A Tale of Two Cities

By JOELLEN K. BLAND

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A TALE OF TWO CITIES
By JOELLEN K. BLAND
Adapted from the novel by Charles Dickens

CAST OF CHARACTERS

NARRATORS ONE, TWO, THREE, and FOUR

CHARLES DARNAY** .................a French aristocrat, handsome, sensitive
SYDNEY CARTON** .................an English lawyer’s clerk, drunken, dissolute

**These two roles are played by the same actor.

THE ENGLISH

JARVIS LORRY............................banker, a man of business
LUCIE MANETTE .....................a beautiful young lady
MISS PROSS............................her devoted companion
JOHN BARSAD .......................a spy for hire
JERRY CRUNCHER...................a loyal porter
C. J. STRYVER.........................a lawyer

THE FRENCH

ALEXANDRE MANETTE ............a physician and former Bastille prisoner
MADAME DEFARGE ..............a wineshop-keeper, sly, cruel
ERNEST DEFARGE .................her husband
VENGEANCE............................Madame Defarge’s loyal companion
JACQUES...............................friend of Defarge
THE MARQUIS.......................an aristocrat, haughty, heartless

The following roles are small, ‘bit’ characters, and may be played by an Ensemble of Players or by the four narrators. The roles may be doubled as needed.

WOMAN IN COURT
COUNSEL FOR THE CROWN
COURT GUARD
MADAME GASPARD
GABELLE
BASTILLE JAILER
1ST ARISTOCRAT
2ND ARISTOCRAT
GUARD OFFICER
1ST RED CAP
2ND RED CAP
CHEMIST
JUDGE
YOUNG MANETTE
YOUNG MARQUIS
YOUNG WOMAN
WOUNDED PEASANT
LADY
MAN IN BLACK

Groups of EXTRAS will be needed for the CROWD, PATRIOTS and the FOUR CITIZENS.

TIME: Late 18th Century.

SETTING: The stage is divided into playing areas: LEFT, CENTER, and RIGHT, with three raised platforms UPSTAGE LEFT, UPSTAGE CENTER, and UPSTAGE RIGHT, each large enough to accommodate two performers. There is a bench at LEFT, a table and three chairs at CENTER, and a bench and straight chair at RIGHT. The benches should be long enough to seat three people. There also is a small bench RIGHT with cobbler's tools on it. This furniture is used in all scenes. A neutral backdrop completes the setting. There are EXITS/ENTRANCES at LEFT, RIGHT and CENTER.

The action of the play should move smoothly from one area to the next, with actors moving into places and exiting in time to avoid any delay between scenes. Actors will bring on and take away hand props as needed.

NARRATORS ONE and TWO sit or stand on UPSTAGE RIGHT platform; NARRATORS THREE and FOUR sit or stand on UPSTAGE LEFT platform.

Costumes are of the late eighteenth century period. Players in multiple roles may wear one basic costume and change accessories to suit their various characters. DARNAY’S and CARTON’S costumes should be easily changeable as the same actor must portray both roles.
ACT ONE

NARRATOR ONE: It is the best of times!

NARRATOR THREE: It is the worst of times!

NARRATOR TWO: The age of wisdom.

NARRATOR FOUR: The age of foolishness.

NARRATOR ONE: The season of light.

NARRATOR THREE: The season of darkness.

NARRATOR TWO: The Spring of Hope.

NARRATOR FOUR: The Winter of Despair.

NARRATORS ONE & TWO: We have everything before us!

NARRATORS THREE & FOUR: We have nothing before us!

NARRATOR ONE: Disturbing messages come to the English Crown from a congress of British subjects in America.

NARRATOR THREE: While France rolls smoothly downhill, making paper money and spending it.

NARRATOR ONE: In London streets—daring daylight burglaries!

NARRATOR TWO: In London jails—prisoners battle turnkeys.

NARRATOR THREE: In Paris—musketeers fire on mobs!

NARRATOR FOUR: The hangman hangs—and the prisons are full.

NARRATOR THREE: The woodman and farmer work unheeded.

NARRATOR FOUR: And the kings and queens of England and France carry their divine rights with a high hand.

ALL NARRATORS: It is the year of our Lord seventeen hundred and seventy-five.

CRUNCHER: (ENTERS LEFT with letter.) Mr. Lorry! Mr. Lorry!

LORRY: (ENTERS LEFT.) Is that you, Jerry?

CRUNCHER: Yes, sir. A letter for you from Tellson’s. Urgent!

LORRY: (Reads hastily.) ‘Wait at Dover for Mam’selle.’

CRUNCHER: Any answer, sir?
LORRY: Yes. Tell them, Jerry, ‘Recalled to Life!’
CRUNCHER: That’s a blazin’ strange answer, sir!
LORRY: It’s all that is required, Jerry.
CRUNCHER: Yes, sir. Goodnight, sir. (He touches his cap, EXITS LEFT.)
LORRY: I go to dig a man out of his grave. A man buried alive for eighteen years! But first, the young lady. I’m to meet her at the Royal George Hotel. (He moves to CENTER, sits at table.)

LUCIE: (ENTERS CENTER.) Mr. Lorry?
LORRY: (Rises.) Yes. Miss Manette? (LUCIE nods.) At your service. Will you be seated?
LUCIE: (Sits.) I received a letter from Tellson’s informing me of a discovery regarding my poor father, and that I must accompany you to Paris on urgent business.
LORRY: That is correct.
LUCIE: I was told to prepare myself for a surprise and perhaps... a shock.
LORRY: Yes. It is very difficult for me to begin. Yet, I am a man of business and not quite a stranger to you, Miss Manette.
LUCIE: I believe, sir, that when I was left an orphan, fifteen years ago in Paris, you brought me away to England.
LORRY: Yes, Miss Manette, and it is a pity that I have never seen you since, though you are a ward of Tellson’s Bank.
LUCIE: What have you to tell me now, sir?
LORRY: (Grasps her hand, gently.) My dear Miss Manette, suppose... suppose your father... had not died?
LUCIE: (Startled.) What?
LORRY: Suppose he had only disappeared, suddenly and silently?
LUCIE: Disappeared?
LORRY: Suppose some enemy had consigned him to the oblivion of a prison, and his poor wife had implored the king, the queen, the court, the clergy for news of him, but all in vain, and to all appearances he seemed dead...
LUCIE: (Breathlessly.) What are you saying?
LORRY: My dear... your father has been found. Alive!
LUCIE: Alive!
LORRY: He has been taken from the Bastille to the house of a former servant in Paris. We are to go there.

LUCIE: I... I will see... his ghost! (She sways.)

