

The Nineteenth Century Novel
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Lecture – 39
Dickens' A Tale of Two Cities, Book III Chapters 10-12

Hello and welcome back to week 9's lectures. In this session, we will be looking closely at chapters 10 to 12. If you remember that previous session, we discussed what was in that really treacherous, problematic, complicated letter that was read out at the tribunal, and the letter is this one big massive evidence that the Defarges have against Charles Darnay. In that letter, we saw how Darnay's uncle and brother were responsible for the destruction of a particular peasant family.

Especially the actions of the younger Evremonde brother was at its cruellest in his treatment of a peasant wife, her husband, the wife's brother. In fact, he was responsible for exterminating the entire family except for one sister, who was hidden away by the brother of that dead girl. So this is the context that we need to remember, and this is this big crime committed by the Evremonde family against not only the peasant family but in fact, against the entire peasant class and therefore, the French Republic which is trying to kind of stick up for the peasants when the regime has changed.

So this is the important context that we need to remember. So the entire nation is against Charles Darnay's antecedents, against the ancestors of Charles Darnay, and since the ancestors are no longer around, they want to take revenge against Charles Darnay. So we will begin today's session with this context in mind.

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Chapter 10: Patriotic Fervour

- “Therefore when the President said (else had his own head quivered on his shoulders), that the good physician of the Republic would deserve better still of the Republic by rooting out an obnoxious family of Aristocrats, and would doubtless feel a sacred glow and joy in making his daughter a widow and her child an orphan, there was wild excitement, patriotic fervour, not a touch of human sympathy.”



“Therefore, when the President said (else had his own head quivered on his shoulders), that the good physician of the Republic would deserve better still of the Republic by rooting out an obnoxious family of Aristocrats, and would doubtless feel a sacred glow and joy in making his daughter a widow and her child an orphan, there was wild excitement, patriotic fervour, and not a touch of human sympathy.”

So the president of the tribunal tells the Doctor, Doctor Manette, that the Republic would be very proud of him, and then Doctor Manette would be considered highly by the Republic if he kind of roots out, if he kind of eliminates Charles Darnay, who represents the family of the Aristocrats in question.

And it is up to the doctor to make his own daughter a widow and his grandchild an orphan. And the entire crowd is excited by this pronouncement of the president, and there was not an iota of human sympathy for Doctor Manette. So if the president does not pronounce these sentiments, his own head would not be stable on his shoulders, his own head would have rolled. So that was the kind of public sentiment that was in the crowd against Charles Darnay's ancestors.

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Chapter 11: Dusk

- "All things have worked together as they have fallen out. It was the always-vain endeavour to discharge my poor mother's trust that first brought my fatal presence near you. Good could never come of such evil, a happier end was not in nature to so unhappy a beginning. Be comforted, and forgive me. Heaven bless you!"

Fatalistic statement



Now this chapter is titled Dusk, and in this chapter, we see what Darnay has to say about the proclamation about his sentencing to death and this is what he says. "All things have worked together as they have fallen out. It was always vain endeavour to discharge my poor mother's trust that first brought my fatal presence near you. Good could never come of such an evil, a happier end was not in nature to so unhappy a beginning. Be comforted, and forgive me. Heaven bless you!"

So Darnay tells his wife and the others that good can never come out of this horrible past. The past in which his uncle and his father was responsible in naming and injuring a particular peasant family. And he says that I came to England to discharge my mother's advice and my mother's trust which is to find out that particular family, that sister who is away, who has been hidden away by that peasant boy, and to kind of make some reparations for the crime that his family has committed against hers. So he also realizes that unhappy beginnings do have an unhappy end. And therefore, he says to Lucie, be comforted and forgive me and blessings of heaven be on you. So it is almost a fatalistic statement, and he has no hope or optimism about his fate, and he thinks that he is going to die a very brutal death.

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Harry Furniss, 1910



This is the scene which depicts the emotions after the proclamation of Darnay's sentencing. Lucie is hanging on to Charles Darnay, and the guards are waiting to take him away, and then Doctor Manette has kind of collapsed there. He is extremely dejected by what has happened. This is an illustration by Harry Furniss for the 1910 edition.

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"A life you love"

- It was remembered afterwards that when he bent down and touched her face with his lips, he murmured some words. The child who was nearest him, told them afterwards, and told her grandchildren when she was a handsome old lady, that she heard him say, "A life you love."

