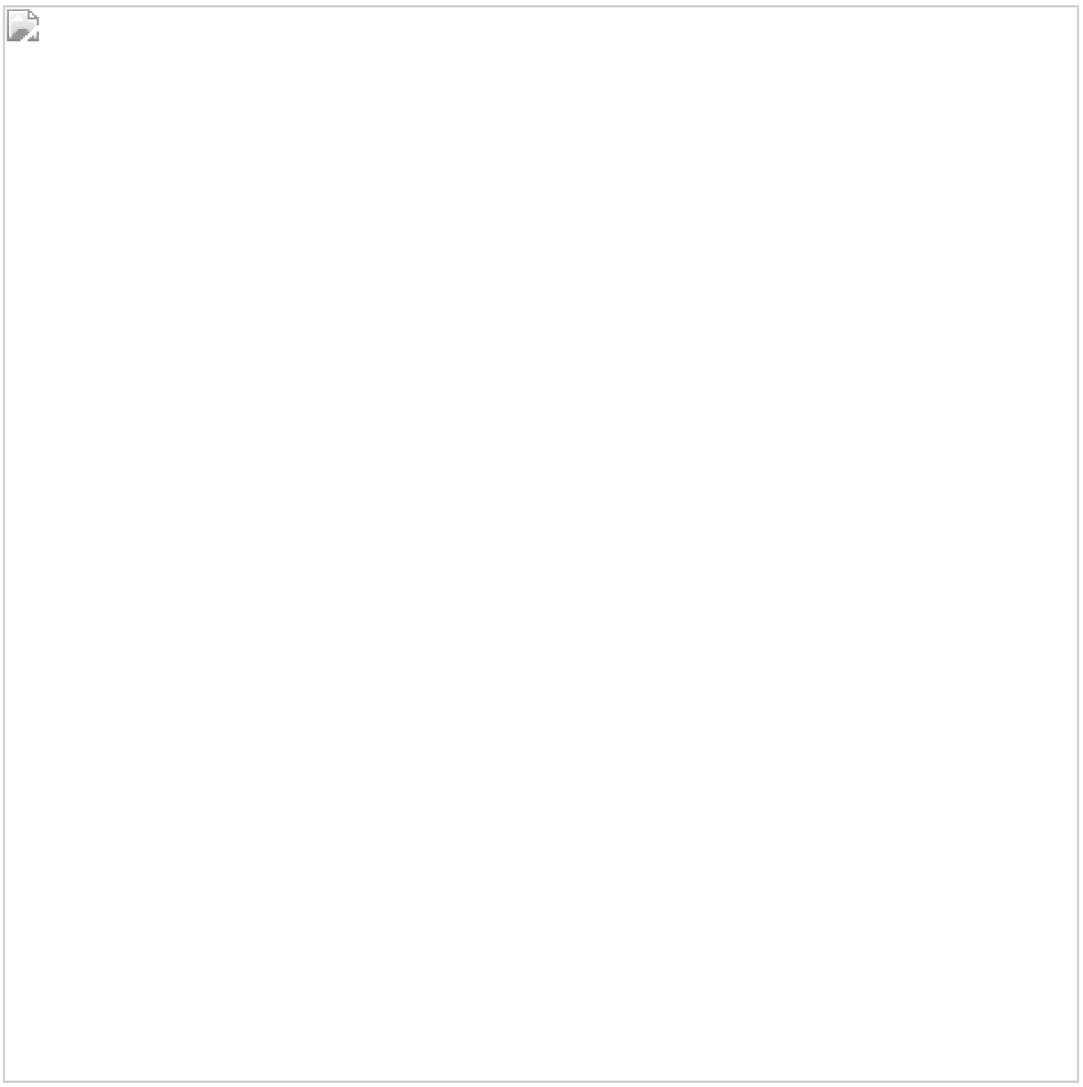
The Marquis tossed him a coin and drove on. Monsieur Defarge was there. “They call me Defarge,” he said, when the Marquis asked. He stayed calm, and watched.

At the wine shop, Madame Defarge sat knitting names into her cloth, names of people who had done wrong. Later, the Marquis was found dead in his bed, with a note: “Drive him fast to his tomb. This, from Jacques.”

TALK ABOUT IT

The Marquis did not stop, or say sorry. What do you think he should have done?

The Carriage in the Street · another picture

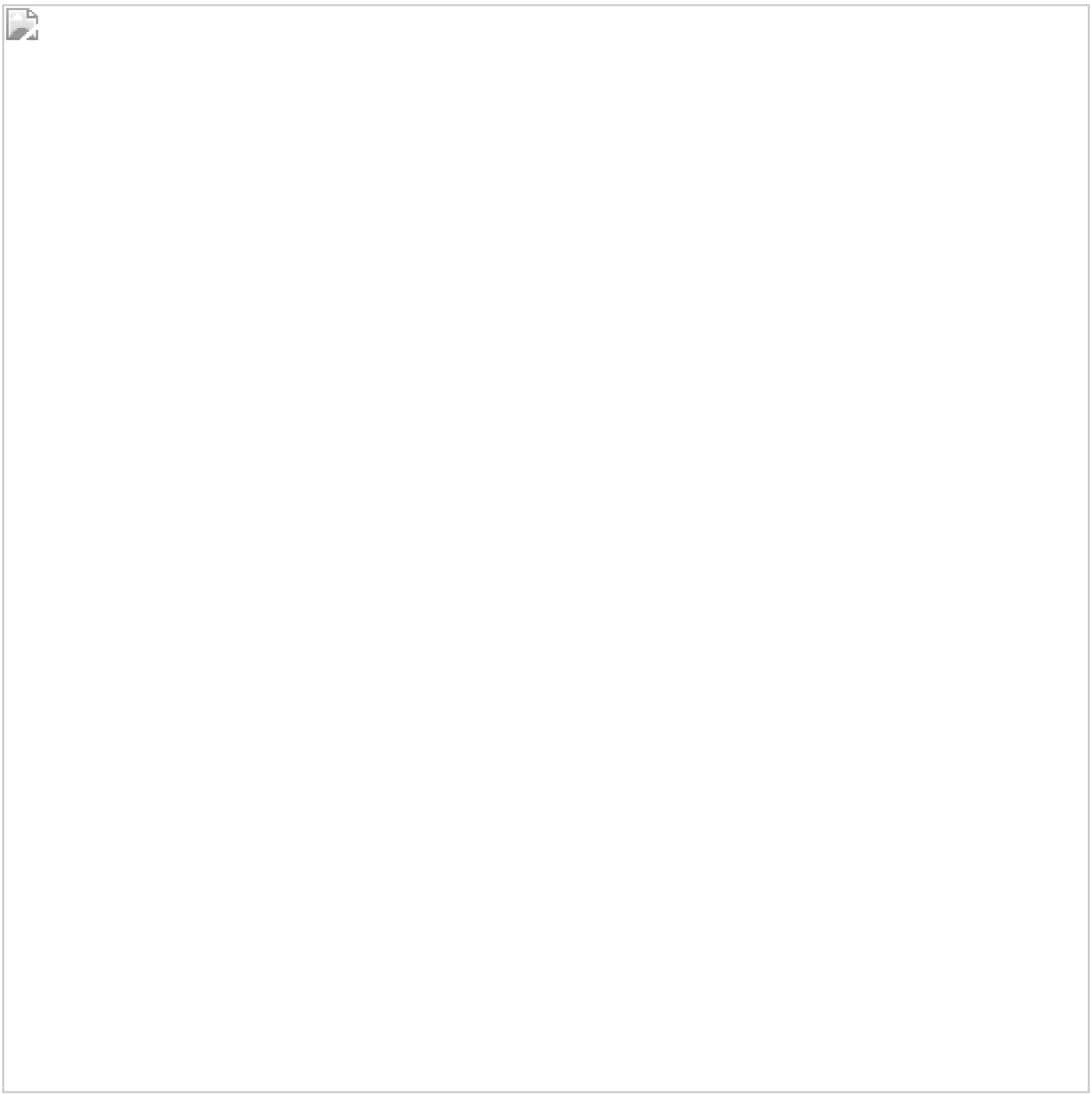


Think about it

1. What did Madame Defarge do at the wine shop?

- ○ She knitted names
- ○ She cooked soup
- ○ She sang

A Life You Love



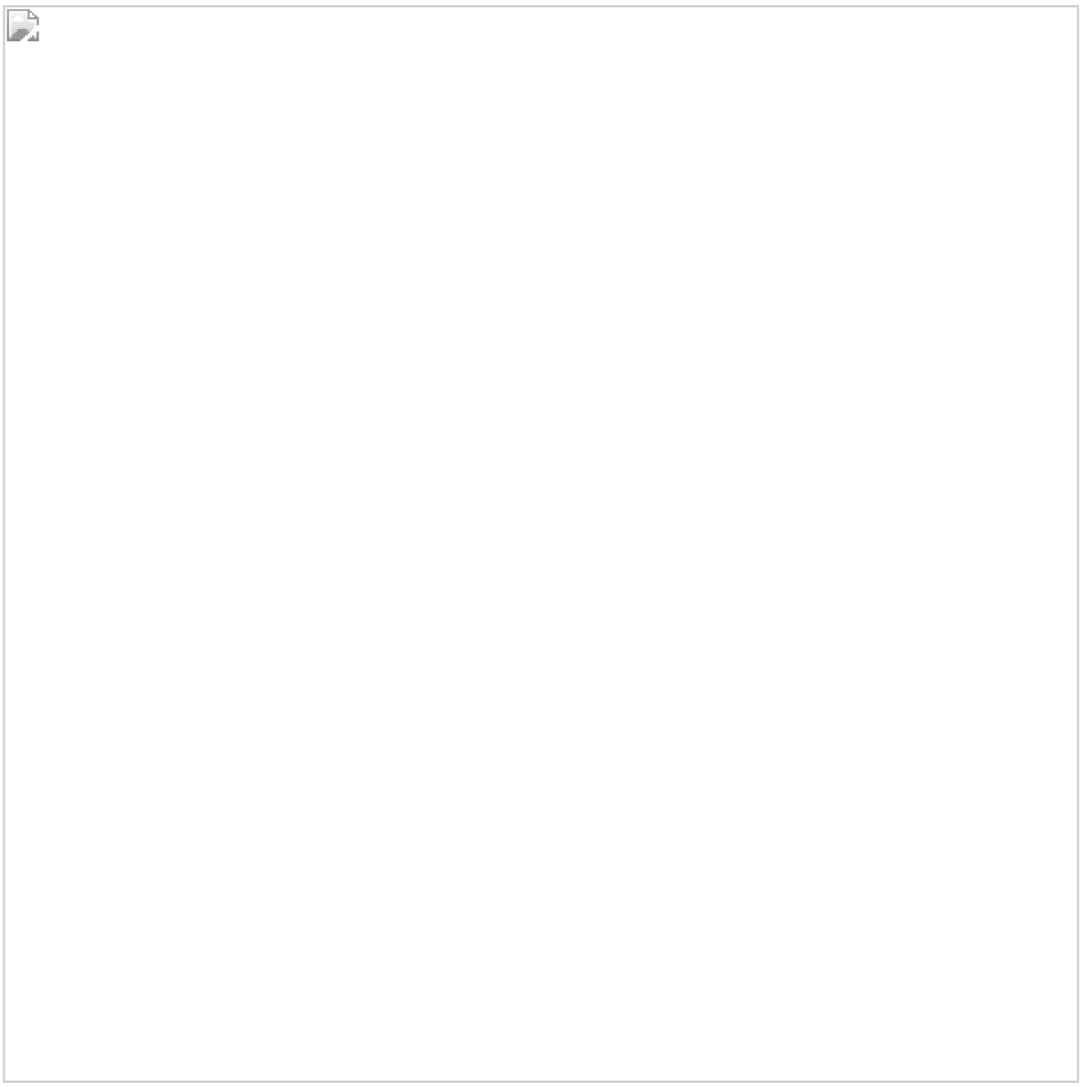
Charles Darnay's real name was Evrémonde, and the cruel Marquis was his uncle. Charles hated what his family had done, and had left it all to live in England.