LORRY: My dear Miss Manette! (He catches her as she nearly faints.)

MISS PROSS: (ENTERS CENTER, quickly.) Ladybird! (Shrilly, to LORRY.) What have you done to my precious? My ladybird! Couldn’t you tell her what you had to say without frightening her to death?

LORRY: I most humbly beg your pardon, madam.

MISS PROSS: (Fans LUCIE.) Do you call this being a banker? Terrifying young ladies half out of their senses?

LUCIE: (Recover.) Dear Miss Pross, I am quite all right. I beg your pardon, Mr. Lorry. Miss Pross has been my dear nurse and companion since I was a child. She is very protective of me. We are ready to go with you, sir... to my... my father.

LORRY: Courage, my dear! And a word of caution. It would be dangerous to inquire if your father has been overlooked in prison or kept there by purpose. This is a secret errand.

MISS PROSS: (Sharply.) Are we to leave England and go all the way to that heathen Paris on such an errand, sir?

LORRY: Yes, to the wineshop of Monsieur Defarge in the St. Antoine quarter. (He, LUCIE and MISS PROSS EXIT CENTER.)

NARRATOR THREE: The quarter St. Antoine is a place of cold and filth and sickness.

NARRATOR FOUR: A place of ignorance, misery and hunger.

NARRATOR THREE: Hunger pushes out of the tall, bleak houses.

NARRATOR FOUR: Hunger stares down from the smokeless chimneys.

NARRATOR THREE: Hunger stares up from the stinking streets that lead to the wineshop of Ernest Defarge and his wife. (ERNEST DEFARGE and MADAME DEFARGE ENTER CENTER and sit at the table. MANETTE ENTERS LEFT and sits at bench, working with cobbler’s tools in the background. MADAME DEFARGE is knitting. LORRY, LUCIE and MISS PROSS ENTER RIGHT.)

LORRY: Monsieur Defarge? (ERNEST DEFARGE nods.) We have come to see Dr. Manette.

ERNEST DEFARGE: (After a hard look at them.) This way. (He moves LEFT.)
LUCIE: I am afraid!

LORRY: Courage, my dear. Think of the goodness of our business here. (They follow ERNEST DEFARGE to where DR. MANETTE, ragged and white-haired, huddles on the bench, LEFT, with cobbler’s tools, making a shoe.)

ERNEST DEFARGE: He is not used to visitors. Let me approach first. (Gently, to MANETTE.) Good day, sir.

MANETTE: (Looks up, vacantly.) Good day.

ERNEST DEFARGE: You are hard at work, I see.

MANETTE: (Faintly.) Yes... I am working.

ERNEST DEFARGE: You have a visitor. (He beckons LORRY to come closer.) Will you tell him your name?

MANETTE: (Looks up slowly at LORRY; submissively.) One hundred and five, North Tower.

ERNEST DEFARGE: Is that all?

MANETTE: (Painfully.) One hundred and five, North Tower! (He bends over his work.)

LORRY: (Sits beside MANETTE.) Sir, you are not a shoemaker by trade.

MANETTE: (Looks up, stares at LORRY.) No. I taught myself.

LORRY: You are a physician. Your name is Alexandre Manette. (MANETTE starts.) Do you not remember me? Lorry, of Tellson’s Bank. (MANETTE stares, almost frightened.) Do you not remember Ernest Defarge, your servant? (MANETTE looks slowly from LORRY to DEFARGE, seems to recall something for a moment, then, confused, bends over his work again. LUCIE, arms outstretched, moves closer to him.)

MANETTE: (Notices her.) Who is this? (LUCIE kisses her hands and offers them to him.) Are you... the jailer’s daughter?

LUCIE: (Through tears.) No... look at me. (LORRY rises; LUCIE takes his place beside her father.) Look at me. (MANETTE stares, notices her hair, touches it timidly, thinks a moment, then takes a dirty string tied to a folded rag scrap from around his neck and opens it. He takes out several strands of hair, looks at LUCIE’S hair, then at the strands in his hand.)

MANETTE: They are the same... how can this be? (LUCIE takes his hand in hers.) My child had laid her head upon my shoulder the night when I was summoned out. When I was brought to prison, the jailers found these upon my sleeve. I begged them... "You will
leave them for me? They can never help me to escape in body, though they may in spirit.'

LUCIE: Can you hear in my voice something that was once sweet music to your ears? Can you touch my hair and recall a beloved head that once lay on your breast when you were young and free?

MANETTE: (Struggles to understand.) Speak on... speak on...

LUCIE: It was Lucie... your child... your Lucie. I am here!

MANETTE: Lucie...?

LUCIE: I have come to take you home with me to England. Your agony is over... my father! (Her head sinks upon his shoulder.)

MANETTE: (Unable to grasp all that she has said, he trembles. His arms slowly fold around her.) Lucie...

LORY: (Overcome, clears his throat.) Monsieur Defarge, do you think he is fit to travel?

ERNEST DEFARGE: More fit to travel than to remain in this city so dreadful to him. For all reasons, Monsieur Manette is best out of France.

LUCIE: Come, father. (She helps him rise.)

MANETTE: (Looks earnestly at her.) I... leave this place?

LUCIE: Yes, father. With me. Take my hand.

MANETTE: With you. (He takes her hand.) With you. (Uneasily.) My tools...

MRS. PROSS: (Dabs at her eyes.) I will bring them, sir. (LUCIE, LORY and MANETTE EXIT RIGHT. MISS PROSS, with a sharp, suspicious look at MADAME DEFARGE, follows. MADAME and ERNEST DEFARGE exchange looks, then EXIT CENTER.)

NARRATOR THREE: The buried man is dug out at last.

NARRATOR FOUR: Does he know that he is recalled to life?

NARRATOR ONE: He cannot say. Only his daughter can love him back to himself.

NARRATOR TWO: It could take years.

NARRATOR ONE: Years to the number of five, when the past is recalled in seventeen hundred and eighty...

NARRATOR TWO: At a trial for treason in the Court of Old Bailey, London.

CRUNCHER: (ENTERS RIGHT with WOMAN IN COURT.) What’s coming on next?
WOMAN: The treason case.

CRUNCHER: The quartering one?

WOMAN: Oh, yes! He'll be draw and half-hanged, then sliced before his own eyes! Then his head will be chopped off and the rest of him cut into quarters. That’s the sentence!

CRUNCHER: If he’s found guilty, you mean?

WOMAN: Oh, they’re always found guilty. There he is! Charles Darnay!

(She and CRUNCHER sit on the bench at RIGHT. CHARLES DARNAY ENTERS on CENTER platform.)