Darnay



So when Darnay is taken away by the guards, Lucie who was trying to kind of keep her confidence up for the sake of her husband, once he has gone, once he has been removed, she faints. And Carton is the one who kind of helps to look after her, and "it was remembered afterwards that when he bent down and touched her face with his lips, he murmured some words."

So he is the one who was trying to help her, then she faints and he kisses her face. And the child, the little Lucie who was near him told them afterwards, and told her grandchildren when she was a handsome old lady, that she heard him say, "A life you love". So the child kind of hears the words of Carton, who seemed to have uttered these words, A life you love. Probably that is an indication to Darnay.

And there is a kind of a hidden promise that he would do something for the life you love. And look at the way the words of Carton is passed on from little Lucie to those who are around her later, perhaps Doctor Manette and the others. And then when she was a handsome old lady, she repeated the same story to those who were around her then. So it is a story that gets passed on from generation to generation.

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Carton

- "Don't despond...don't grieve. I encouraged Doctor Manette in this idea, because I felt that it might one day be consolatory to her. Otherwise, she might think "his life was wantonly thrown away or wasted, and that might trouble her."
- "Yes, yes, yes," returned Mr.Lorry, drying his eyes, "you are right. But he will perish; there is no real hope."
- "Yes. He will perish: there is no real hope," echoed Carton.

Darnay *↳ Darnay? himself?*

The slide features a list of three quotes from Charles Dickens' 'A Tale of Two Cities'. The third quote, "Yes. He will perish: there is no real hope," is circled in red. Below the quotes, there are handwritten red annotations: "Darnay" under the first quote, and "↳ Darnay? himself?" with an arrow pointing to the circled quote. In the bottom right corner of the slide, a woman with dark hair and glasses, wearing a red and white checkered shirt, is seated at a desk, looking towards the camera.

"Don't despond, don't grieve. I encouraged Doctor Manette in this idea, because I felt that it might one day be consolatory to her. Otherwise, she might think, his life was wantonly thrown away or wasted, and that might trouble her. Yes, yes, yes, returned Mr. Lorry, drying his eyes, you are right. But he will perish; there is no real hope. Yes. He will perish. There is no real hope, echoed Carton."

So the setting of this scene is in Mr. Lorry's apartments in the bank, and the men have come back

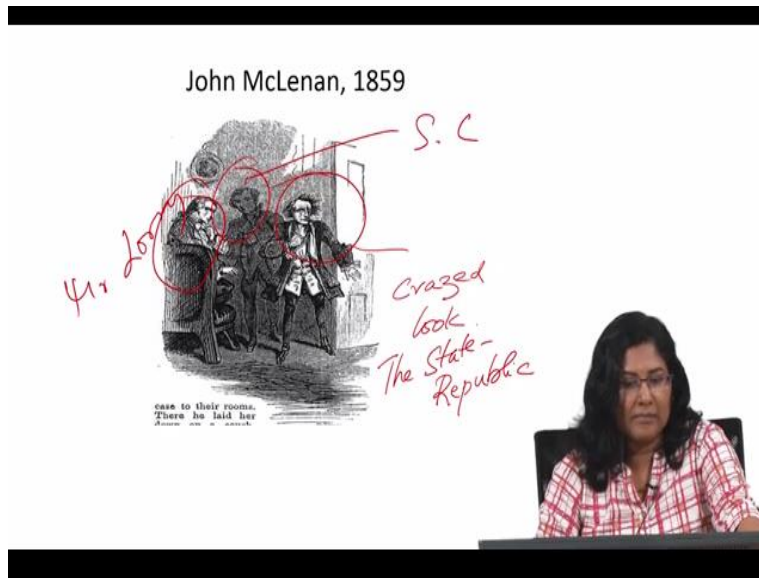
to the place. We have Carton and we have Mr. Lorry and then Carton advises Doctor Manette to go back once more to the authorities and kind of beg for the release of Charles Darnay. And he tells, Carton tells Mr. Lorry once the doctor has left the room, that he encouraged him because they should not be punishing themselves later on for the fact that they did not do enough to save Charles Darnay.

So this would be a consolation to them. This action of going back to the authorities and begging for Darnay's life would be consolatory, will give them some kind of comfort later on. And they should not regret the fact that they did not do enough in that Darnay's life was thrown away or wasted.