Charles and Lucie fell in love. Sydney Carton loved Lucie too, and knew he was not good enough for her. He told her so gently, asking for nothing. He hoped she would think, now and then, that “there is a man who would give his life, to keep a life you love beside you!”

Charles and Lucie were married. Sydney became a friend of the family, and their little daughter, also named Lucie, was fond of him.

TALK ABOUT IT

Sydney loved Lucie but wanted her to be happy with someone else. What do you think that was like for him?



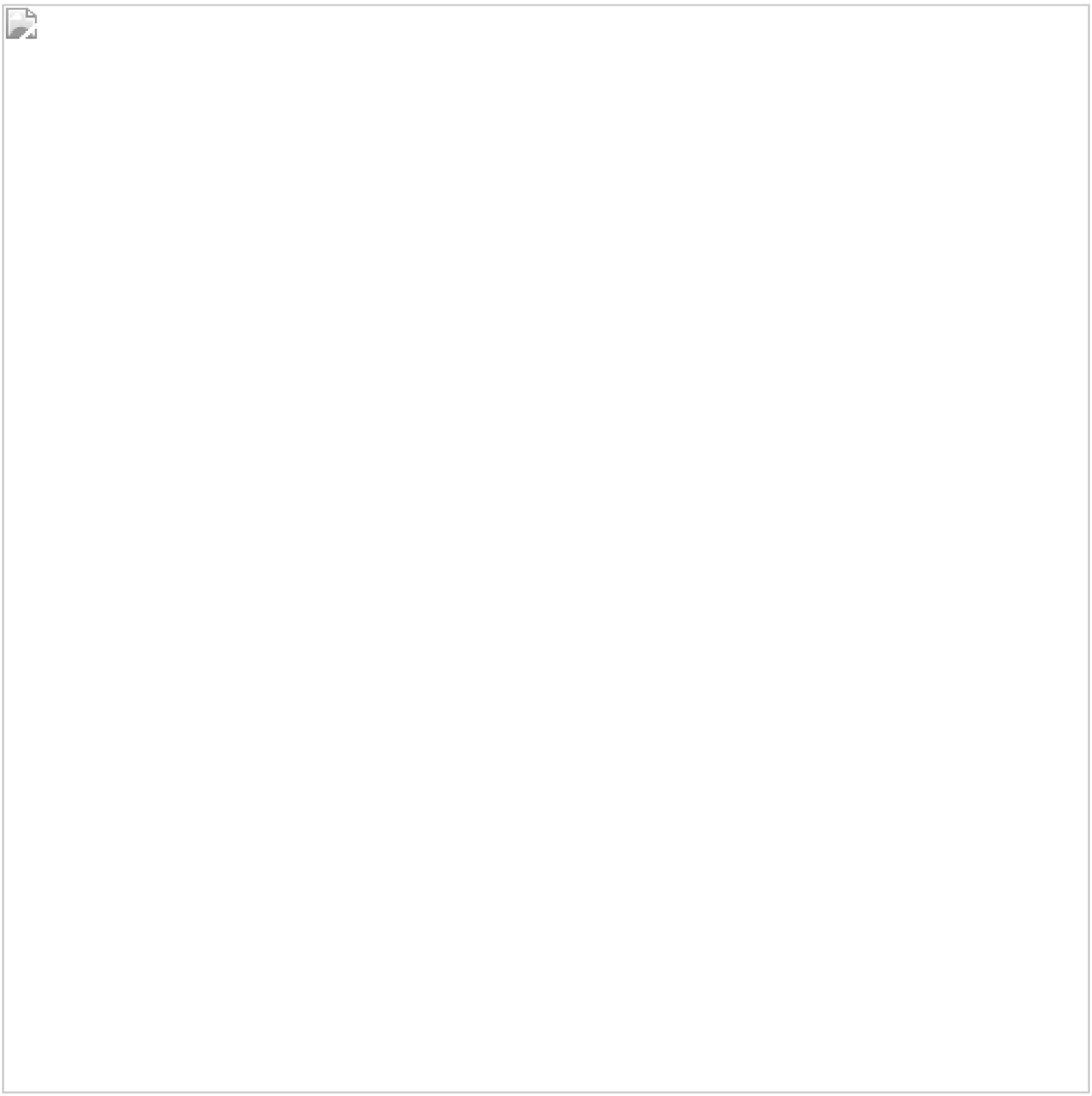
Think about it

1. What did Sydney say he would do for someone Lucie loved?

- ○ Give his life
- ○ Give a gift
- ○ Write a book

2. Why do you think Sydney said this out loud?

The Storm Breaks



Back in France, the hungry people rose up. They had been treated badly for a very long time, and now their anger burst out. This was the French Revolution. Soldiers and a crowd attacked the great prison called the Bastille.

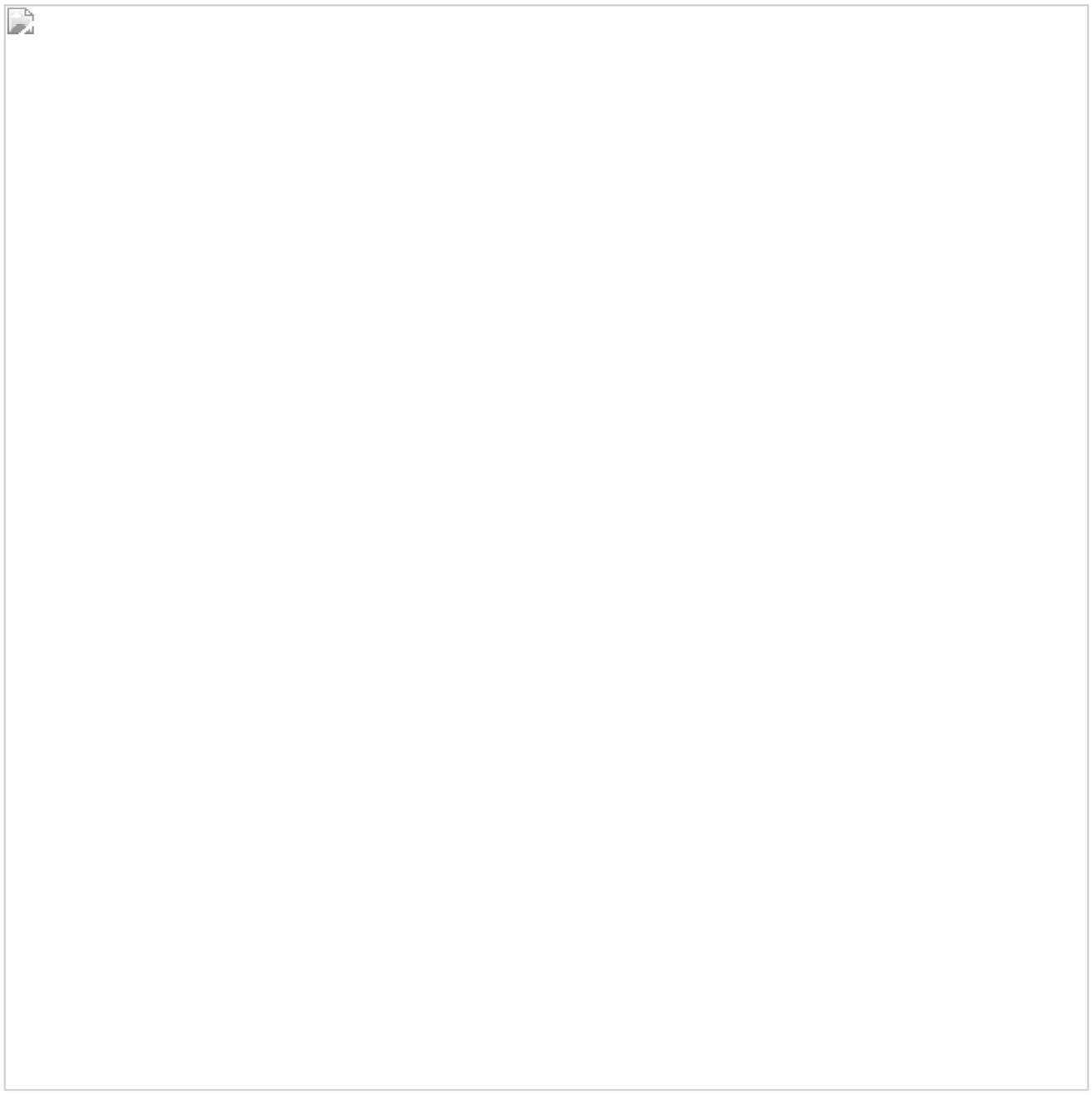
Monsieur Defarge went to the cell where Doctor Manette had been kept, number One Hundred and Five. Behind a stone, he found a paper the Doctor had written long ago.

Soon afterward, Charles got a letter from an old servant in France, begging for help. Charles felt he must go. He left for Paris in secret, leaving letters for Lucie and her father to tell them why.

