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Dramatic Publishing

Charles Dickens'

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

Dramatized

by

ROBERT JOHANSON



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • London, England • Melbourne, Australia

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(A TALE OF TWO CITIES)

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A TALE OF TWO CITIES

A Play in Two Acts

For 16 Men, 2 Boys, 7 Women, 1 Girl, doubling

CHARACTERS (in order of appearance)

CHARLES DARNAY

SYDNEY CARTON

JARVIS LORRY

LUCIE MANETTE

MISS PROSS

JEREMY (JERRY) CRUNCHER

ERNEST DEFARGE

MADAME THERESE DEFARGE

GASPARD

GASPARD'S SON

MADAME GASPARD (later the VENGEANCE)

JACQUES 1, 2, 3

DR. ALEXANDRE MANETTE

MARQUIS ST. EVREMONDE

COACHMAN TO THE MARQUIS

GABELLE - STEWARD TO THE MARQUIS

4-8 SERVANTS OF THE MARQUIS

JOHN BARSAD

ROGER CLY

WOMAN BY THE GRAVEYARD

JACQUES 4 - ROADMENDER/WOODCUTTER

YOUNG JERRY CRUNCHER

MRS. CRUNCHER

SPECTATOR AT THE OLD BAILEY AND AT FUNERAL

JUDGE AT THE OLD BAILEY

BAILIFF
C.J. STRYVER
PROSECUTOR - ATTORNEY GENERAL
YOUNG LUCIE DARNAY
GUARD AT THE BASTILLE
THE GOVERNOR OF THE BASTILLE
CITIZEN AT THE BORDER
JESTER AT LA FORCE
YOUNG SEAMSTRESS
GAOLER AT LA FORCE
PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH TRIBUNAL
FLASHBACK AT THE TRIAL:
 THE YOUNG BROTHERS EVREMONDE, SICK GIRL,
 HER BROTHER, MARQUIS' WIFE, YOUNG CHARLES
SOLDIER AT THE GATE
SAMSON - THE EXECUTIONER

Cast breakdown (other doubling combinations possible)

MEN:

Sydney Carton
Charles Darnay
Jarvis Lorry
Dr. Manette
Ernest Defarge - English Court
Jerry Cruncher - Guard at the Bastille
C.J. Stryver - Driver of Coach, Jester at LaForce,
 French Mob, Samson
The Marquis - Judge at the Old Bailey, Governor,
 Young Marquis, French Mob
John Barsad - English, French Mob
Roger Cly - Citizen at the Border, English, French
Gaspard - Marquis' Brother, English Court, French Mob

Gabelle - English Court, French Mob
Jacques 1 - Sick Girl's Brother, Spectator, English, French,
Marquis' Servant
Jacques 2 - Soldier at the Gate, English, French,
Marquis' Servant
Jacques 3 - Bailiff, President, French Mob, Marquis' Servant
Jacques 4 - Attorney General/Roadmender/Woodcutter/Jovial Man

BOYS:

Young Jerry Cruncher - Marquis' Servant/Drummer Boy
Young Gaspard/Young Charles/Bugle Boy

WOMEN:

Lucie Manette
Miss Pross
Madame Therese Defarge - English Court
Mrs. Cruncher/Marquis Wife - French Mob, English Court,
Marquis' Servant
Madame Gaspard later The Vengeance - English Court
Young Seamstress - Sick Girl, English Court, French Mob,
Marquis' Servant
Woman 1 - Woman at the Graveyard, English/French,
Marquis' Servant

GIRL:

Young Lucie Darnay

Walk ons: English Court, Mob, Servants, Prisoners at La Force,
Guillotine Victims

