

# A TALE OF TWO CITIES

Original by Charles Dickens

Retold by Pauline Francis



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# Introduction

Charles Dickens was born in 1812, the second of eight children. When he was twelve years old, his father went to prison because he owed money. Charles went out to work to help his family. He never forgot this terrible time when he was poor, and later used his experiences in some of his stories.

In his twenties, Charles found work writing about London life for newspapers and magazines. Some of these articles were published as a book called *Pickwick Papers*. This is how Charles Dickens became famous at the age of twenty-four.

*A Tale of Two Cities* was published in 1859. The two cities are London and Paris. It tells the story of Doctor Manette, a Frenchman who has been wrongly imprisoned and his daughter Lucie, who marries the son of the man who imprisoned him. The later part of the story is set in the terrible events of the French Revolution, which began in 1789.

Charles Dickens wrote many famous novels, including *Nicholas Nickleby*, *David Copperfield*, *Oliver Twist* and *Great Expectations*. He died in 1870 at the age of fifty-eight, and is buried in Westminster Abbey, London.



## CHAPTER ONE

# *Brought Back to Life*

1775. It was the best of times. It was the worst of times. There was a king and queen on the throne of France and a king and queen on the throne of England. It was a time of hope and a time of despair.

One dark November night, an elderly man by the name of Mr Jarvis Lorry was travelling from London to Dover on the mail coach. A man on horseback caught up with the coach and gave him this message: “*Wait at Dover for Mademoiselle.*”

‘Is there any reply, sir?’ the messenger asked.

‘Yes,’ Mr Lorry replied. ‘My answer is this: “*brought back to life.*”’

As the coach lumbered on through the damp mist, everybody had the same thought: it was a very strange reply indeed.

Mr Lorry sat thinking about the bank where he worked – Tellson’s. But he also pictured in his mind a man of about forty-five, thin and white-haired. As they came into Dover, he looked at the rising sun and said out loud, ‘Eighteen years! Oh, God, the poor man has been buried alive for eighteen years!’

Towards evening, as Mr Lorry was waiting for dinner at his inn, the waiter announced that Miss Manette had arrived from London and was ready to speak to him.