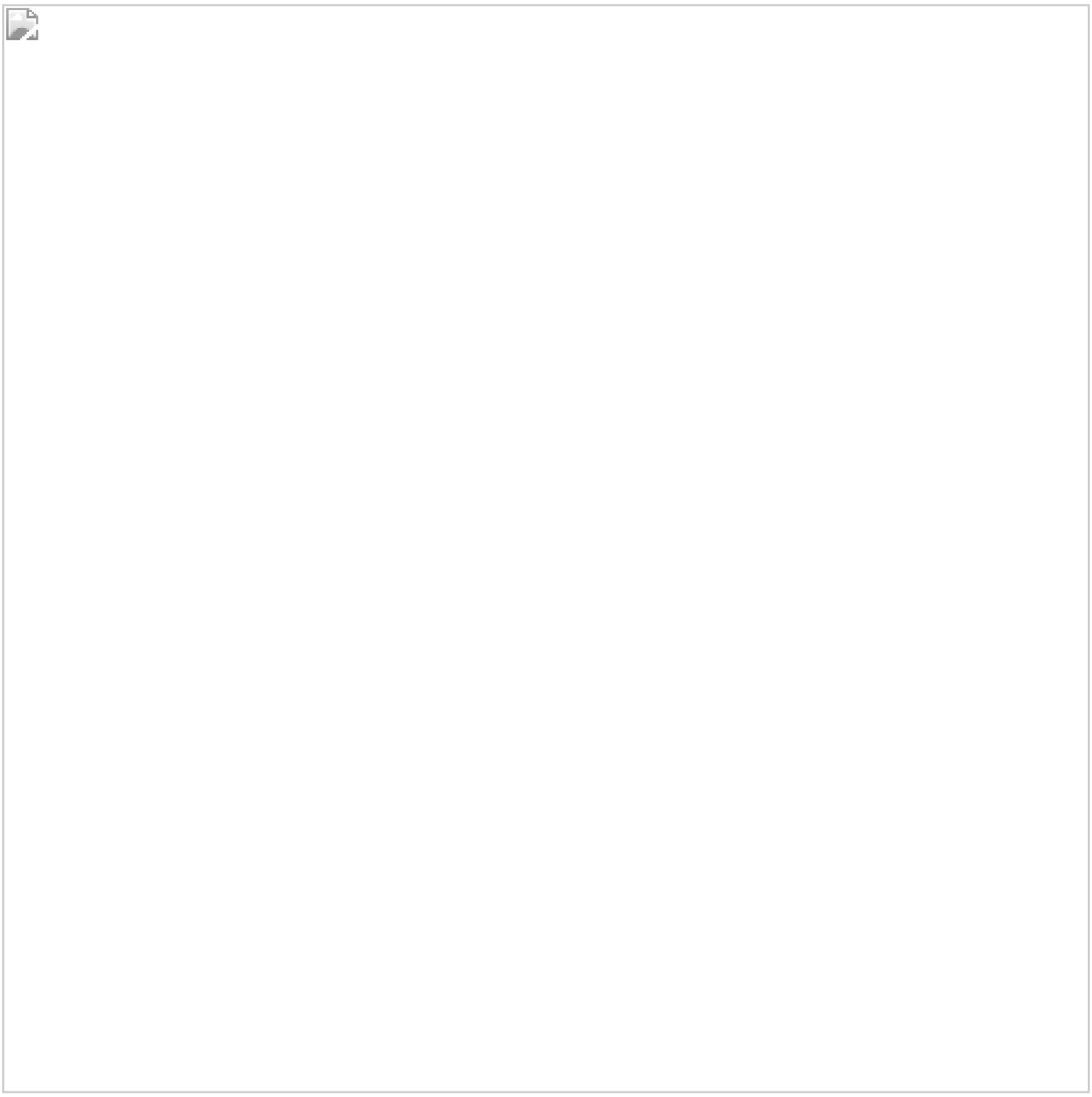
TALK ABOUT IT

Charles went toward danger to help someone. What makes someone do that?

The Storm Breaks · another picture



Charles Is Arrested



In Paris, Charles was seized the moment he arrived, because his family name was Evrémonde. The new rulers wanted to punish everyone from the old noble families. He was put in prison.

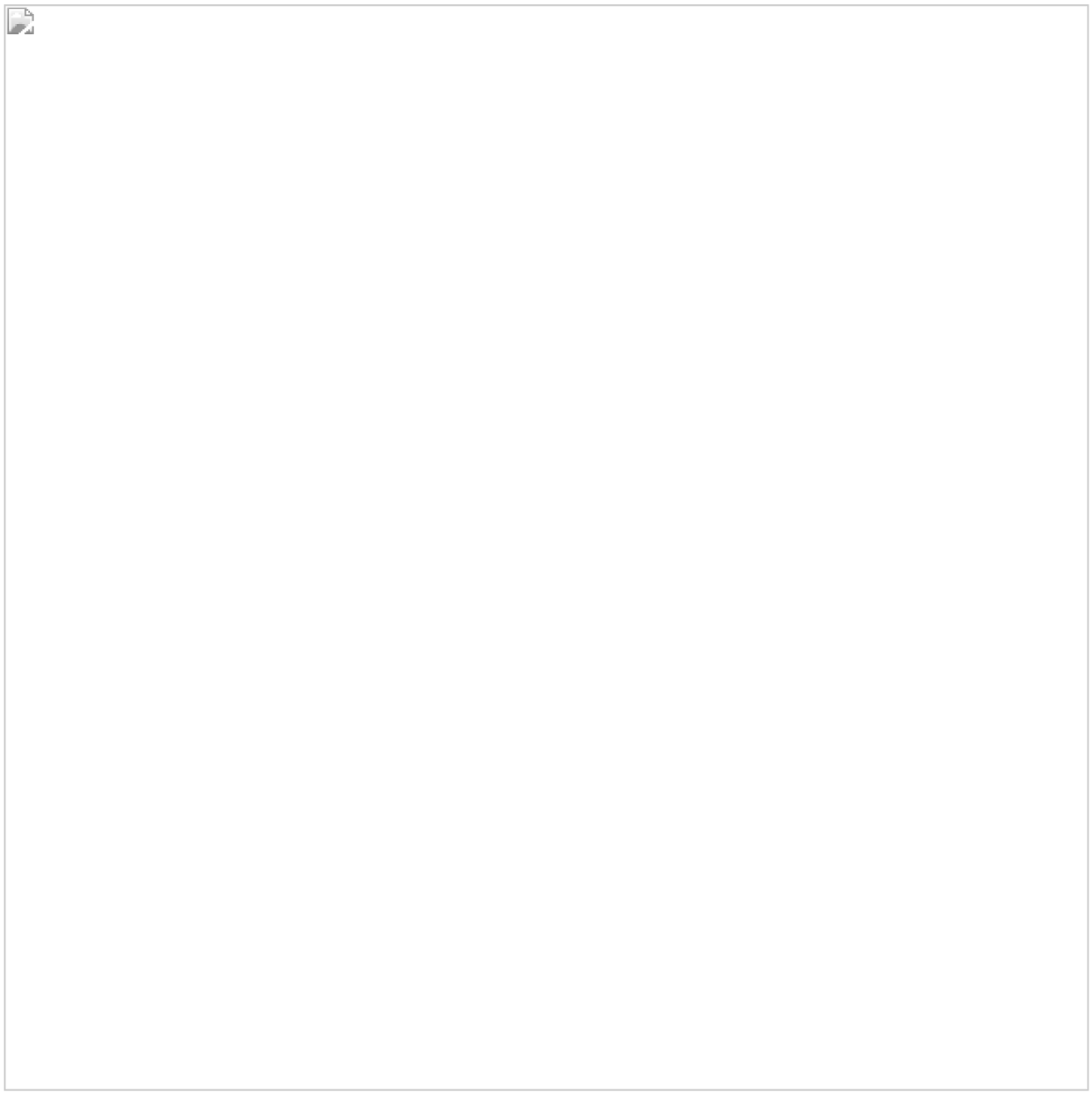
Lucie and her father came to Paris to find him, along with her little daughter and Mr. Lorry. They could not see Charles, but Doctor Manette had once been a prisoner himself, and the people respected him.

Each day, Lucie stood at a street corner for hours, in the cold and the rain, where Charles could just see her from a high window. This went on for a year and three months.

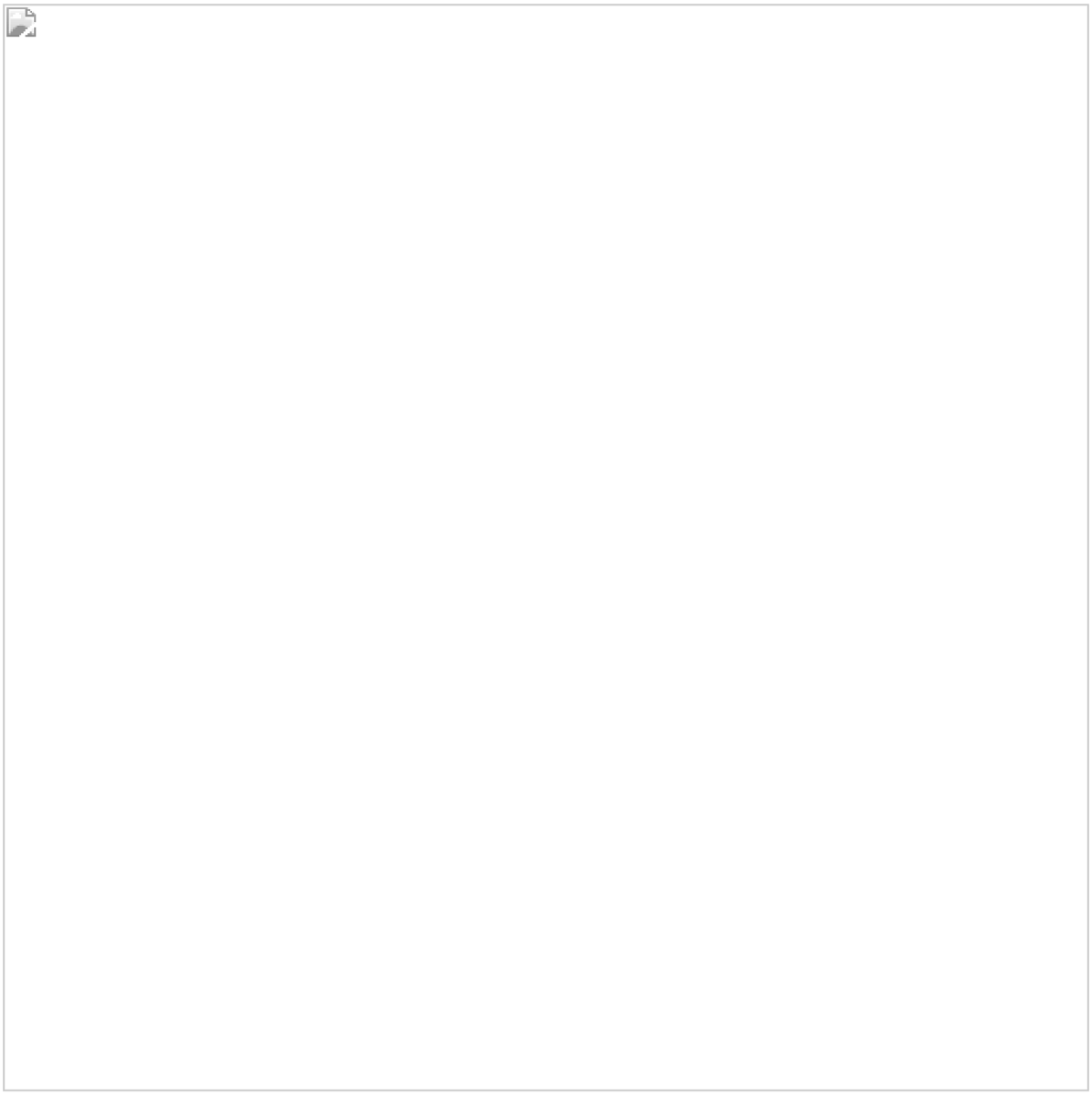
TALK ABOUT IT

Lucie stood in the street every day, just so Charles could see her. Why did that matter to him, do you think?