A TALE OF TWO CITIES was first presented at the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn, New Jersey in February and March of 1994 with the following cast in order of appearance:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Charles Darnay | MICHAEL JAMES REED |
| Sidney Carton | CHRISTOPHER INNVAR |
| Jarvis Lorry | RON PARADY |
| Lucie Manette | NANCY BELL |
| Miss Pross | MARGARET HALL |
| Jeremy (Jerry) Cruncher | KEVIN CHAMBERLIN |
| Ernest Defarge | JOHN JUBACK |
| Madame Therese Defarge | JUDITH ROBERTS |
| Gaspard | MARK IRISH |
| Gaspard's Son | JEFFREY FORCE |
| Madame Gaspard, later the Vengeance | SUZANNE TOREN |
| Dr. Alexandre Manette | JAMES PRITCHETT |
| Jacques 1 | TIMOTHY ALTMEYER |
| Jacques 2 | WILLIAM CARL |
| Jacques 3 | VERL JOHN HITE |
| Coachman to the Marquis | JOHN RAINER |
| Marquis St. Evremonde | LARRY GREY |
| Gabelle, Steward to the Marquis | KERMIT BROWN |
| John Barsad | KEN KLIBAN |
| Roger Cly | STEVE BOLES |
| Woman by the Graveyard | KRISTIN KAY WIEGAND |
| Jacques 4, Roadmender/Woodcutter | PATRICK TULL |
| Young Jerry Cruncher | MATTHEW D'ANTUONO |
| Mrs. Cruncher | KATHLEEN MAHONEY-BENNETT |
| Bailiff at the Old Bailey | VERL JOHN HITE |
| Spectator at the Old Bailey | TIMOTHY ALTMEYER |
| Judge at the Old Bailey | LARRY GREY |
| Attorney General | PATRICK TULL |
| C.J. Stryver | JOHN RAINER |

| | |
|--|--|
| Knitting Women | WILMA MONDI, ELIZABETH TIMPERMAN |
| Young Lucie Darnay | ELIZA SCHLESINGER |
| Guard at the Bastille | KEVIN CHAMBERLIN |
| Bugle Boy | ADAM SLATER |
| Citizen at the Border | STEVE BOLES |
| Gaoler at La Force | DONALD S. KILCOYNE |
| Jester at La Force | JOHN RAINER |
| Prisoners at La Force | ETHEL BAER, KAREN BERNSTEIN, DOLORES DIBENEDETTO, ROSEMARY DONALD, DAVID FAIRMAN, HELEN FAIRMAN, JEANANN NOZZA, BILL PADILLA, ROBERT PEARSON, CONNIE PEARSON, EMILY RIDGWAY, ALISON SOMMER, DREW WILLARD |
| A Young Seamstress | SABRINA BOUDOT |
| President of the French Tribunal | VERL JOHN HITE |
| Sick Girl | SABRINA BOUDOT |
| Sick Girl's Brother | TIMOTHY ALTMAYER |
| Marquis' Wife | KATHLEEN MAHONEY-BENNETT |
| Young Charles | STEPHANIE JONES |
| Soldier at the Gate | WILLIAM CARL |
| Samson, The Executioner | JOHN RAINER |

Citizens of London and France, Servants of the Chateau
of the Marquis St. Evremonde, Sailors, Prisoners,
and Guards at the Bastille:

Timothy Altmeyer, Steve Boles, Sabrina Boudot, Kermit Brown,
William Carl, Matthew D'Antuono, Larry Grey, Verl John Hite,
Mark Irish, Ken Kliban, Kathleen Mahoney-Bennett, Wilma
Mondi, John Rainer, Judith Roberts, Adam Slater, Elizabeth
Timperman, Suzanne Toren, and Kristin Kay Wiegand

Executive Producer ANGELO DEL ROSSI
Artistic Director ROBERT JOHANSON
Stage Adaptation and Direction ROBERT JOHANSON
Scenic Design MICHAEL ANANIA
Costume Design GREGG BARNES
Lighting Design KEN BILLINGTON
Music ALBERT EVANS
Sound Design DAVID R.PATERSON
Fight Choreographer DALE A. GIRARD
Hair Design JEFFREY FRANK
Casting ALAN FILDERMAN

**A TALE
OF
TWO CITIES**

ACT ONE

SCENE: *MUSIC. The sound of the blade of a guillotine sliding down—steel against steel. The reverberating ring as it hits bottom is the downbeat for a drum cadence, trumpets—a funeral march.*