Because if they did not do enough, if they did not take enough efforts, they might be troubled over that fact later on. Especially Lucie would worry about it later on, and Mr. Lorry who is really not paying attention to the nuances of Carton's arguments, is drying his eyes. He has been shedding tears.

And he says that yes, yes, you are right, but then no matter how hard doctor Manette tries to intervene, tries to talk to the authorities, he will perish. Darnay will perish. There is no hope. Perish is die, and he says there is no hope of his being saved, and Carton repeats yes, he will perish. There is no real hope. Is he referring to Darnay or is he referring to somebody else? Is he referring to himself, that is the question that we need to ask.

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This is the illustration that depicts the scene in which Doctor Manette is advised to go back to the tribunal, the authorities so that he can intercede once again in order to get Darnay released. And look at the haunted look, the crazed look that is there on the Doctor's face. So once again we have the power of the State lashing against Doctor Manette. And this time, the state is the revolutionary state, the Republic which is wounding, injuring the physical and the mental health of Doctor Manette and his family.

And this is Mr. Lorry we have, and then we have Sydney Carton here. This illustration was done by John McLenan for 1859. And look at the way Carton is in the shadows. His entire physique is shadowed, whereas we do see some kind of light on the body of Doctor Manette and Mr. Lorry. So once again Dickens is playing on the contrast between the values that these shades of colour have in the common mind.

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Chapter 12: Darkness

- “Certainly, a little like.” Madame Defarge sternly retorted, “I tell you a good deal like.” Jacques Three pacifically remarked, “He is so much in your mind, see you, madame.” The amiable Vengeance added, with a laugh, “Yes, my faith! And you are looking forward with so much pleasure to seeing him once more to-morrow!”

irony

Darnay



Chapter 12 is entitled Darkness. We have Sydney Carton walking about in the streets of Paris and then he also visits a wine shop, and he makes sure that he is seen by a lot of people. And the crowd that sees him here in this particular moment is Madame Defarge and Jacques Three, and the Vengeance, and they comment on the fact that Carton resembles Charles Darnay. “Certainly, a little like.”

Madame Defarge sternly retorted, “I tell you a good deal like.” She insists that Carton is possessing a strong resemblance to Charles Darnay. Jacques Three pacifically remarked, “He is so much in your mind, see you, madame.” And he is the reference to Darnay. He kind of tries to pacify her. Jacques three, if you remember, he was among the jury members. So he is trying to kind of pacify Madame Defarge and says that Darnay is so much in your mind, that is why you are trying to see resemblance in other people.

And the amiable Vengeance added, with a laugh, “Yes, my faith! And you are looking forward with so much pleasure to seeing him once more tomorrow!” And Vengeance tells her yes, that is the reason which is why you are trying to see resemblance of Darnay in Carton. And she says that you are very much looking forward to seeing him, Darnay, tomorrow at the execution by the guillotine. And we have a lot of irony in this adjective, amiable. We do know that the Vengeance is a character who is not at all amiable, and quite the opposite.

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John McLenan, 1859



This is the illustration which depicts the scene that I talked about just now. We have Vengeance and Madame Defarge here, we have the other people looking at Carton who is kind of well dressed here and he has a very tidy appearance, and he is trying to mimic the demeanour of Darnay who is also always well dressed.

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Why stop?

- "It is true what madame says", observed Jacques Three. "Why stop? There is a great force in that. Why stop?"
- "Well, well," reasoned Defarge, "but one must stop somewhere. After all, the question is still where?"
- "At extermination," said madame.
- "Magnificent!" croaked Jacques Three. The Vengeance, also, highly approved.



Later they talk about, the crowd consisting of Madame Defarge and her companions, talk about where to stop in terms of exterminating the family associated with Charles Darnay. And this is the horrific conversation that discusses the matter of where to stop and why to stop. "Is it true what madame says", observed Jacques Three. 'Why stop? There is a great force in that. Why stop?' 'Well, well,' reasoned Defarge, 'but one must stop somewhere. After all, the question is