Charles Is Arrested · another picture



Free, and Then Taken Again



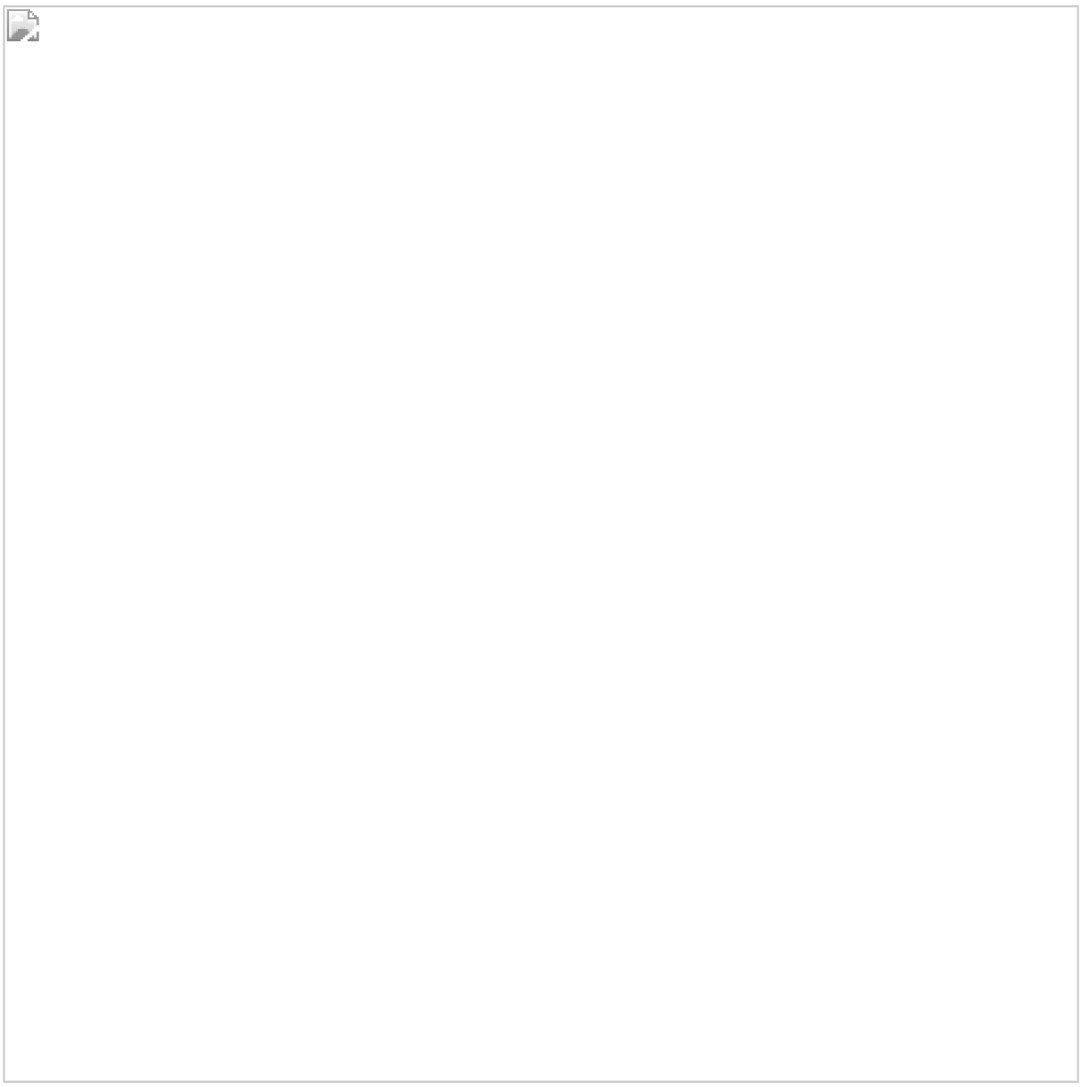
At last the Doctor was able to speak for Charles at a trial, and the people cheered for him. Charles was set free, and Lucie held him in her arms.

But that very night, there was a knock at the door, and soldiers took Charles away once more. Someone had named him again.

Sydney Carton had come to Paris too. Quietly, he made a secret bargain with a man who worked at the prison. He told Mr. Lorry about it, and then he said, “Don’t tell Her.” Lucie must not know.

TALK ABOUT IT

Everyone cheered, and then the soldiers came back. What do you think Lucie felt that night?



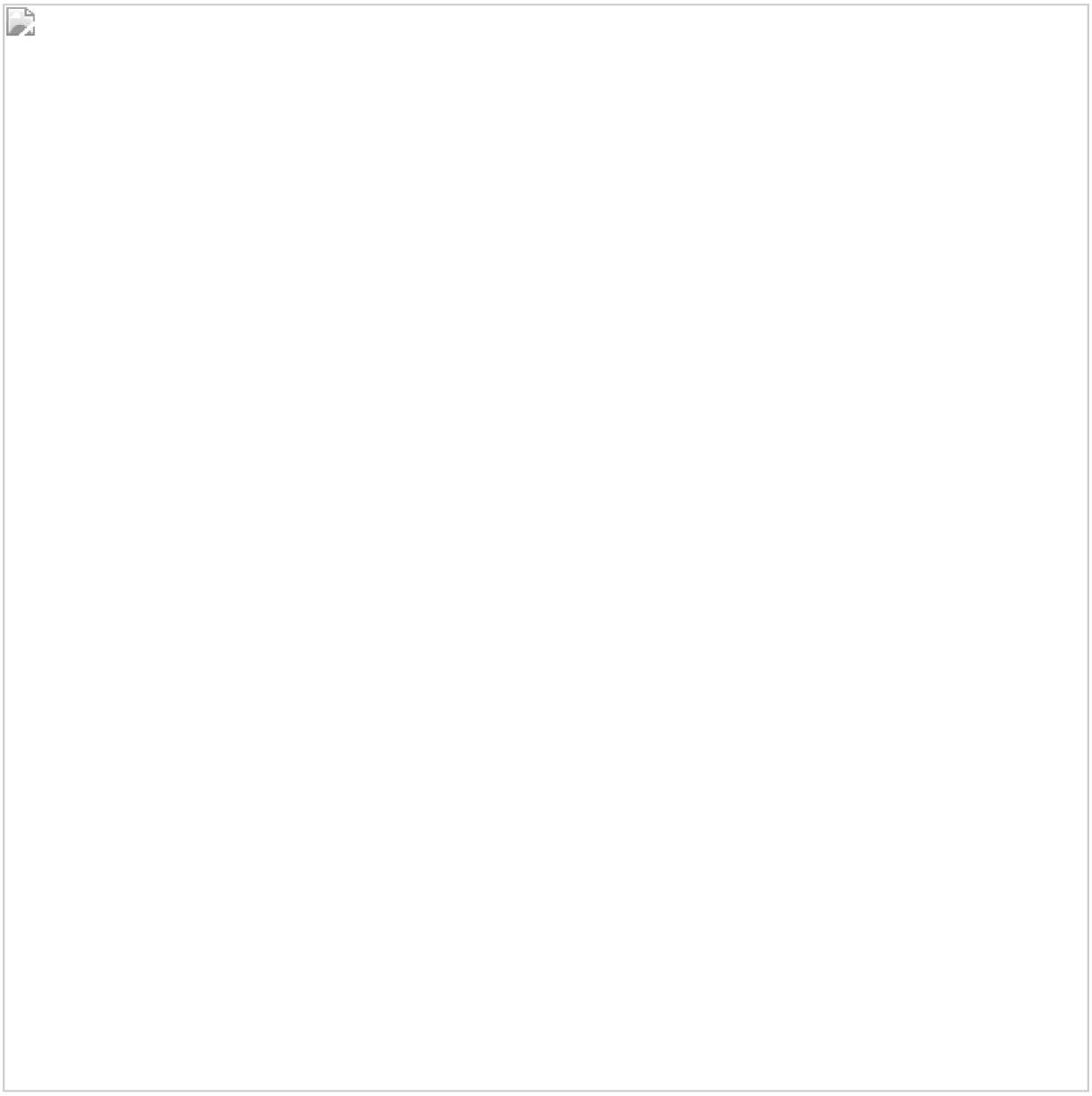
Think about it

1. What happened on the night Charles was set free?

- ○ Soldiers took him away again
- ○ He sailed home to England
- ○ He went back to the wine shop

2. Why do you think Sydney did not want Lucie to know his plan?

The Long Night



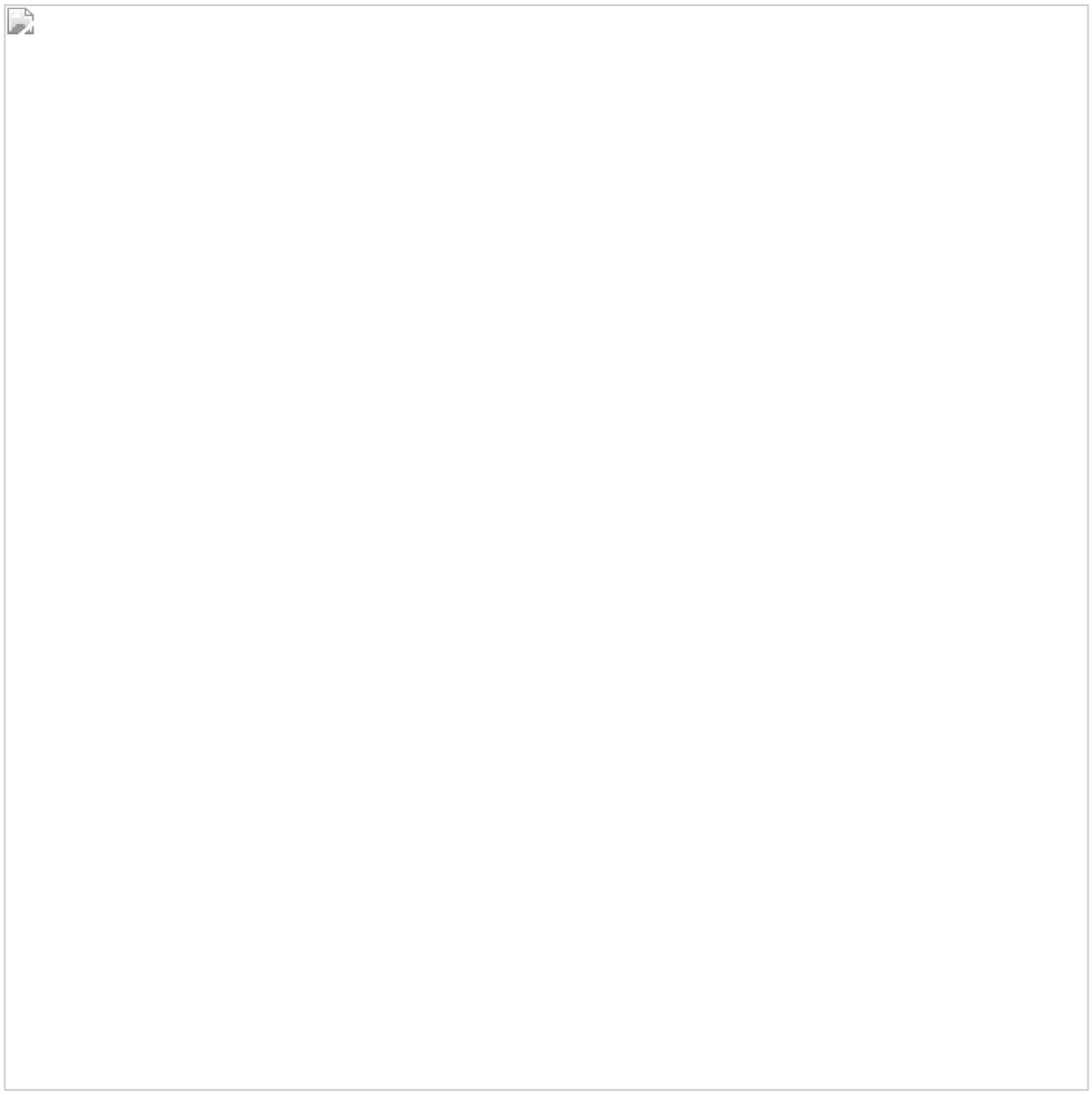
That night, Sydney walked the streets of Paris alone. Words came to him that had been read at his father's grave when he was a boy: "I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