AT RISE: *Two men appear on opposite sides of the stage. They are dressed almost identically with hair tied back by a ribbon. They are both about thirty years old—they are the same height—they resemble each other in almost every way except that one is French—the other, English.*

CHARLES DARNAY. It was the best of times—

SYDNEY CARTON. It was the worst of times—

DARNAY. It was the age of wisdom—

CARTON. It was the age of foolishness—

DARNAY. It was the season of Light—

CARTON. It was the season of Darkness—

DARNAY. It was the spring of hope—

CARTON. It was the winter of despair—

DARNAY. We had everything before us—

CARTON. We had nothing before us—

DARNAY. We were all going direct to Heaven—

CARTON. We were all going direct the other way.

(They both turn C to face a darkly-curtained parlor where lights come up on MR. JARVIS LORRY, elderly, neatly but

quaintly dressed in brown, who is bowing to MISS LUCIE MANETTE, a very pretty young woman in a traveling cloak.)

LORRY (*bows*). Miss Lucie Manette? (*She nods.*) I kiss your hand, miss. (*He does.*) Jarvis Lorry, Tellson's Bank. (*LUCIE curtsies.*)

LUCIE. I received a letter from your bank, sir, yesterday, informing me that some discovery—respecting the small property of my poor father, whom I never saw—so long dead—renders it necessary that I must go to Paris.

LORRY (*bows and pulls on his wig—a nervous habit of his*). Yes—I—it is very difficult to begin—

LUCIE. Are you quite a stranger to me, sir?

LORRY (*a violent tug at the wig*). Miss Manette, we have met before, yes, when you were but two years old.

LUCIE (*remembering*). It was you who brought me to England when I was orphaned! I am almost sure it was you! (*He nods uncomfortably. She embraces him. Not used to such a demonstration, he pushes her away.*)

LORRY. Miss Manette! I am a man of business and I have a business charge to acquit myself of.

LUCIE. Yes, sir. I understand. I have been the ward of Tellson's Bank since my mother's death.

LORRY (*pulling his wig forward, than straightening it back again*). Ah—yes—well, you see, Miss Manette—if your father had been falsely imprisoned—silently disappeared in France and your mother and Tellson's had tried in vain to find him—

LUCIE. Oh—

LORRY. Business. Regard this as a matter of business—

LUCIE. Yes!

LORRY. Yes! Well—if your mother, wishing to protect you, had reared you in the belief that your father was dead, but, in fact, he had not died when he did—*(She suddenly takes his hand.)* Don't be frightened! How you start! *(She kneels.)* No, don't kneel! In Heaven's name, why should you kneel to me?

LUCIE. For the truth—good, compassionate sir—the truth!

LORRY. Don't confuse me, how can I transact business if I am confused? Courage! Your father has been—well, he has been found. He is alive. Recalled to life. He has been secretly freed from his prison cell and taken to the home of a former servant in Paris and we are going there: I, to identify him; you, to restore him to life, love, duty, comfort. Now the best and worst are known to you.

DARNAY *(who has been watching all the while—turns forward)*. It was the best of times—

CARTON. It was the worst of times. *(They both exit.)*

LUCIE. I am going to see his Ghost! It will be his Ghost—not him! *(She quietly faints to the floor.)*

LORRY. Miss Manette!

(LUCIE's wild-looking companion, MISS PROSS, runs into the room. She is a mannish Englishwoman wearing a wonderful bonnet like a great Stilton cheese. She sends LORRY flying.)

PROSS. Cold water and vinegar, my man, and quick! *(PROSS lifts LUCIE onto her lap—strokes her hair.)* Don't stand there staring at me! I am not so much to look at, am I? Send your man to fetch things!

LORRY. Jerry! Cruncher! Cold water and vinegar!

(CRUNCHER—LORRY's rough errand man—appears—then hastily exits.)

PROSS *(cooing to LUCIE).* My precious...my bird...*(Indignantly to LORRY.)* And you in brown! Couldn't you tell her what you had to tell her without frightening her to death? Look at her, with her pretty pale face and her cold hands.