NARRATOR THREE: Charles Darnay, Frenchman, gentleman.

NARRATOR ONE: Charles Darnay, traitor!

NARRATOR TWO: Accused of transporting secret information to the French king and assisting him in his wars in Canada and North America against our serene, illustrious and most excellent Lord the King.

NARRATOR ONE: Observed passing regularly between France and England on secret business of which he can give no honest account.

NARRATOR TWO: Observed by an immaculate and unimpeachable patriot, John Barsad, who followed and watched the prisoner carry out his infamous schemes! (JOHN BARSAD ENTERS RIGHT.)

NARRATOR ONE: Then, struck with horror, reported direct to His Majesty’s Privy Council. Certain papers were seized and the prisoner arrested! (BARSAD sits in the chair at RIGHT. COUNSEL FOR THE CROWN and C. J. STRYVER ENTER CENTER. STRYVER sits.)

COUNSEL: Counsel for the Crown calls Mr. Jarvis Lorry! (LORRY ENTERS LEFT.) Mr. Lorry, have you ever seen the prisoner before?

LORRY: I have. Five years ago, when I was returning from France, he came on board the ship at Calais and made the voyage with me.

COUNSEL: At what hour did he come on board?

LORRY: At midnight.

COUNSEL: In the dead of night! Were you travelling alone?

LORRY: No, with two companions, Dr. Manette and his daughter.

COUNSEL: That is all, Mr. Lorry. Counsel calls Miss Lucie Manette! (LORRY sits at LEFT; LUCIE ENTERS LEFT.) Miss Manette, had you any conversation with the prisoner?
LUCIE: Yes, sir. When he came on board, he noticed that my father was in a weak state of health. He showed me how to make him more comfortable on the deck of the ship.

COUNSEL: Had he come on board alone?

LUCIE: No, sir. There were two French gentlemen with him.

COUNSEL: Were papers handed about among them?

LUCIE: Some papers were exchanged, but I don’t know what they were. I only know that Mr. Darnay was kind to me that night. I hope I may not repay him by doing him harm today.

COUNSEL: (Stern.) It is your duty to give evidence, Miss Manette! A duty you cannot evade! (LUCIE sits, LEFT.) Counsel for the defense, Mr. Stryver! (COUNSEL sits; STRYVER rises.)

STRYVER: I call Dr. Alexandre Manette! (MANETTE, now respectably dressed, ENTERS LEFT.) Dr. Manette, can you identify the prisoner as your fellow passenger on board the ship, or recall his conversation with your daughter?

MANETTE: (Looks steadily at DARNAY, seems puzzled, almost fearful.) Sir, I cannot.

STRYVER: Had it been your misfortune, sir, to undergo a long imprisonment without trial, without accusation, in your native France?

MANETTE: (With difficulty.) A long imprisonment.

STRYVER: Were you newly released on the occasion in question?

MANETTE: They tell me so. I have no remembrance of it. I recall nothing from the time of my captivity in the Bastille until the day a gracious God restored my faculties, and I found myself living in London with my dear daughter.

COUNSEL: (Impatient.) The patriot Barsad can identify the prisoner. Let Barsad be called! That is all, Dr. Manette. (MANETTE sits, LEFT.)

STRYVER: Yes! John Barsad! (BARSAD rises.) Mr. Barsad, have you ever been a spy?

BARSAD: (Startled.) What! Indeed, I have not, sir!

STRYVER: Have you ever been in prison?

BARSAD: Certainly not!

STRYVER: Not even a debtor's prison?
BARSAD: What does that have to do with...

STRYVER: Never in a debtor's prison, Mr. Barsad?

BARSAD: *(Struggles to control himself.)* Yes.

STRYVER: How many times?

BARSAD: *(Reluctant.)* Once... or twice...

STRYVER: Not six times?

BARSAD: *(Angry.)* Perhaps!

STRYVER: Positively! *(To the Court.)* Here is an immaculate and unimpeachable witness! Mr. Barsad, are you certain you saw the prisoner with these secret papers?

BARSAD: Quite certain! *(He points to DARNAY.)* That is the man! *(DARNAY is taken from CENTER platform by a GUARD. The two EXIT CENTER. OFFSTAGE, DARNAY quickly changes to CARTON.)*

STRYVER: You didn’t produce these secret papers yourself, for instance?

BARSAD: Of course not!

STRYVER: Do you expect to get anything, money perhaps, by giving this evidence?

BARSAD: No!

STRYVER: You are not in government pay and employment to lay traps?

BARSAD: I am not!

STRYVER: You are positive, without the slightest doubt, that Charles Darnay is the man who carried these papers between France and England?

BARSAD: I am positive that Charles Darnay is a traitor!

STRYVER: Even though you saw him only at night, wrapped up against stormy winds, rain and fog?

BARSAD: I am certain! It was Darnay!

STRYVER: I must ask you to look upon my clerk, Mr. Sydney Carton. *(CARTON ENTERS CENTER with papers which he puts on table before STRYVER.)* It was pointed out to me before this trial began that Sydney Carton bears a most remarkable resemblance to Charles Darnay. Look hard upon him, Mr. Barsad. What say you? Are not Sydney Carton and Charles Darnay very like each other? *(BARSAD stares at CARTON.)* Could Sydney Carton be mistaken for Charles Darnay at night, in fog and rain? Could not Mr. Lorry and
Miss Manette have seen Sydney Carton that night on the ship? (He pauses, enjoying BARSAD’S confusion.) Are we now to try Sydney Carton for treason? No! I say that John Barsad is a hired spy! A traitor himself! A trafficker in blood! A giver of false evidence! It is clear that no positive identification has been made. I say, therefore, that Charles Darnay is innocent of treason! (BARSAD EXITS RIGHT, angry. CARTON, STRYVER and COUNSEL EXIT CENTER. CRUNCHER and WOMAN EXIT RIGHT. LORY, LUCIE and MANETTE EXIT LEFT.)

NARRATOR ONE: The jury considers the case.

NARRATOR TWO: The jury returns. They are not agreed.

NARRATOR THREE: This is most unusual!

NARRATOR FOUR: Highly irregular!

NARRATOR ONE: They retire again, under watch and ward, and then...

LORY: (ENTERS LEFT.) Jerry! Jerry Cruncher!

CRUNCHER: (ENTERS LEFT.) Here, sir!

LORY: Quick! Hurry back to Tellson’s! Tell them Darnay is acquitted!

CRUNCHER: Acquitted, sir! Yes, sir! (He starts to EXIT LEFT, then stops.) Recalled to life! (He EXITS.)

DARNAY: (ENTERS CENTER with LUCIE, MANETTE and STRYVER.) My friends! Dear Miss Manette! (He kisses LUCIE’S hand.)