He walked until morning. By the river, in the light and warmth of the sun, he fell asleep on the bank.

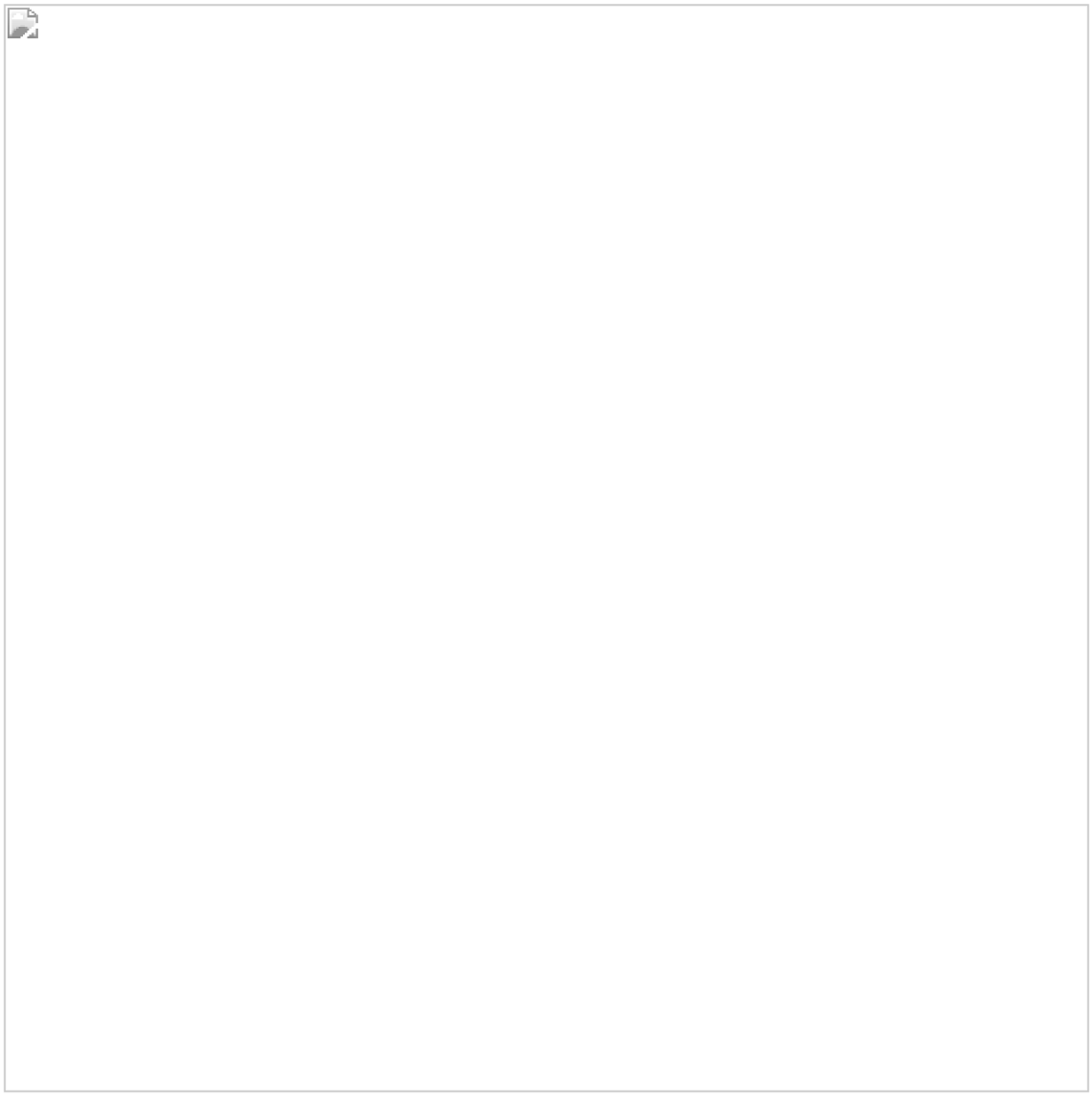
When he woke, he went to the court, where Charles was to be tried again.

TALK ABOUT IT

Sydney remembered words from long ago. What words do you like to remember?



The Old Letter



The people who accused Charles were Monsieur Defarge, Madame Defarge, and, to everyone's surprise, a paper written long ago by Doctor Manette himself.

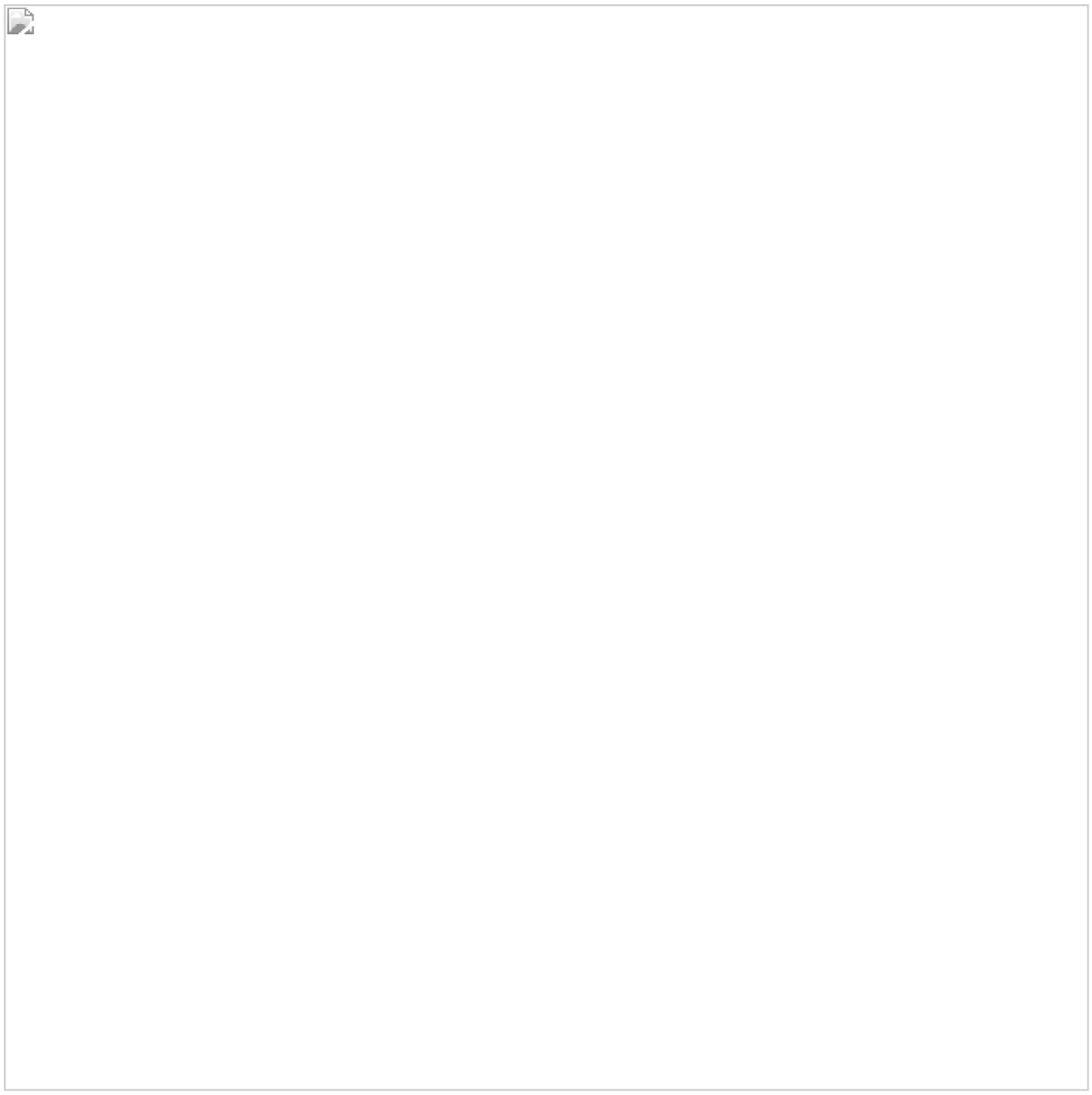
The Doctor had written it in his cell in the Bastille, in his darkest years. It told how two Evrémonde brothers had been very cruel to a poor family, and how he had been locked away so that he would keep quiet. Now it was used against his own daughter's husband.

The court said that Charles must die within a day. Lucie held out her arms to him, and they had one last goodbye before he was led away.