LORRY. I hope she will do well, now.

PROSS. No thanks to you in brown, if she does. My pretty darling!

(CRUNCHER returns with a pitcher of water and cloth.)

LORRY. I hope that you accompany Miss Manette to France?

PROSS. Hmmmph! And just where are we taking her?

LORRY. To a wine shop in the St. Antoine District of Paris—where the former servant of Doctor Manette resides.

PROSS. And who exactly is this winekeeper?

LORRY. His name is Defarge.

(MUSIC. PROSS lifts LUCIE and takes her off, as the parlor disappears. LORRY attempts to help but PROSS slaps him away. He follows with CRUNCHER as a faded sign flies in bearing the picture of a wine bottle and keg with the name "Defarge." The very crowded Parisian suburb of St. Antoine appears. DEFARGE stands under his sign—a bull-necked, martial-looking man—his strong brown arms bare to the elbows. Joining him is his wife—MADAME DEFARGE—a woman his same age with a steady face, a large hand heavily ringed. Being sensitive to cold, she is wrapped in fur with a quantity of bright shawl twined about her head, though not to the concealment of her large

earrings. She carries her knitting. DEFARGE directs MEN to carry a wine barrel into his shop, as another barrel is being unloaded from a cart at the head of the street.)

DEFARGE. Eh! My good men—careful of that barrel there!

(The second barrel teeters ominously then topples to the pavement. The hoops burst and the barrel shatters like a walnut-shell. Wine fountains forth, running dark and red over the cobbles. The poor and hungry PEOPLE of Paris appear from everywhere. Men use their caps to catch streams of wine—women and children sop it up with their head scarves—others just use their hands or actually lick it up off the streets. DEFARGE has entered into a heated argument with the MEN who dropped the wine.)

DEFARGE (walking away). It's not my affair. You dropped it. You must bring me another!

MADAME DEFARGE (quietly, intensely). Look you, husband. *(She nods toward GASPARD, who has taken a shoe-ful of wine and is smearing it on a wall. He is writing the word "BLOOD.")*

DEFARGE. Gaspard—Gaspard! What do you do there? Are you ready for the madhouse? Why do you write in the public streets?

GASPARD. For the time to come when another kind of wine will be spilled on these street-stones, and the stain of it will be a brighter red than this.

DEFARGE (hurls water on the bloody word—smearing it into unrecognizability). Till then, it is only wine, my Gaspard, only wine! If you must write the word—there is another place to write it, eh? *(He puts his hand on GAS-*

PARD's heart.) Write it again in the hearts of your wife and child.

GASPARD. There is only one word written there. Hunger. Hunger is the inscription on the Baker's empty shelves. Hunger grinds our children old. Hunger! You cannot wash away that word, Defarge.

(GASPARD joins his WIFE and CHILD as DEFARGE returns to the wine shop and goes within. MADAME DEFARGE is now stationed at the counter, picking her teeth with a toothpick. The three JACQUES are present.)

JACQUES 1 *(to DEFARGE).* How goes it, Jacques? Is all the spilt wine swallowed?

DEFARGE. Every drop, Jacques.

(At this time LORRY and LUCIE enter the shop. PROSS and CRUNCHER wait outside. MADAME DEFARGE coughs lightly, raising her eyebrow ever so slightly in their direction.)

JACQUES 3. It is not often that these miserable beasts know the taste of wine or anything but black bread and death. Is it not so, Jacques?

DEFARGE. It is so, Jacques. *(Again, MADAME DEFARGE coughs.)* Gentlemen, my wife. *(She nods. Then begins knitting.)* About that furnished chamber you wished to see—I believe one of you has already been there and can show the way. Good day. *(The three JACQUES leave as LORRY approaches DEFARGE.)*

LORRY. Pardon me, sir, are you Mr. Ernest Defarge?

DEFARGE. Yes, monsieur.

LORRY. I am Jarvis Lorry of Tellson's Bank. I have come about Doctor—

DEFARGE. No names, please, monsieur. You were to come alone. Who is this with you?