LUCIE: You are saved, Mr. Darnay! Heaven be thanked!

STRYVER: (Pompous.) Heaven and Stryver be thanked! I am glad I brought you off with honor, Mr. Darnay.

DARNAY: I shall never be able to repay you, Mr. Stryver. You are indeed fortunate in your clerk, Mr. Carton. Will you convey my thanks to him?

STRYVER: Thank him yourself, sir. He has a night’s work yet to do for me. This way! (He EXITS CENTER with DARNAY, who quickly changes to CARTON.)

LUCIE: Father, you must be very tired. Shall we go home now?

MANETTE: (Stares after DARNAY, anxious; then, suddenly turns to LUCIE as if awakened from a bad dream.) What, my dear? Home? Yes, yes. Home. Of course. (They EXIT LEFT.)

LORY: (Looks after them.) What is that strange look I saw in the good doctor’s face? Distrust? Fear? Of what? Of whom? It was painful for him to speak again of his imprisonment, though it has been five years...
CARTRON: (ENTERS CENTER, dishevelled and slightly drunk.) Mr. Lorry! The man of business tarries late this evening.

LORRY: Are you not a man of business in your own way, Mr. Carton?

CARTRON: (Careless.) Bless you, sir, I have no business. I am merely a disappointed drudge. I care for no man and no man cares for me.

LORRY: What? Have you not saved Darnay?

CARTRON: Have I? I merely thought he was rather a handsome fellow, and that I should have been much the same sort of fellow if I had had any luck. I don’t even know why I did it. I don’t particularly like Darnay.

LORRY: Why not, sir?

CARTRON: Why should I like a man who resembles me? There is nothing in me to like. He shows me what I might have been. (He turns away.) Could I have changed places with him and had Miss Manette’s beautiful eyes looking at me as she looked at him? Would she have pitied me and wept for me if I had been on trial for my life? (To LORRY.) In plain words, sir, I hate the fellow!

LORRY: I think you have been drinking, Mr. Carton.

CARTRON: Yes, and shall drink more before the night is out.

LORRY: It is a pity, sir. Goodnight. (He EXITS LEFT.)

CARTRON: Goodnight. (He crosses to the table, brings a flask from his pocket, drinks.)

STRYVER: (ENTERS CENTER.) Well, Sydney, you were very sound today! (He sits.)

CARTRON: (Sullen.) I am always sound, am I not?

STRYVER: True! The old Sydney Carton of old Shrewsbury School! The old see-saw Sydney, up one minute and down the next. Now in spirits, now in despondency.

CARTRON: Yes, the same Sydney with the same luck. All bad.

STRYVER: You summon no energy or purpose. Look at me! How have I done what I’ve done? How do I do what I do?

CARTRON: Partly through paying me to help you, I suppose. But you were always in the front rank, and I was always behind.

STRYVER: I had to get into the front rank! I wasn’t born there, you know!

CARTRON: I believe you were! (They laugh.) Before school and at school
and ever since school, you have fallen into your rank and I into mine. You are a lion, I am your jackal. Even when we were students together in Paris, you were always somewhere and I was always nowhere. But it’s a gloomy thing to talk about the past. Turn me in some new direction.

STRYVER: Well, then, pledge me to the pretty witness!

CARTON: Pretty witness?

STRYVER: The doctor’s picturesque daughter, Miss Manette!

CARTON: (Shrugs.) If you wish, Miss Manette! (He drinks.)

STRYVER: And now, Sydney, to work! (He and CARTON EXIT CENTER.)

NARRATOR THREE: Dr. Manette and his daughter lodge in a quiet street in a corner of Soho.

NARRATOR FOUR: Four months after the trial for treason, Mr. Lorry comes, a welcome visitor. It is a pleasant home, comfortable and charming, where the doctor once more receives patients.

NARRATOR THREE: A delightful place, furnished with taste, except for a crude shoemaker’s bench and tray of tools in a corner.

LORRY: (ENTERS RIGHT with MISS PROSS. Motioning to the cobbler’s tools.) I wonder why he keeps that old reminder of his sufferings?

MISS PROSS: Why wonder at that, sir?

LORRY: My dear Miss Pross, now that we have become good friends, allow me to ask you if the doctor, in talking with Lucie, ever refers to the shoemaking time?

MISS PROSS: Never.

LORRY: Yet he keeps that bench and those tools in plain view!

MISS PROSS: He thinks of that time, Mr. Lorry. Often.

LORRY: Do you suppose that he has a theory, preserved through the years, as to who his oppressor was?

MISS PROSS: I believe he has.

LORRY: Then is it not remarkable, though he is innocent of any crime, that he never touches upon that subject?

MISS PROSS: To the best of my understanding, sir, he is afraid of the subject.

LORRY: Afraid? Even now, when he is safe and secure?
MISS PROSS: It is a dreadful remembrance for him, sir. His loss of himself came out of it. Not knowing how he lost himself, or how he recovered himself, he may never feel certain of not losing himself again.

LORRY: Yet, a doubt lurks in my mind whether it is good for him to have that suppression shut up within him.

MISS PROSS: It can’t be helped! Touch that string, and he instantly changes for the worse. Sometimes he gets up in the dead of night and walks up and down in his room. My Ladybird knows then that in his mind he is walking up and down in his old prison. She hurries to him and walks with him until her love and company bring him back to himself.

LORRY: I have seen him slip back... as on that evening when Mr. Darnay was here and we were talking of the old buildings in London, and Darnay spoke of his time in the Tower. (DARNAY, LUCIE and MANETTE ENTER CENTER and sit at the table.)

DARNAY: When I was a prisoner in the Tower, the jailers told me a curious story. In making some alterations, some workmen came upon an old dungeon which had been built over and forgotten. When they dug up the floor, they found the ashes of a paper, obviously written by some poor prisoner and hidden away from the jailers.

MANETTE: (Starts up, anxious, frightened.) What’s that you say?

LUCIE: Father! Are you ill?

MANETTE: (Starts up, anxious, frightened.) What do you say... about a paper? (Abruptly, he composes himself.) I beg your pardon. No, my dear Lucie, I am not ill. Not at all.

LORRY: (To MISS PROSS, at RIGHT.) I distinctly recall that look of fear on the doctor’s face. I had seen it before, directed at Darnay.

MISS PROSS: Yes, I remember that night, the night of the storm.

LORRY: It was very hot. We sat by the open window, watching the storm approach.

DARNAY: The rain drops are heavy and large. The storm comes slowly.