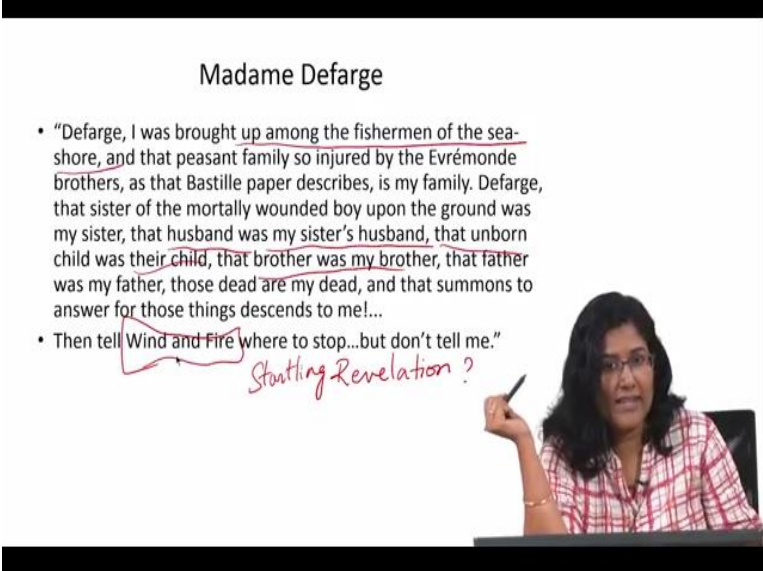
where?'

'At extermination', said madame. 'Magnificent!' croaked Jacques Three. The Vengeance, also, highly approved." So if you go back to that illustration, we do have Defarge as well in this scene along with Jacques Three, and except for Defarge, the rest of them agree completely with madame Defarge in the sense that madame Defarge wants to destroy the entire family which includes Lucie, her child, Doctor Manette.

And they agree, Jacques Three, Vengeance and the others agree with Madame Defarge, and they kind of comment that it is a magnificent idea. And look at the approval by Vengeance here. But we can get the sense that Defarge is not completely in agreement, because he says that one must stop somewhere with this kind of execution, and the question is where. And we can see that the revolution is kind of getting very subtly represented in the figure of Madame Defarge.

So the revolution itself has become very bloodthirsty, that the Republic has turned into a movement that just seeks blood and more blood. And it does not seem to move towards a constructive manner of governing the country. So in this literal desire for vengeance on the part of Madame Defarge, we also see a symbolic representation of the revolutionary regime.

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Madame Defarge

- "Defarge, I was brought up among the fishermen of the sea-shore, and that peasant family so injured by the Evrémonde brothers, as that Bastille paper describes, is my family. Defarge, that sister of the mortally wounded boy upon the ground was my sister, that husband was my sister's husband, that unborn child was their child, that brother was my brother, that father was my father, those dead are my dead, and that summons to answer for those things descends to me!..."
- Then tell Wind and Fire where to stop...but don't tell me."

Startling Revelation?

Look at the response of Madame Defarge, and her justifications for seeking extermination of the

entire family. She says, "Defarge, I was brought up among the fishermen of the seashore, and that peasant family so injured by the Evremonde brothers, as that Bastille paper describes, is my family. Defarge, that sister of the mortally wounded boy upon the ground was my sister, that husband was my sister's husband, that unborn child was their child, that brother was my brother, that father was my father, those dead are my dead, and that summons to answer for those things descends to me! Then tell Wind and Fire where to stop but don't tell me." So we do get another startling revelation here.

What is that revelation? We saw that early on, that letter is crucial in condemning Charles Darnay. In fact, it is very ironical that Doctor Manette is the one who is condemning the descendents of the Evremondes, and he is the one who was also ironically requesting the regime to put to death the men who were responsible for putting him in the Bastille for 18 long years.

And though the men are not around anymore, the kind of gets passed on to the heir, and that heir is Charles Darnay. So the letter offers us a kind of an insight into the reasons for the imprisonment of Doctor Manette, and the letter also kind of gives justification on the part of the Republic in deciding to kill Charles Darnay at this moment. So that is one kind of revelation we saw in the earlier chapter which was titled, *The Substance of the Shadow*.

And now, in this chapter which is titled *Darkness*, tells us another interesting revelation which is that the sister who was hidden away by that young boy, by that young man who came to the country house to take revenge on the younger Evremonde brother, is in fact Madame Defarge. So she says that I was brought up among the fishermen of the seashore, and she says that that family is my family, the family that was killed by the Evremondes.

And she says that my sister was the one who was killed by the Evremonde brother, and her husband is the husband of my sister. And in fact, we also know that the woman, the young woman who was severely assaulted and killed by Evremonde was also pregnant at that time. And she, Madame Defarge also points to that fact that unborn child was the child of my sister, and that brother who was killed by Evremonde was my brother, and the father who died of shock and misery was my father.