LORRY. If the gentleman proves to be who you say, sir, this is his daughter.

DEFARGE (*going down to his knee and kissing her hand*). I kiss the hand of the child of my old master.

LUCIE. Thank you, sir. Will you take us to him?

MADAME DEFARGE. Go you, husband. Show them the man who fate buried alive for eighteen years and has recalled to life.

(DEFARGE leads them off. PROSS and CRUNCHER converse outside.)

CRUNCHER. Recalled to life. Blazing strange thing if you ask me.

PROSS. Nobody did ask you. And if any harm befalls my Ladybird, you and your master will be recalled *from* life if I have anything to say about it.

(LORRY, DEFARGE and LUCIE walk down a dim hallway toward a solitary door.)

LORRY. Is he alone?

DEFARGE. Alone! God help him, who should be with him?

LORRY. He is greatly changed?

DEFARGE. Changed? (*He strikes the wall violently—then takes out a large key.*)

LORRY. Good Lord, man, is his door locked then?

DEFARGE. Ay. Yes!

LUCIE. Why?

DEFARGE. Why! Because he lived so long, locked up in the Bastille, that he would be frightened—rave—come to I know not what harm—if his door were left open.

LUCIE. Is it possible?

DEFARGE. Is it possible? Yes. And a beautiful world we live in, when it is not only possible, but done, see you!—under that sky there, every day! A good man—lost for eighteen years—who did this and why—someday I will know. I will know.

LORRY. Courage, dear miss! The worst will be over in a moment. Come now. Business!

(They approach the door—the three JACQUES stand before it peering in.)

DEFARGE. Leave us, good Jacques. *(The three JACQUES retreat silently into the darkness.)*

LORRY. Do you make a show of Doctor Manette?

DEFARGE. I show him to those to whom the sight is likely to do good. They are the chosen few. All of us of the same name—Jacques. Hold there. *(He has peeked through himself. He now pounds three times—then he draws his key across—then clumsily and loudly turns it in the lock.)*

LUCIE. I am afraid of it.

LORRY. Of it? What?

LUCIE. I mean of him. Of my father.

(The door creaks open—light reveals a white-haired MAN sitting on a low bench, stooping forward and very busy, making shoes.)

DEFARGE. Good day!

MANETTE (*in a voice not physically weak, but faint from solitude and disuse—like the last feeble echo of a sound made long, long ago*). Good day.

DEFARGE. You are still hard at work, I see?

MANETTE. Yes. I am working.

DEFARGE. I want to let in a little more light here. You can bear a little more?

MANETTE. I must bear it if you let it in. (*DEFARGE draws back a gauze and now fully reveals the old man's face as he turns toward the light—shielding his eyes with his transparent hand. He has a white beard raggedly cut and wears a tattered canvas frock and loose stockings faded to a parchment yellow. LORRY draws forward.*)

DEFARGE. You have a visitor. Here is monsieur who knows a well-made shoe when he sees one. Take it, monsieur. (*LORRY takes it.*) Tell monsieur what kind of shoe it is and the maker's name.

MANETTE (*after a long pause*). It is a young lady's walking shoe.

DEFARGE. And what is the maker's name?

MANETTE. Did you ask me for my name?

DEFARGE. Assuredly I did.

MANETTE. One Hundred and Five, North Tower.

DEFARGE. Is that all?

MANETTE. One Hundred and Five, North Tower.

LORRY. You are not a shoemaker by trade?

MANETTE. No—I learned it here. I taught myself.

LORRY. Do you remember nothing of me, Doctor Manette? (*MANETTE drops shoe at the mention of his name.*) Doctor Manette. Is there no old banker—(*Resting his hand on DEFARGE's arm.*) no old servant—no old time rising in your mind, good Doctor Manette? (*MANETTE, after a long*

pause, sighs, picks up the shoe and quietly resumes his work. LUCIE approaches him.)

DEFARGE (*quietly*). Have you recognized him, monsieur?