LUCIE: Footsteps echo here in this corner by our house. So many people hurrying to shelter... echoes of footsteps, coming and going. I have sometimes sat here alone of an evening, listening, until I fancied the echoes to be the echoes of all the footsteps that will come into our lives.

LORRY: (To MISS PROSS, at RIGHT.) A memorable storm of thunder and lightning that night, Miss Pross! Shall we ever see such a night again?
MISS PROSS: I pray not, sir! If my Ladybird heard the footsteps of some great crowd bearing down upon us, God help us! (She and LORRY EXIT RIGHT; LUCIE, MANETTE and DARNAY EXIT CENTER.)

NARRATOR THREE: God help us, indeed! And who helps those who flee before a carriage in Paris, bearing down upon the people in the narrow streets?

NARRATOR FOUR: The driver seems to be charging an enemy! The common wretches barely escape!

NARRATOR THREE: Women scream! Men clutch each other out of its way!

NARRATOR FOUR: The driver seems to be charging an enemy! The common wretches barely escape! (ERNEST DEFARGE and MADAME GASPARD, sobbing wildly over a ragged bundle in her arms, ENTER LEFT. The MARQUIS ENTERS LEFT, impatient.)

MARQUIS: What has happened here? What causes this delay?

ERNEST DEFARGE: (Submissive, with a bow.) Pardon, Monsieur the Marquis, it is a child.

MARQUIS: Then why does this woman make such abominable noise?

DEFARGE: Monsieur the Marquis... it is... her child! Madame Gaspard!

MADAME GASPARD: Killed! Killed! My child is dead!

MARQUIS: (Looks at MADAME GASPARD as if she were a rat just come out of a hole, then takes out his purse.) It is extraordinary to me that you people cannot take care of yourselves and your children. You are forever in the way! How do I know what injury you have done my horses? Here! (He tosses a coin at MADAME GASPARD’S feet.)

MADAME GASPARD: (Ignores the coin.) My child is dead!

ERNEST DEFARGE: (Gentle.) Madame...

MADAME GASPARD: (Sobs.) My child! My poor child!

ERNEST DEFARGE: Be brave, Madame. It is better for the poor little one to die so. It has died in a moment, without pain. Could it have lived an hour as happily?

MARQUIS: (Calls OFF LEFT.) The horses! Are they all right?

MADAME GASPARD: (Picks up the coin and throws it at the MARQUIS.) Murderer! Devil!

MARQUIS: (Furious, picks up the coin.) Dogs! I would ride over any of you, willingly, and grind you into the earth! (He EXITS LEFT.)
ERNEST DEFARGE: Come, Madame. *(He leads MADAME GASPARD OFF RIGHT.)*

NARRATOR THREE: Monsieur the Marquis rides on to his chateau...

NARRATOR FOUR: A massive building with faces of men carved in its heavy stone walls, as if the Gorgon’s head cursed it two centuries ago.

NARRATOR THREE: In the Marquis’ apartments a visitor waits. *(DARNAY ENTERS CENTER.)*

MARQUIS: *(ENTERS LEFT.)* Well, nephew! You have been a long time in England. I... have missed you.

DARNAY: *(Distrustful.)* Have you, sir? I believe that if you were not in disgrace at court, you would have sent me to prison long ago and never missed me at all.

MARQUIS: *(Sly.)* For the honor of the family, I could do that if I wished. But France has changed for the worse. Our ancestors held the right of life and death over the surrounding swine. From this very room many were taken out and hanged. But now we have lost many privileges. A new philosophy has become the mode. The assertion of our station these days can cause us extreme inconvenience.

DARNAY: We have so asserted our station, sir, that I believe our name to be the most detested one in France.

MARQUIS: Let us hope so! Detestation of the high is the involuntary homage of the low. Repression is the only lasting philosophy! Repression will keep these swine obedient to our whip!

DARNAY: Sir, we have done wrong, and we are reaping the fruits of that wrong!

MARQUIS: We have done wrong? *(He points delicately to himself, then to DARNAY.)*

DARNAY: Our family! You! My father, who left me bound to a system that is frightful to me! I, too, am responsible for it, but powerless in it. I seek to carry out my dear mother’s last request, to have mercy on the people and redress the wrongs we have done them, in vain!

MARQUIS: *(Cold.)* If you seek assistance from me in that endeavor, you will forever seek in vain! *(He points his finger sharply into DARNAY’S chest, like a sword point.)* I will die perpetuating the system under which I have lived. Be a rational creature and accept your natural destiny!
DARNAY: I cannot! This property and France are lost to me. There is a curse upon them! I renounce them!

MARQUIS: And how do you intend to live?

DARNAY: I will work!

MARQUIS: In England?

DARNAY: Yes. I do not bear the family name there.

MARQUIS: (With a quiet smile.) You know a compatriot who has found a refuge in England, a doctor?

DARNAY: (Surprised.) Yes.

MARQUIS: With a daughter?

DARNAY: Yes, but how do you know them?

MARQUIS: How indeed, nephew? (With a bitter laugh.) The new philosophy commences!

DARNAY: (Troubled.) What do you mean?

MARQUIS: Goodnight, nephew! (He starts to EXIT RIGHT.)

DARNAY: (Seizes the MARQUIS’ arm.) Uncle! What are you saying?

MARQUIS: (Pulls free.) I am saying goodnight! (Calls OFFSTAGE RIGHT.) Gabelle!

GABELLE: (An old servant, ENTERS RIGHT.) You called, monsieur?

MARQUIS: Yes, Gabelle! Light monsieur, my nephew, to his bedchamber! Good repose, nephew!

GABELLE: (To DARNAY.) If you will follow me, monsieur? (DARNAY EXITS RIGHT with GABELLE, looking back anxiously at the MARQUIS.)

MARQUIS: Yes, Gabelle, light your master to his bed! And if I so command you, burn him in his bed! (He paces, angry.)

NARRATOR THREE: Monsieur the Marquis prepares for sleep, but scraps of the day’s journey come to his mind, unbidden.

NARRATOR FOUR: The street... the lifeless bundle in the weeping woman’s arms.

MADAME GASPARD’S VOICE: (From OFFSTAGE RIGHT, wailing.) My child! My child is dead! (The MARQUIS EXITS CENTER, still angry.)

NARRATOR THREE: The stone faces carved on the grim stone walls stare blindly into the night.
NARRATOR FOUR: And blindly on to the new day when one more stone face is discovered.

NARRATOR THREE: The silent stone face of Monsieur the Marquis, and driven deep in his heart of stone... a knife!

MADAME GASPARD: *(Runs IN RIGHT with bloody knife in her hand.)* My child is avenged! *(She runs OUT LEFT.)*

NARRATOR ONE: A year passes.