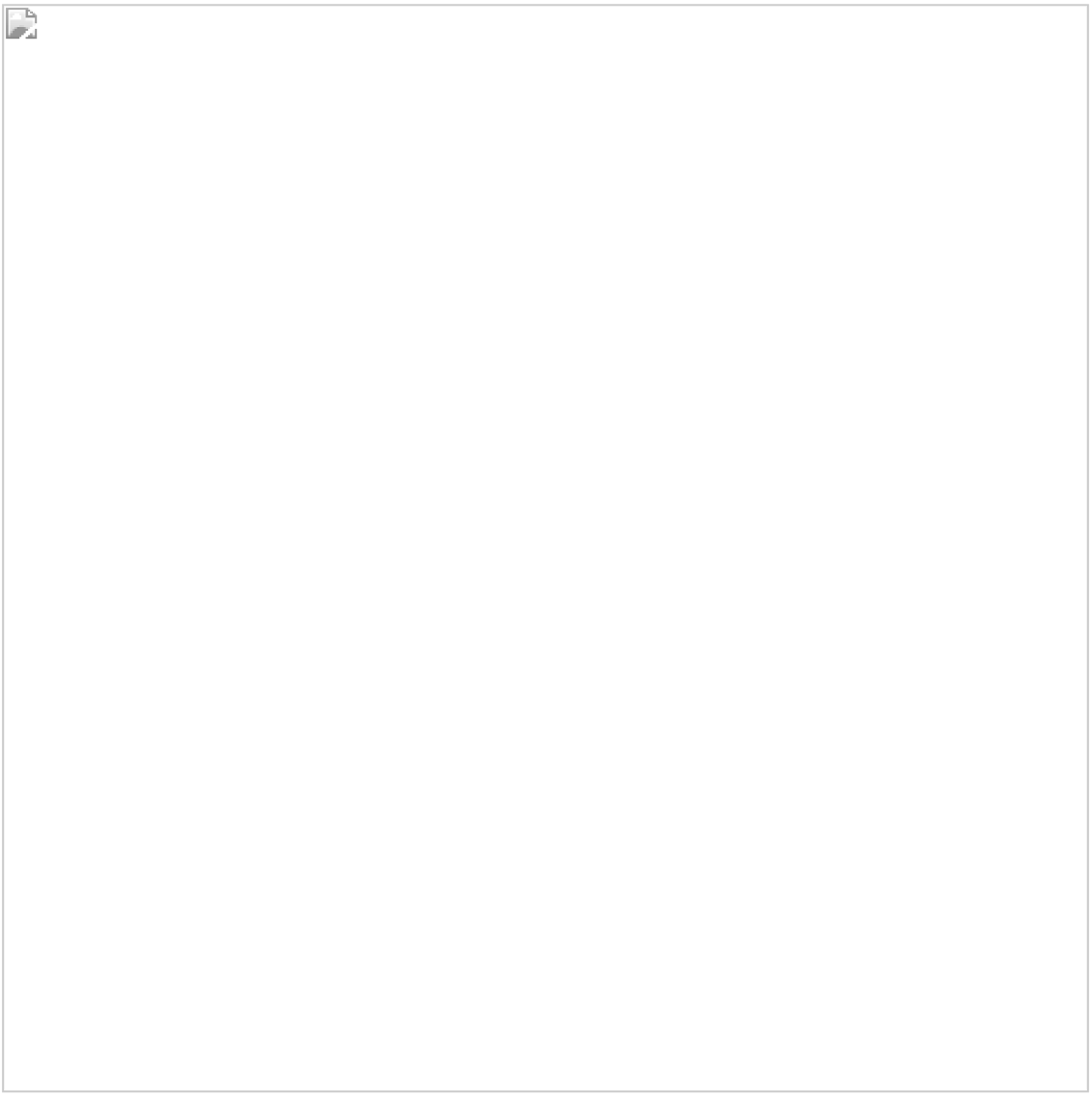
TALK ABOUT IT

The Doctor wrote the paper in his darkest time. How do you think he felt hearing it read out loud?

The Old Letter · another picture



What Sydney Heard



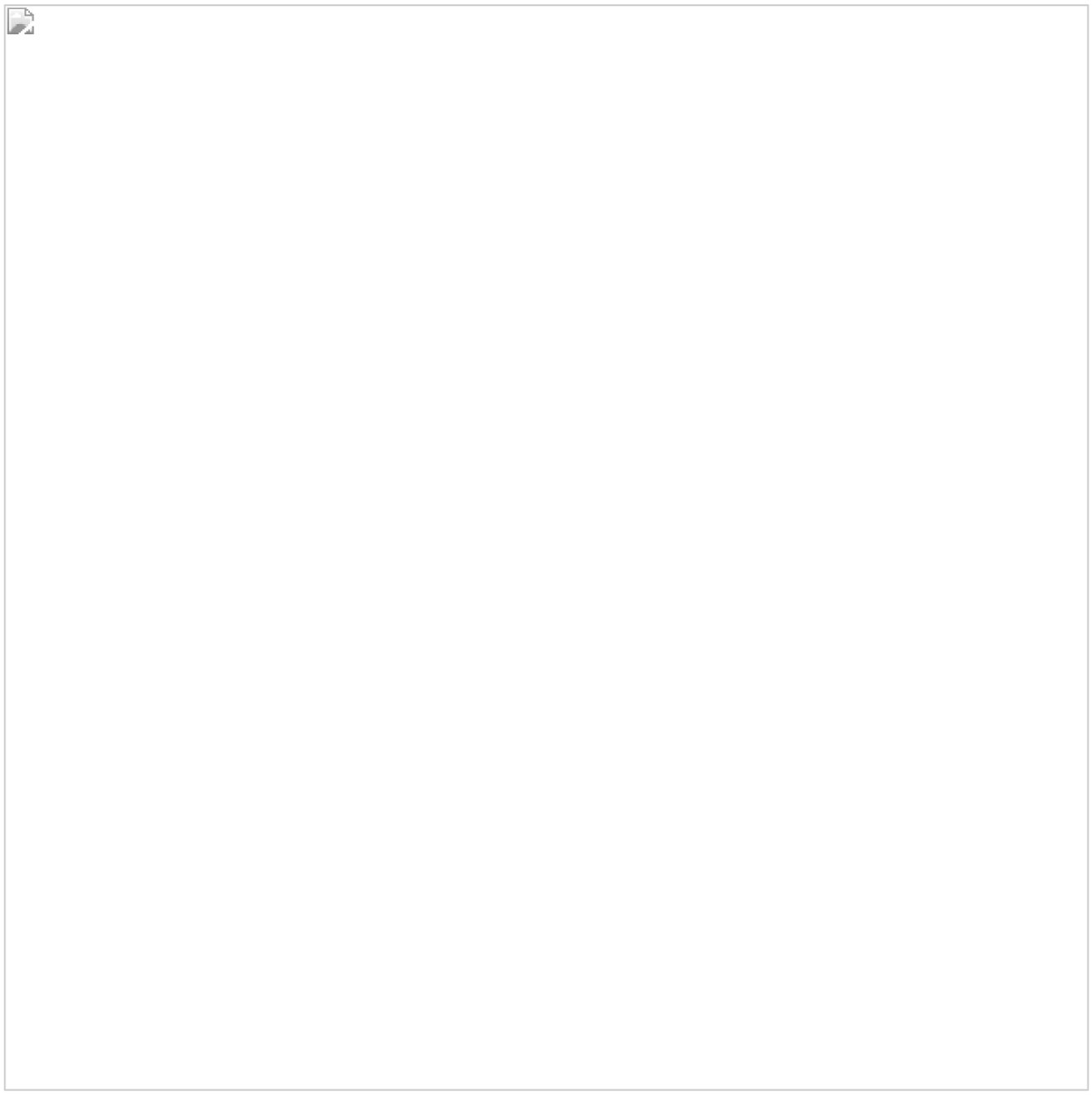
That evening, Sydney sat in the Defarges' wine shop, listening quietly. He heard Madame Defarge talking. Her own family had been hurt by the Evrémonde brothers, and she wanted more than Charles. She wanted Lucie and her little daughter too.

Sydney now understood how great the danger was. He went to Mr. Lorry and told him to have a coach ready to leave Paris with the Manettes the next afternoon.

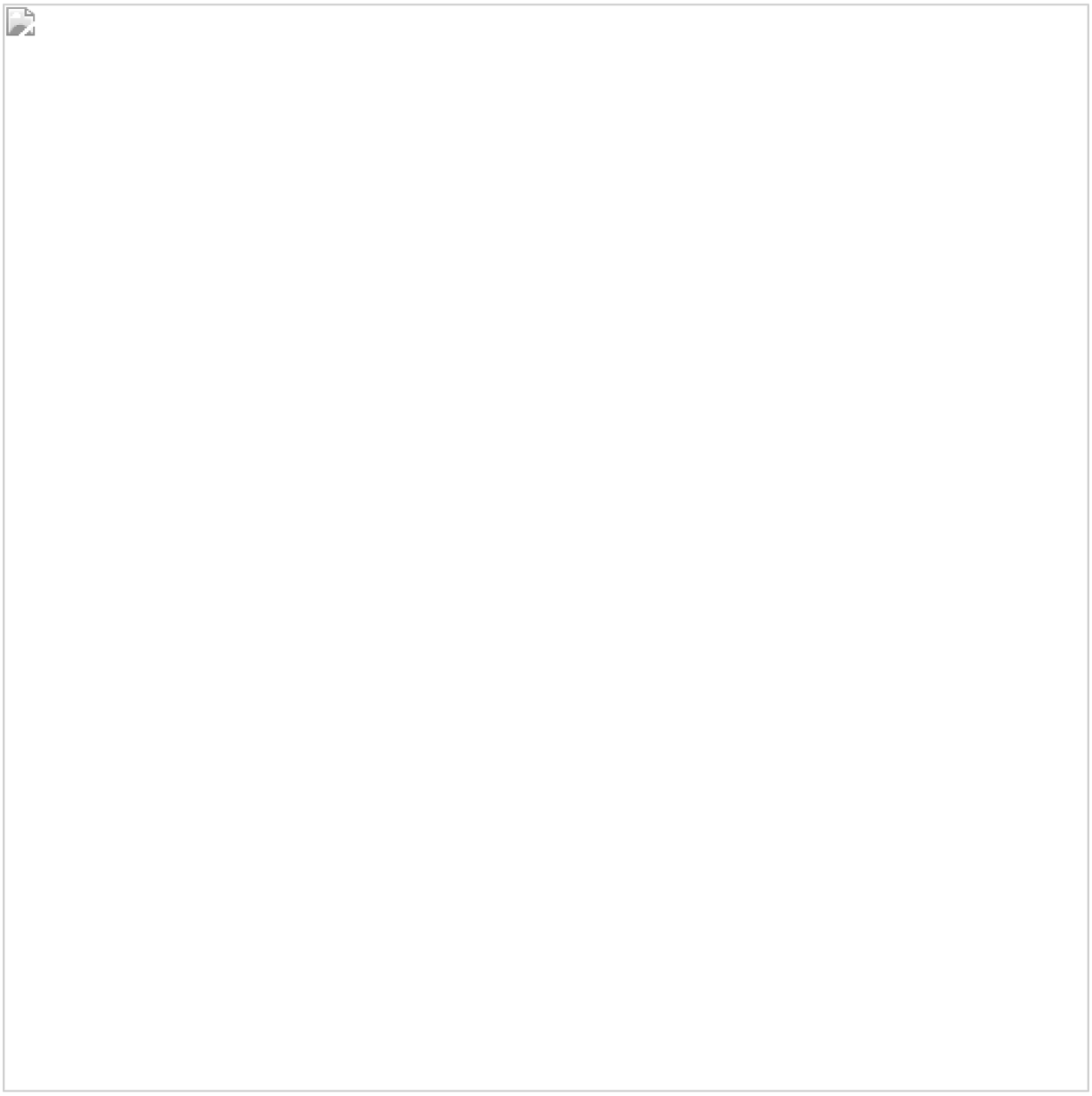
Before he went away, he stood outside Lucie's window and breathed a blessing towards it, and a goodbye.