LORRY. I thought it quite hopeless, but for a single moment, I have unquestionably seen the face I once knew so well. It is he. But hush. Hush. (*LUCIE is now beside him. He holds his leather knife—working intently. Seeing the skirt of her dress, he starts up and raises the knife. The other two men move forward, but LUCIE motions them to be still.*)

MANETTE. You are not the gaoler's daughter?

LUCIE (*brimming with tears*). No.

MANETTE. Who are you? (*She slowly sits on the bench beside him. He moves back at first, then sets down his knife and stares at her ringlets cascading over her shoulders. He fondles one of her tresses and then with a cry grabs at the collar of his tunic and rips it open, taking a small pouch from around his neck. Opening it, he removes some strands of hair and compares them with hers.*) They are the same. How can it be? When was it? She laid her head upon my shoulder, that night when I was summoned and when I was brought to the North Tower they found these upon my sleeve. How was this? WAS IT YOU? (*He starts violently. Again the other two men try to intervene.*)

LUCIE. I entreat you, good gentlemen, do not come near us, do not speak, do not move!

MANETTE. Her voice! (*He is very confused and disturbed.*) But, it can't be. You are too young—too blooming. Your hands would be withered like mine. But, your face—your voice—who are you?

LUCIE (*falling softly to her knees in front of him and taking his hands*). O sir, if you hear in my voice any resemblance to a voice that once was sweet music in your ears, weep for it, weep for it. If you touch, in touching my hair, any-

thing that recalls a beloved head that lay on your breast when you were young and free, weep for it, weep for it. If, when I mention to you the new Home that is before us in England, where I will be as true to you as ever daughter was to father, I bring back the remembrance of a Home long desolate, where your poor wife and my mother hid your torture from me and never told me of your hard, hard history, weep for it, weep for it. Weep for her and oh, my dear father, weep for me. *(With a tremendous shudder, MANETTE heaves a great sob and collapses onto the floor beside LUCIE. She cradles his head in her lap, rocking him gently as he cries.)* Good Gentlemen, thank God! Thank God for you—thank God for us—thank God!

(The lights fade on this tableau and come back up on PROSS and CRUNCHER as they enter the wine shop.)

PROSS. You there, my good madame with the needles. I inquire of my mistress, Miss Manette.

MADAME DEFARGE. I do not see her here.

PROSS. I do not see her here, either, which is why I inquire where she might be!

MADAME DEFARGE. Is it important to you?

PROSS. Would I be inquiring if it were not?

CRUNCHER. Take my word for it, madam, if Miss Pross says it is important then surely it is!

PROSS. I will thank you, sir, to let me speak for myself!

MADAME DEFARGE. Your mistress comes directly—Miss Pross.

(She begins actively knitting. LUCIE and LORRY support MANETTE into the wine shop as DEFARGE comes before.)

PROSS. Oh, my pet, my Ladybird!

LUCIE. Prossie, we leave directly for England.

DEFARGE. For all reasons it is best that you get monsieur out of France—immediately.

MANETTE. My tools. My shoes!

DEFARGE. They are here. (*Gives him his tools.*) Now all of you, go quickly. Go!

(They hurry away, through the gathering CROWD.)

CRUNCHER (*as he hurries after them*). Recalled to life he is!
Blazes recalled to life!

MADAME DEFARGE. Recalled to life, husband. Soon we all will be recalled to life. (*SOUND of a coach approaching—crowd gathers U to watch.*)

YOUNG GASPARD. Listen! A coach is coming! A great coach! May I see it, Father?

GASPARD. Gaspard!

YOUNG GASPARD. Please, Father! (*He runs into the crowd.*)

GASPARD. Gaspard! Come back here!

MADAME GASPARD. Husband—run after him. Don't let him chase the coach! Gaspard! Gaspard! (*GASPARD hurries into the crowd—there is a scream and a great cry, the coach has come abruptly to a halt. Then there is another cry.*)

GASPARD (*offstage*). No! Killed! Dead!

(MADAME GASPARD jumps up and slowly walks toward the crowd—it parts to make way for GASPARD carrying the lifeless body of their son.)

GASPARD. Killed!