NARRATOR TWO: In England, Charles Darnay is a teacher of French, well-known and prosperous, and deeply in love with Lucie Manette.

DARNAY: *(ENTERS CENTER with MANETTE.)* Sir, I love your daughter dearly and devotedly. If ever there was love in this world, I love her! Sir, you have loved. Let your old love speak for me.

MANETTE: No! Not that! I beg you, do not recall that to me! *(He calms himself with difficulty.)* I... I beg your pardon, Darnay. Forgive me. I do not doubt that you love my dearest Lucie.

DARNAY: If one day she might become my wife, I would never ask that you and she be separated. Like you, a voluntary exile from France, driven from it by its oppression and miseries, striving to live away from it and trusting in a happier future, I look only to sharing your life and home, and being faithful to you and to her, until death.

MANETTE: You speak manfully, Charles Darnay. If Lucie should love you, I will give her to you.

DARNAY: Your confidence in me must be returned with full confidence. My present name is not my own. I wish to tell you my true name and why I am in England.

MANETTE: *(Turns away.)* No.

DARNAY: I would keep no secret from you, sir.

MANETTE: No! *(He covers his ears, then abruptly turns and covers DARNAY’S mouth.)* No! *(He slowly draws his hands away.)* If Lucie should love you, and I know in my heart that she will... tell me on your wedding morning. Not before! Do you promise?

DARNAY: Willingly!

MANETTE: Then give me your hand. *(He grasps DARNAY’S hand.)* God bless you, Charles Darnay!

DARNAY: Thank you, sir! *(He EXITS CENTER. MANETTE looks after him, then, agitated, almost frightened, he goes to shoemaker's tools, sits. He is about to take off his coat and begin to work, when LUCIE calls.)*
LUCIE’S VOICE: (From OFFSTAGE RIGHT.) Father! Father, where are you?

MANETTE: (Quickly puts down the tools, straightens his coat, rises.) Here I am, my dear. (As LUCIE ENTERS RIGHT, he embraces her without a trace of fear or agitation. They EXIT RIGHT.)

NARRATOR ONE: If Sydney Carton ever shone anywhere, he certainly did not in the house of Dr. Manette.

NARRATOR TWO: He had been there often through the year, a silent, morose and moody loungier.

NARRATOR ONE: When he cared to talk, he talked very well. But the cloud of uncaring that shadowed him was rarely pierced by the light within him.

NARRATOR TWO: And yet, he did care for the streets about that house and the people in it. (LUCIE and CARTON ENTER CENTER. She sits at table with needlework. He ambles about the room, aimlessly.)

CARTON: (Hesitant.) Miss Manette...

LUCIE: Mr. Carton.

CARTON: I wish to speak to you... if I may.

LUCIE: Of course. (She gestures to a chair; he sits, keeping his eyes lowered.) I fear you are not well, sir.

CARTON: (With a sigh.) No. The life I lead is not conducive to good health.

LUCIE: Forgive me, but is it not a pity to live no better life?

CARTON: God knows it is a shame!

CARTON: (With tears in his eyes, and his voice.) It is too late for that. I shall never be better than I am. I am like one who died young. All my life might have been.

LUCIE: Oh, no, Mr. Carton! I am sure that the best part of it might still be. I am sure that you might be much worthier of yourself.

CARTON: In my heart I know better, but I shall never forget your kind words. (He rises, paces.) If it were possible for you to return the love of this wasted, drunken creature before you, he knows that in spite of his happiness, he would bring you to misery and sorrow. He would blight you, disgrace you, pull you down with him. I am even thankful that it can never be!
LUCIE: *(Trembles, rises.)* Can I not recall you to a better course, Mr. Carton? Can I not repay your confidence, for I know you would say this to no one else.

CARTON: *(Gently seats LUCIE, then pulls his chair close to hers.)* I wish you to know that in my degradation I have not been so degraded but that the sight of you has stirred old shadows within me. You have kindled me, heap of ashes that I am, into a fire. But it is a fire that lights nothing... does no service... merely burns idly away.

LUCIE: If I have made you more unhappy than you were before you knew me...

CARTON: No, no! You would have reclaimed me if anyone could. Only let me believe that this confidence reposes with you and will be shared with no one else, not even with the dearest one ever to be known to you.

LUCIE: The secret is yours, Mr. Carton. I promise to respect it.

CARTON: *(Draws her hand to his lips.)* God bless you for your sweet compassion! *(He rises, turns to leave, then looks back at her.)* For you... and for anyone dear to you, I would do anything. I beg you never to forget... there is a man who would give his life to keep a life you love beside you. *(He EXITS CENTER.)*

LUCIE: *(Looks after him.)* There are deep wounds in your heart, Sydney Carton, and they are bleeding! I am sure you are capable of good things, but oh, how weak you are in your misery! *(She EXITS CENTER.)*

NARRATOR THREE: Carton’s misery is slight compared to that in St. Antoine!

NARRATOR FOUR: In the wineshop of Monsieur and Madame Defarge the people wait, and drink thin wine, and talk and whisper of something in the wind.

NARRATOR THREE: Something inaudible, invisible, a long way off. *(ERNEST DEFARGE, MADAME DEFARGE, JACQUES and VENGEANCE ENTER CENTER. MADAME DEFARGE sits at the table, her knitting in her hands.)*

ERNEST DEFARGE: *(To VENGEANCE.)* You remember, a year ago, after the death of her child, our good Madame Gaspard walked to the chateau of Monsieur the Marquis, and in the dead of night avenged her child, then was hidden by the people.

VENGEANCE: I remember!
ERNEST DEFARGE: A week ago, she was found. The soldiers took her to the prison on the hill beyond the Marquis’ chateau.

JACQUES: We saw her behind the bars of her iron cage, her arms bound behind her. No hand free to wave to us!

ERNEST DEFARGE: She looked at us like a dead woman.

JACQUES: She was condemned to die! A petition was presented to the king that poor Madame Gaspard was made mad by the death of her child and begged for mercy.

ERNEST DEFARGE: I put the petition into the king’s hand myself, as he sat in his carriage in the street, the queen beside him. But his guards struck me down and drove me away.

JACQUES: The petition fell into the mud and filth and was trampled by the king’s horses.

ERNEST DEFARGE: This morning, our poor Gaspard was hanged! Forty feet high!

VENGEANCE: The king! To be registered!

MADAME DEFARGE: The Marquis’ family and all his race!

VENGEANCE: To be registered!

MADAME DEFARGE: The Marquis and all his race! Extermination!

VENGEANCE: Are you sure that no trouble can arise from our manner of keeping the register?