So all these dead people are my dead people and that, in the absence of my brother, it kind of depends on me to summon all these people to justice. And I am responsible for wreaking vengeance on these people, the Evremondes, and their existing heir which is Charles Darnay and his descendants, his connections. And she says tell Wind and Fire, tell the elements of nature where to stop, because they will not stop, but do not tell me. So I am like the wind and the fire which will not stop even if they are asked to.

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The Bastille Prisoner

- "Where is my bench? I have been looking everywhere for my bench, and I can't find it. What have they done with my work? Time presses: I must finish those shoes."
- They looked at one another, and their hearts died within them.

in their shoes

Shoe making materials

Now Doctor Manette goes to the authorities to intercede once more, returns empty handed, and he has completely lost his senses. He is once more the insane man that we first met him at the beginning of the novel. He has lost his sense of reality, and these are the questions that he asks. "Where is my bench? I have been looking everywhere for my bench. I can't find it. What have they done with my work? Time presses: I must finish those shoes."

So he imagines that he is back in the Bastille, like he was before he was recovered by Mr. Lorry and Lucie Manette. He is trying to find out the whereabouts of his shoe making materials. And he cannot find them, because we know that Mr. Lorry and Miss Pross destroyed these materials when Doctor Manette was away travelling with his daughter and son-in-law. And the men who listened to this set of words by Doctor Manette are Mr. Lorry and Carton.

And they looked at one another in utter shock, and the hearts died with them. They are so emotionally wounded by this man who is returning to his past because of the assault of the state against his family. So we can clearly see that the revolution has been reduced to a monster, which is trying to destroy a very ideal and healthy, happy family, centered around the Doctor, Lucie and Charles Darnay.

So it is very interesting that Dickens brings these two as oppositional elements. On the one side, we have the state, and on the other side, we have the family. And even during the Aristocratic regime, the state was against the family, and even during the Republic's time, the state is against the family.

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Carton

Offers his papers/passport for safe keeping to Mr Lorry

Collect the passport that Manette has for him and his family: Lucie and her child

*It is good until recalled. But it may be soon recalled, and I have reason to think, will be.

Act quickly

disaster

The letter by Dr M

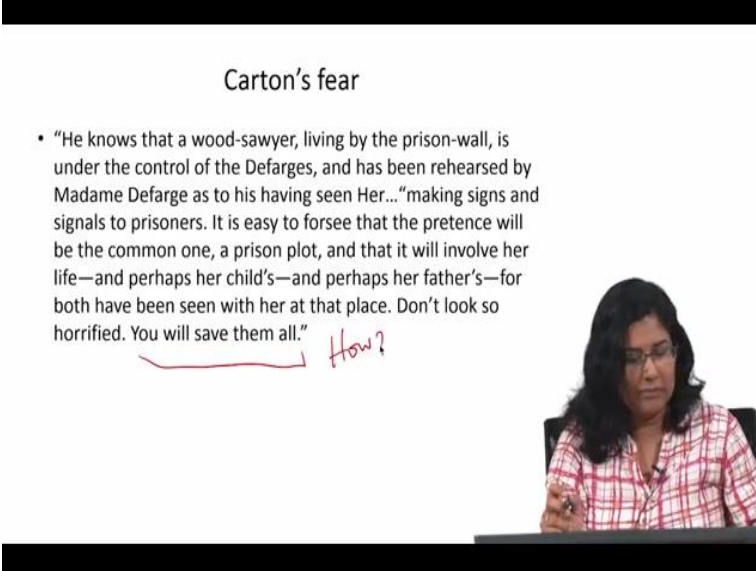
Now Carton has come up with a plan, and he is trying to execute his strategy in order to recover some of the members of Lucie's family. So what he does here at this moment in the novel is offer his papers, that is his passport, for safe keeping to Mr. Lorry. He just offers all the important documents to Mr. Lorry to keep it, for him to keep it safely because he is going to meet Darnay in the conciergerie.

He is going to have a meeting with Charles Darnay in the prison. So before he goes to the prison, he offers his passport to Mr. Lorry. And he also collects the passport of Doctor Manette and that of his family, that is Lucie's and her child's passport from Doctor Manette, who has completely

lost his consciousness in the sense that he does not know who he is anymore. So he collects those passports as well and offers them to Mr. Lorry.

