Chapter 5

A Robbery Takes Place

Oliver learned of their evil ways when he was out strolling about one day. "See that man over there looking at the books?" asked the Dodger. "Watch us steal from him!" The Dodger and Bates ran toward the man. He was reading and didn't notice the boys. But he felt something strange. When he turned around, he saw Oliver screaming and running away. The man thought Oliver was the pickpocket. "Stop thief!" yelled the man. Oliver ran faster. The Dodger and Bates started to run in a different direction. The townspeople started to chase Oliver. "Stop thief!" they shouted.

A hand from the crowd reached out and grabbed Oliver's shoulder. The hand had sores all over it. The man had purple lips. He knocked Oliver to the ground. The police were called at once. They took Oliver to see a judge. When they were in front of the judge, Oliver fainted. He was frightened. "This boy is ill," said Mr. Brownlow. "He tried to steal from me but I don't want to press charges. He's a young, sick, boy." Just then, the bookseller came in to see the judge. He knew Oliver was innocent. He had witnessed everything. Oliver was set free. Mr. Brownlow took Oliver home with him. He and his housekeeper, Mrs. Bedwin, nursed Oliver back to health. In the room where he slept, there was a large portrait of a beautiful woman on the wall. "Mrs. Bedwin, do you think Oliver resembles the woman in that portrait?" Mr. Brownlow asked.

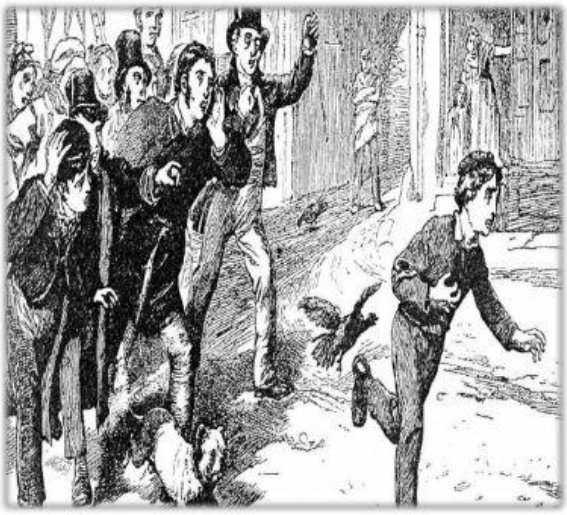
"Shockingly so, Mr. Brownlow," said Mrs. Bedwin. She couldn't stop marveling at how much they looked like each other. But they never spoke of it again since Mr. Brownlow had the portrait removed. Oliver woke up

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the next day. He had never seen such a fancy place! He was pleased when Mr. Brownlow asked him to stay with him. “You are a good boy put in a bad situation,” said Mr. Brownlow. “I am interested in your future. I’m also curious about your past.” This pleased Oliver. “You won’t send me away?” he asked. “Never,” said Mr. Brownlow. “But I do hope to learn more about you. Where were you born? How did you end up in this town?” Just then, a friend of Mr. Brownlow’s arrived. It was Mr. Grimwig, a sour man. He always had a scowl on his face and bad thoughts in his heart. “You will tell me your story shortly,” said Mr. Brownlow. “But today, I have an errand that I’d like you to do.” He picked up some books. “I need these returned to the bookseller and new books brought to me.” He gave Oliver a five pound note. “He won’t return,” said Grimwig. “His kind never does. He’s going to run off with your money.” Brownlow laughed. “Nonsense. Oliver is a good boy.” He smiled as Oliver made his way out the door and down the path, clutching the five pound note. While Oliver was happy with his new arrangements, Fagin was not. “Where did he get to?” Fagin screamed at the Dodger and Bates. Fagin had beaten both boys for allowing Oliver to be taken in front of the judge. One of Fagin’s brutal men, Bill Sikes, was angry. “Oliver is going to turn all of us in. He must be found before it’s too late for us.” Sikes had a plan. He forced Nancy, another member of Fagin’s gang, to go to the police station and ask about Oliver. She pretended she was his sister. “He was taken to a house in Pettonville,” said an officer. When Nancy told Fagin, he exploded. “He must be found! We must kidnap him!” He thought up an evil plan. Nancy and Sikes watched Brownlow’s house. They hid in the bushes and followed Oliver to the bookseller. Right before he went inside, Nancy pounced on him. “Oliver! My long lost brother! There you are!” She grabbed Oliver as he kicked and screamed. People gathered to see what all the fuss was about. “He joined a band of robbers and broke my mother’s heart!” shouted Nancy. “Come, Oliver. Time to come home!” Oliver still kicked and screamed. Then Sikes came upon the scene with his dog. “Oliver! I don’t believe it! Go home with your sister now!

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Oliver was confused. “I don’t know these people. Help me!” No one helped Oliver. Nancy and Sikes managed to carry him away and brought him to Fagin. “Let me go,” begged Oliver. “These belong to a man who has been kind to me. He’ll think I ran away with his money.” “It’s my money now,” shouted Fagin as he struck Oliver with a cane. Nancy stepped between the two. “He’s suffered enough, Fagin. Leave him alone. You got the boy back. You made him a thief. Surely that’s enough! I was younger than Oliver when I started robbing and I’m still doing it. Leave the boy alone.” Fagin was enraged. “That’s enough of you, Nancy. Put that kid to bed and make sure he never wears those fancy clothes again.” As Nancy took Oliver’s clothes away, Fagin couldn’t help but wonder why Nancy was defending a wretched boy like Oliver Twist.



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