MADAME DEFARGE: My little Vengeance, if I kept the register in my memory alone, I would not lose a word of it! Knitted in my own stitches and symbols, it will always be as plain as the sun.

JACQUES: One other thing, comrades, a new spy is commissioned for our quarter.

MADAME DEFARGE: We will register him!

JACQUES: He is English.

MADAME DEFARGE: His name?

JACQUES: Barsad. John Barsad. Be watchful! (He and VENGEANCE EXIT CENTER.)

MADAME DEFARGE: You are fatigued, my husband, and a little depressed, I think.

ERNEST DEFARGE: It is such a long time!
MADAME DEFARGE: Vengeance and retribution require a long time. It is the rule.

ERNEST DEFARGE: But it does not take long to strike a man with lightning!

MADAME DEFARGE: How long does it take to make and store the lightning? When it is ready, it strikes! In the meantime, it is always preparing. Look around! Consider the rage and discontent of the people. Can they suffer in silence much longer?

ERNEST DEFARGE: *(Looks OFF RIGHT.)* Someone comes. A stranger.

MADAME DEFARGE: Perhaps... the English spy.

BARSAD: *(ENTERS RIGHT; politely, with confidence.)* Good day, monsieur, madame!

MADAME DEFARGE: Good day, monsieur.

BARSAD: Have the goodness to give me a little cognac, madame.

MADAME DEFARGE: As you wish. *(She rises, puts a drink before him, then sits and resumes her knitting, watching him carelessly.)*

BARSAD: You knit with great skill, madame. A pretty pattern.

MADAME DEFARGE: *(Smiles slyly.)* You think so?

BARSAD: May I ask what it is for?

MADAME DEFARGE: Pastime.

BARSAD: Not for use?

MADAME DEFARGE: That depends. I may find a use for it one day.

BARSAD: *(Looks around.)* Business seems bad here.

ERNEST DEFARGE: The people are very poor here, monsieur.

BARSAD: Yes, the poor unfortunate people! So oppressed, too, as you say.

ERNEST DEFARGE: *(Lightly.)* As you say, monsieur.

BARSAD: But you naturally think so, of course?

MADAME: All we think of here is how to stay alive.

BARSAD: *(Casual.)* Yes. A bad business, this execution of Madame Gaspard. The poor woman!

MADAME DEFARGE: If people use knives for such purposes, they must suffer for it.

ERNEST DEFARGE: She knew the price of her luxury, and she has paid it.
BARSAD: I believe there is much compassion and anger in this neighborhood touching the poor woman. Is this not true?

MADAME DEFARGE: Is it?

ERNEST DEFARGE: I know nothing of it, monsieur.

BARSAD: *(Shrugs, drinks.)* I believe that when Dr. Alexandre Manette was released from the Bastille some years ago, you, monsieur, his old servant, had charge of him here?

ERNEST DEFARGE: Such is the fact.

BARSAD: It was to you that his daughter came, and from your care that she took him to England?

ERNEST DEFARGE: It was as you say, monsieur.

BARSAD: I have known Dr. Manette and his daughter in England. You don’t hear much about them, I suppose?

MADAME DEFARGE: We have held no correspondence. They took their road in life, we ours.

BARSAD: Then you do not know that Miss Manette has married a Frenchman. Respecting Madame Gaspard, it is curious that Miss Manette’s husband is the nephew of Monsieur the Marquis, for whose murder the poor Gaspard was hanged. He lives in England under the name of Charles Darnay, D’Aulnais being his mother’s family name.

MADAME DEFARGE: *(Knits steadily.)* We had not heard.

BARSAD: An odd coincidence, don’t you think? *(He finishes his drink, tosses a coin on the table.)* I look forward to seeing you both again. *(He EXITS RIGHT.)*

ERNEST DEFARGE: *(Looks after him.)* If this is true, I hope for Miss Manette’s sake, destiny will keep her husband out of France!

MADAME: His name is in the register. His destiny will take him where he is meant to go! *(They EXIT CENTER.)*

NARRATOR ONE: In the pleasant house in the corner in Soho, Lucie and Charles, Miss Pross, and the doctor listened to the echoing footsteps of the years.

NARRATOR TWO: A daughter was born and grew to her sixth year in that loving household.

NARRATOR ONE: Then echoes from a distance rumbled and roared, as of a great storm, with a dreadful sea rising!
NARRATOR TWO: In the month of July, seventeen hundred and eighty-nine...

NARRATOR THREE: Headlong, mad and dangerous, footsteps force their way into innocent lives. Footsteps newly stained with blood!

NARRATOR FOUR: Footsteps raging in St. Antoine, a vast, dusky mass of human scarecrows, heaving to and fro...

NARRATOR THREE: A tremendous roar rising from the throats of the people... a forest of naked arms struggling in the air...

NARRATOR FOUR: Fingers clutching at every weapon, every heart in high-fever heat! (A CROWD of ragged citizens ENTERS LEFT with ERNEST DEFARGE, MADAME DEFARGE, VENGEANCE and JACQUES leading them.)

ERNEST DEFARGE: (With drawn sword.) Come, patriots! We are ready! Follow me to the Bastille!

VENGEANCE: The Bastille!

MADAME DEFARGE: The Bastille!

JACQUES: The Bastille!

CROWD: The Bastille! (They surge around the UPSTAGE platforms, playing out an attack on the ‘Bastille.’)

NARRATOR ONE: On to the Bastille! To the deep waiting ditches and the double drawbridge!

NARRATOR TWO: To the massive stone walls and the eight great towers!

NARRATOR THREE: With cannon, muskets, fire and smoke! Charge the Bastille!

NARRATOR FOUR: The Bastille!

NARRATOR ONE: Two hours of assault!

NARRATOR TWO: Four hours of attack! (The BASTILLE JAILER appears on the CENTER platform, waving a white flag.)

NARRATOR THREE: A white flag! A parley!

NARRATOR FOUR: Surrender!

NARRATOR ONE: Resistless is the force of the sea that pours in. The human sea, exultant and deafening!

ERNEST DEFARGE: Free the prisoners!

MADAME DEFARGE: Seize the records!
JACQUES: Find the secret cells!

VENGEANCE: Down with the instruments of torture!

ERNEST DEFARGE: (Mounts the CENTER platform.) Hang the jailers! (He seizes JAILER.) Jailer! Where is the North Tower?

JAILER: I will show you, but there is no prisoner there.

ERNEST DEFARGE: What is the meaning of one hundred and five North Tower? Tell me, or I’ll strike you dead!

JAILER: It is a cell.