And he checks the passport and sees that these passports are valid, the ones that Doctor Manette has are valid, but he feels that this will not be so for a long time because he can get a sense through the remarks of Madame Defarge to her companions that the state will also turn against the Doctor and his family. And when such a thing happens, that passports will be recalled. So he says that it is good, the papers are good until recalled. But it may soon be recalled and I have reason to think, will be. So it is good, it is absolutely essential for the family to act quickly. And again the idea of recalling something, here suggests that it would end in a disaster, as was the case with the letter which was recalled. The letter by doctor Manette hidden in the Bastille is recalled, is brought to the surface to be read out, and that has disastrous consequences for Darnay.

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Carton's fear

- "He knows that a wood-sawyer, living by the prison-wall, is under the control of the Defarges, and has been rehearsed by Madame Defarge as to his having seen Her..."making signs and signals to prisoners. It is easy to foresee that the pretence will be the common one, a prison plot, and that it will involve her life—and perhaps her child's—and perhaps her father's—for both have been seen with her at that place. Don't look so horrified. You will save them all."

How?

This is what is Carton afraid of, and he utters his fears to Mr. Lorry. He says that, "He knows that a wood-sawyer, living by the prison wall, is under the control of the Defarges, and has been rehearsed by Madame Defarge as to his having seen Her ... 'making signs and signals to prisoners.' It is easy to foresee that the pretence will be the common one, a prison plot, and that it will involve her life, and perhaps her child's, and perhaps her father's, for both have been seen with her at that place. Don't look so horrified. You will save them all."

So Carton knows that Madame Defarge is planning something, Madame Defarge and her companions are planning something against Lucie and her family. And he knows this because he overheard the conversation of Madame Defarge and her friends at that wine shop. And he is also aware, Carton is also aware that the wood-sawyer will be the witness against Lucie and her child, and he says that the wood-sawyer will say that Lucie was making signs and signals to the prisoners, and they will immediately interpret this testimony as one that is kind of suggesting a prison plot, and that will involve danger to the Republic, and so everybody might be executed including the child and Doctor Manette. So once Mr. Lorry hears the fears of Carton, he is horrified, but Carton assures him that you will save them all. But how, that is the question.

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The slide is titled "Carton's advice to Lorry". It features three blue callout boxes with white text. The top-left box says "Advices him to leave France on the morrow". The bottom-left box says "Advices him to convince Lucie to leave the country with her child and father". The right box contains a quote: "Quietly and steadily have all these arrangements made in the court-yard here, even to the taking of your own seat in the carriage. The moment I come to you, take me in, and drive away." A red pen is shown pointing to the quote. In the bottom right corner, a woman with glasses and a red and white checkered shirt is visible, appearing to be presenting the slide.

So this is Carton's advice to Mr. Lorry. He says that, and that Lorry has to leave France on the morrow, and he advises him to convince Lucie to leave the country with her child and father. So it is up to Mr. Lorry to do whatever he can to get Lucie and her family out of the country, the very next day. And he says that "Quietly and steadily have all these arrangements made in the court-yard here, even to the taking of your own seat in the carriage. The moment I come to you, take me in, and drive away."

So Carton tells Mr. Lorry have all the arrangements made, keep everything in ready, the carriage in which they have to travel out of the country and in which they were to travel to the harbour

where they are going to board a ship back to England. So he says that just wait for me, I will be back from the prison after meeting Darnay, and as soon as I come in, just drive away without waiting.

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Promises made

- "Promise me solemnly that nothing will influence you to alter the course on which we now stand pledged to one another."
- "Nothing, Carton."
- "Remember these words to-morrow: change the course, or delay in it—for any reason—and no life can possibly be saved, and many lives must inevitably be sacrificed."

And he asks for a couple of promises from Mr. Lorry. He says that, "Promise me solemnly that nothing will influence you to alter the course on which we now stand pledged to one another." Do not change a thing about the strategy that I have advised you. And he says, "Nothing, Carton." "Remember these words tomorrow. Change the course, or delay in it, for any reason, and no life can possibly saved, and many lives must inevitably be sacrificed."

So he warns Mr. Lorry. So the warning is in such a manner that will make sure that Mr. Lorry will not change the course of plan. He says that do not change it, do not delay the plan for any reason. If you delay, then no life can possibly be saved, and all lives will be sacrificed. So when he says that no life can possibly will be saved, he is hinting at a life that could be Darnay's but

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