TALK ABOUT IT

Sydney stood outside Lucie's window to say goodbye. What do you think he wanted for her?



The Switch



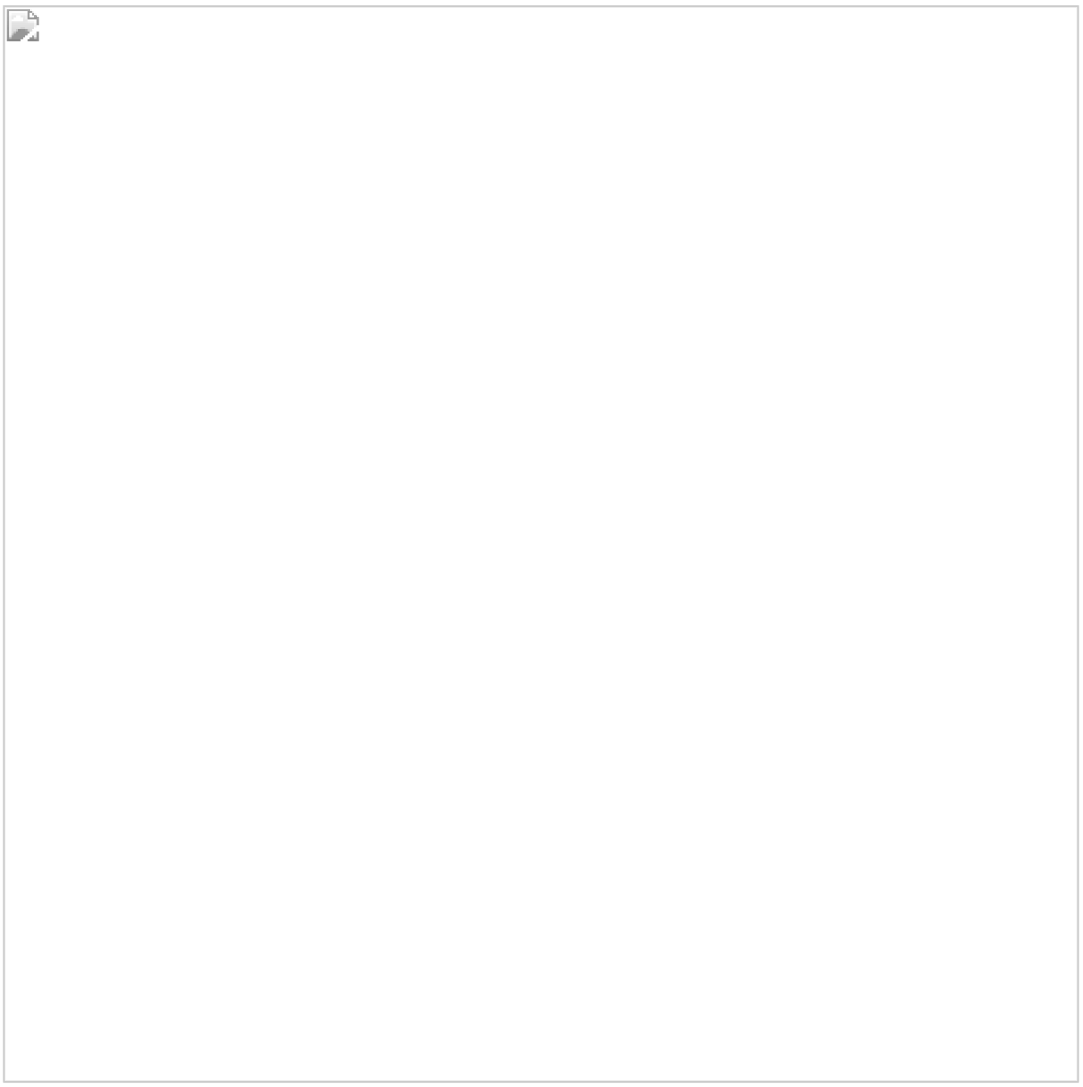
Sydney went to the prison. In Charles's cell, he told Charles to change clothes with him. Charles said no, but Sydney would not hear it. He made sure that Charles fell fast asleep.

Then a helper carried Charles out, as if he were the sleeping man, and put him in a coach. Sydney stayed behind in his place.

Sydney Carton, who had once said no one cared for him, had decided to give his own life, so that Charles could go home to Lucie and their little girl.

TALK ABOUT IT

Sydney chose to take Charles's place. What do you think made him so sure?



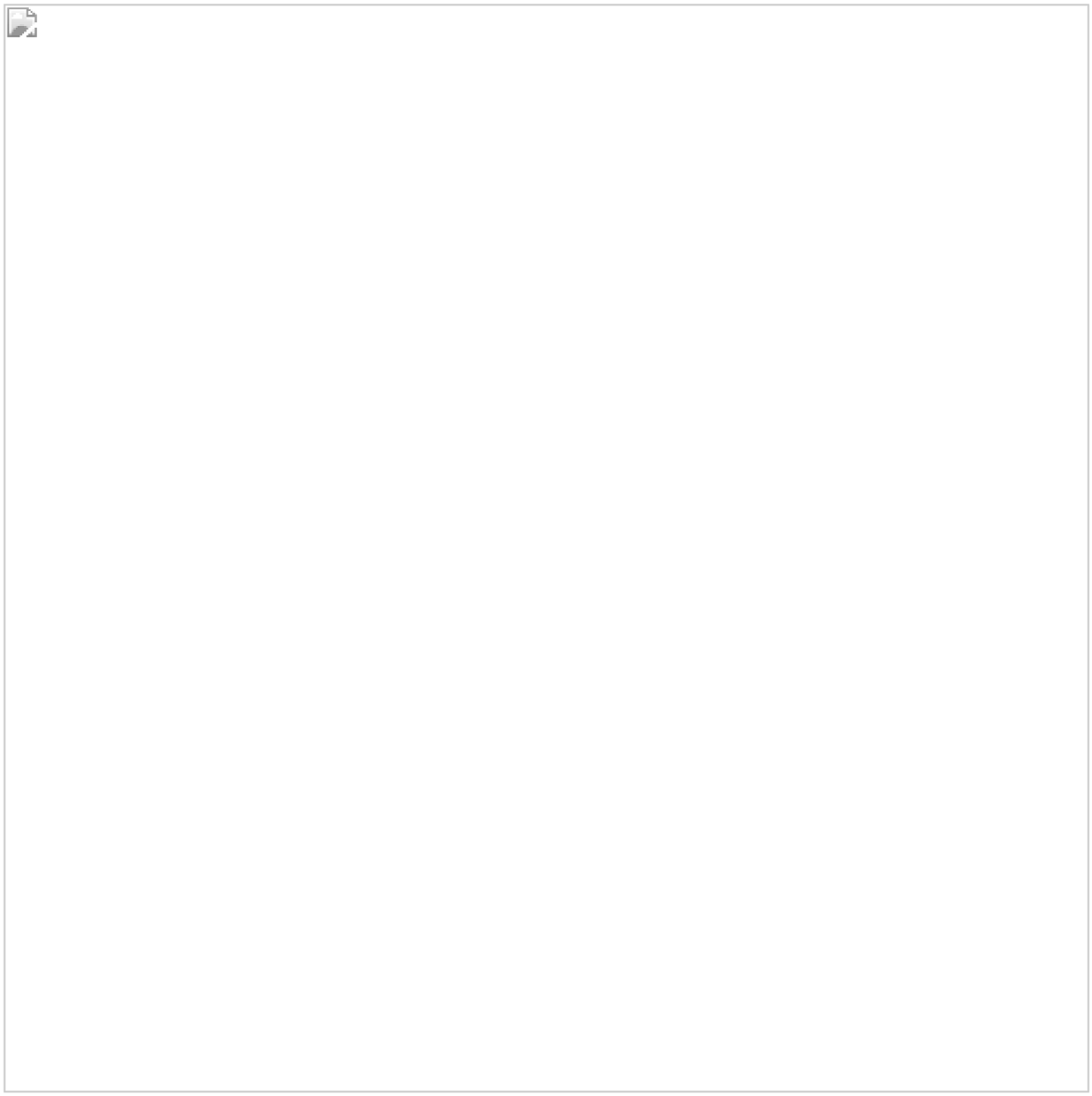
Think about it

1. What did Sydney do for Charles in the cell?

- ○ Took his place
- ○ Said goodbye and left
- ○ Ran away

2. Why might Sydney not have told anyone his plan ahead of time?

The Coach and the Gate



The Manettes, with Mr. Lorry and Charles, still asleep, rode away in the coach. At the city gate, the guards looked at the papers and let them pass. “And the first danger passed!” said Mr. Lorry, his hands together and his eyes lifted up.