ERNEST DEFARGE: Show me! (He pushes JAILER ahead of him and EXITS CENTER platform.)

NARRATOR ONE: The hour is come!

NARRATOR TWO: St. Antoine’s blood is up!

NARRATOR THREE: And the blood of tyranny and domination is down!

NARRATOR FOUR: The sea of black and threatening waters heaves and rises, wave upon wave...

NARRATOR ONE: Its depth unfathomed, its forces unknown.

NARRATOR TWO: The Bastille falls! The Revolution begins! (The CROWD, MADAME DEFARGE, VENGEANCE and JACQUES EXIT CENTER.)

NARRATOR THREE: Three years of tempest are consumed. The aristocracy takes to its heels!

NARRATOR FOUR: The French Court flees. Royalty vanishes.

NARRATOR THREE: In August, seventeen hundred and ninety-two, the nobility of France are scattered far and wide.

NARRATOR FOUR: They have fled from France by every highway, their property confiscated or destroyed, their names blotting out behind them.

NARRATOR ONE: Many go to England, to Tellson’s Bank, London.

NARRATOR TWO: Aristocrats without a guinea haunt the spot where their guineas used to be. (LORRY and DARNAY ENTER RIGHT. TWO ARISTOCRATS follow them.)

LORRY: (Chuckles.) You think I am too old to travel to Paris, Charles?

DARNAY: I am sure you are the youngest man who ever lived, sir, but a long journey to a disorganized France and a Paris that may not be safe for you concerns me.
LORRY: My dear Charles, nobody will interfere with an old fellow like me. If Paris were not disorganized, there would be no reason to send me there to Tellson’s. Do I not know the city and the business of old?

DARNAY: I wish I were going with you. I am a Frenchman, and I can’t help thinking of those miserable people... how I have abandoned them. I might be listened to. I might have the power to persuade them to some restraint.

LORRY: Your place is here, Charles, with your wife and daughter and father-in-law. I leave tonight, taking Jerry Cruncher with me. No one will suspect him of being anything but an English bulldog, ready to fly at anybody who touches his master.

CRUNCHER: (ENTERS RIGHT with letter.) Tellson’s wants to know, sir, if you found the person this letter is for?

LORRY: No, I have not. Charles, would you happen to know this Frenchman?

DARNAY: (Takes letter, reads address.) Confided to Tellson & Company, London, to Monsieur heretofore the Marquis St. Evremonde, of France.

1ST ARISTOCRAT: (Overhearing.) Evremonde! Nephew, I believe, and degenerate successor of the polished Marquis who was murdered in his bed. I’m happy to say I never knew him.

2ND ARISTOCRAT: A craven coward, infected with the new doctrines! Deserted his estates when he inherited them, and left them to the ruffian herd who burned his chateau to the ground!

DARNAY: (Calm.) I know the gentleman.

1ST ARISTOCRAT: Do you, sir? I’m sorry for it!

DARNAY: You may not understand him.

2ND ARISTOCRAT: Bah! After leaving his worldly goods to the butcherly mob, I wonder that he is not at the head of them! (He EXITS RIGHT with 1ST ARISTOCRAT.)

LORRY: Can you deliver the letter, Charles?

DARNAY: Yes.

LORRY: Thank you. Now, Jerry, be good enough to fetch my cloak while I gather all the papers I shall need to take with me. (He EXITS RIGHT.)

CRUNCHER: Right away, sir. (He EXITS RIGHT.)

End of Script Sample
PRODUCTION NOTES

The story is intended to be played out simply on any stage or stage area, of any size, with no backdrops necessary, other than plain colored curtains, if desired. The stage or stage area is divided into three playing areas, LEFT, CENTER and RIGHT, with three raised platforms UPSTAGE LEFT, UPSTAGE CENTER and UPSTAGE RIGHT, each large enough to accommodate two performers. Wooden chairs or stools may be used on these platforms. More elaborate backdrops or flats may be used, if desired.

Furniture necessary for the play includes a wooden bench DOWN LEFT, a plain wooden table and three wooden chairs DOWN CENTER, and a wooden bench and straight chair DOWN RIGHT. The benches should be long enough to seat three people. A small bench, RIGHT, has cobbler’s tools on it. This simple wooden furniture is used in all scenes. There are EXITS/ENTRANCES at LEFT, RIGHT and CENTER. The CENTER platform should also have a way for actors to ENTER and EXIT it.

The action of the play should move smoothly from one area to the next, with performers moving into places and exiting in time to avoid any delay between scenes. Performers will bring on and take away all hand props, as needed.

NARRATORS ONE and TWO should sit or stand on the UPSTAGE RIGHT platform. NARRATORS THREE and FOUR should sit or stand on the UPSTAGE LEFT platform, leaving the CENTER platform open for other performers.

COSTUMES:

Costumes of the late eighteenth century period can enhance the performance, lending color, authenticity, and a contrast between the quality clothing of the central characters and the ragged, dirty outfits of the French crowd. Performers playing multiple roles may wear one basic costume and change accessories as needed (wigs, hats, coats, shawls, etc.) to suit their various characters. DARNAY’S and CARTON’S costumes should be easily changeable as the same actor must portray both roles. The NARRATORS may wear period costumes, or neutral black. There is a reference in the play to MANETTE’S “streaming white hair”, and this characteristic should be adhered to, if possible.

PROPERTIES:

BROUGHT ON, ACT ONE: Two letters in sealed envelopes, additional letter (CRUNCHER); knitting needles and a long piece of knitting, wine bottles, cups or tankards, sword (MADAME DEFARGE); a folded scrap
of fabric with locks of hair inside, tied up with a string to hang around his neck (MANETTE); a bundle of business papers, a small pocket flask (CARTON); a large doll, representing a small injured child, dirty and wrapped in rags (MADAME GASPARD); a coin (MARQUIS); needlework (LUCIE); a coin (BARSAD); swords, staffs, makeshift weapons (CROWD, ERNEST DEFARGE, JACQUES, VENGEANCE); white cloth tied to a stick (JAILER).

BROUGHT ON, ACT TWO: Wallet with identity papers (DARNAY); two folded notes, a dirty, torn paper on which is written MANETTE’S story (ERNEST DEFARGE); large basket with handle (MISS PROSS); swords (RED CAPS); two small folded papers containing medicinal powders (CHEMIST); two sashes or strips of cloth to bind her arms (YOUNG WOMAN); knife (MAN IN BLACK); a letter (YOUNG MARQUIS); pass in coat pocket (MANETTE); pass (CARTON); a pistol of the period (MADAME DEFARGE); knitting (VENGEANCE).

SOUND:
Knock on a wooden door, pistol firing.
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