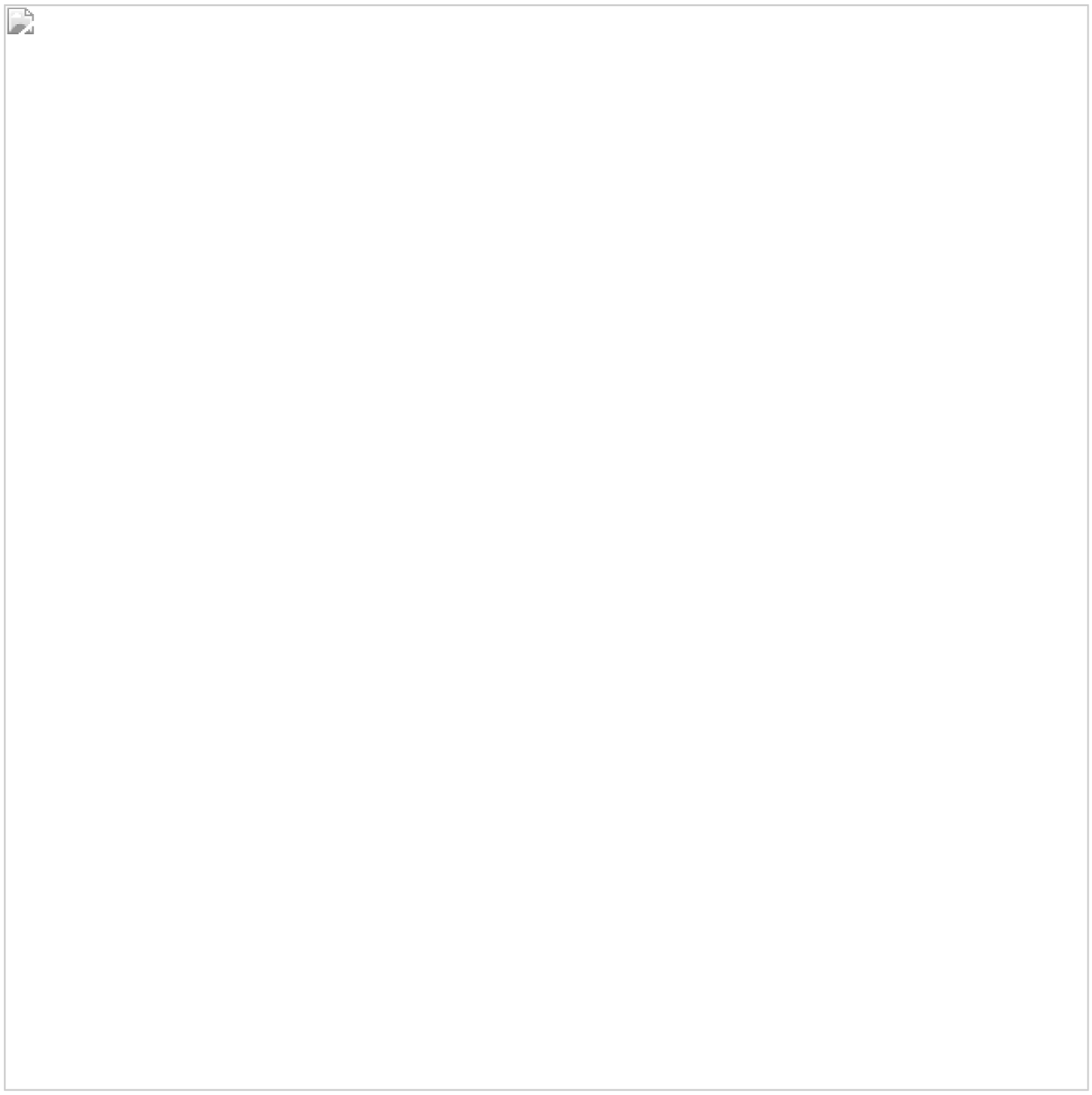
Brave Miss Pross had stayed behind. When Madame Defarge came to the house looking for Lucie, Miss Pross stood in her way. The two women struggled. A pistol went off, and Madame Defarge was dead. The noise left Miss Pross deaf for the rest of her life.

Lucie and her family were safe, and on their way to England.

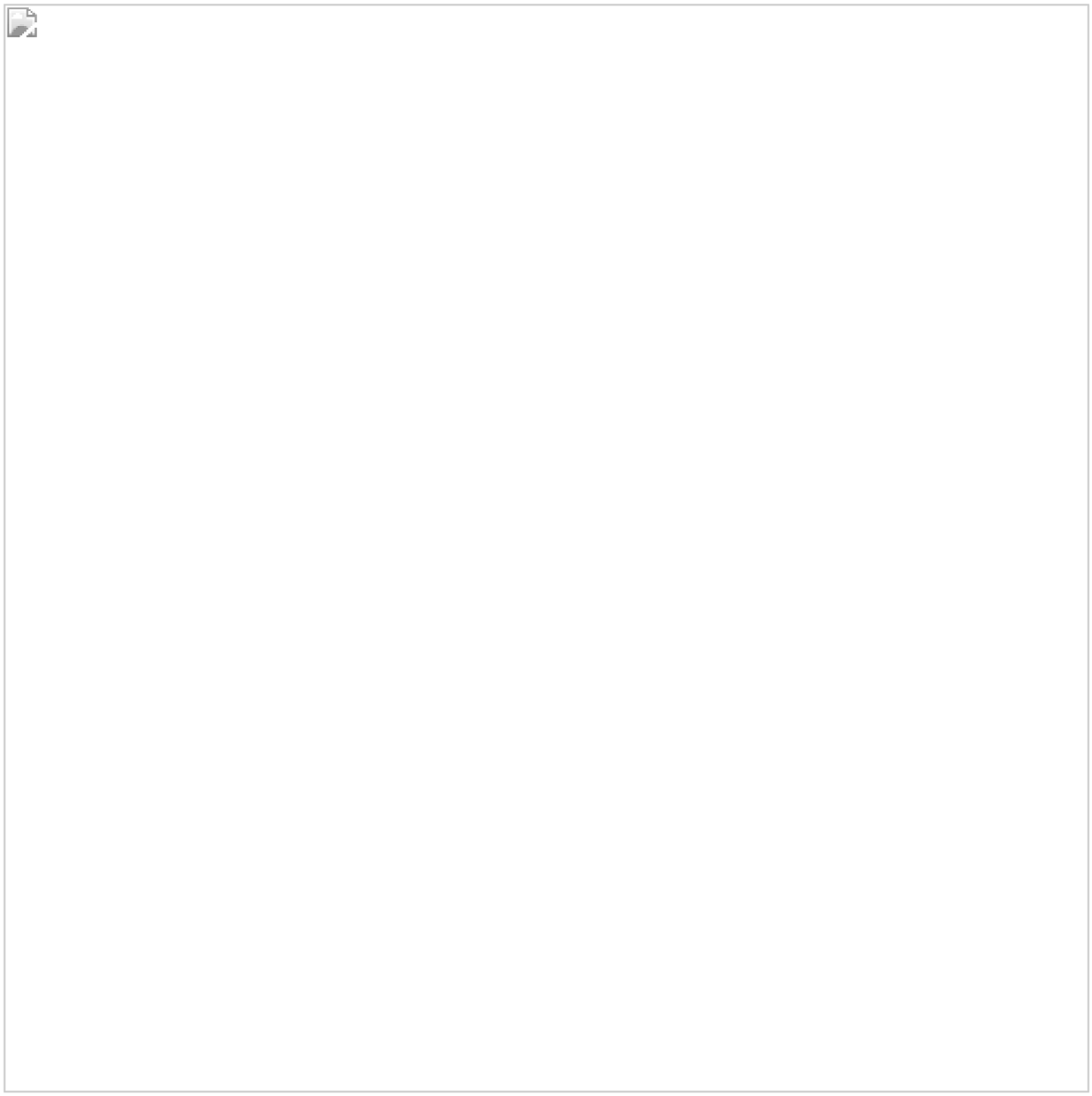
TALK ABOUT IT

Miss Pross stayed behind to keep Lucie safe. How do you think she felt, doing that?

The Coach and the Gate · another picture



A Far, Far Better Thing



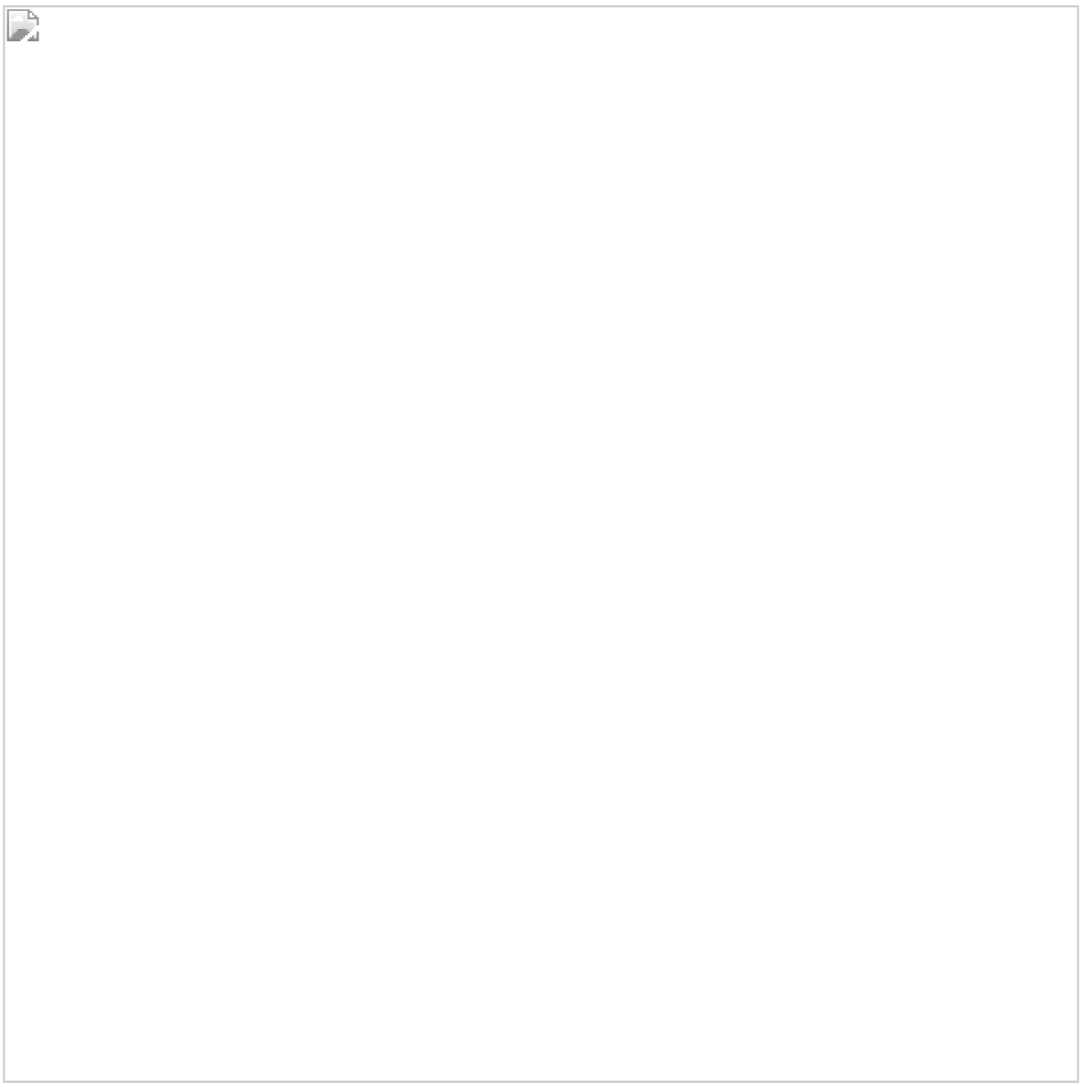
In prison, a frightened young woman held Sydney's hand. He told her to look only at him, and she was not afraid. “I think you were sent to me by Heaven,” she said.

At the last, Sydney thought of the people he loved. He pictured Lucie with a child who bore his name, and a family safe and happy in England.

If Sydney had spoken his thoughts at the end, Dickens says, they would have been these: “It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known.”

TALK ABOUT IT

Sydney gave up his life so that others could live. What do you think about what he did?



Think about it

1. Why did Sydney Carton take Charles's place?

- ○ To save Charles, and so Lucie and her family could be happy
- ○ Because he was afraid
- ○ Because he wanted to be famous

2. Who is someone you would do something big and hard for?

“There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

— Yeshua HaMashiach

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