



Chapter 6

Shots Ring Out

One day Mr. Bumble had to travel to London on business. As he entered a tavern, he came upon a sign that promised a reward for a missing boy. The boy's name was Oliver Twist! The note said that anyone with information about Oliver's past or his present whereabouts would be rewarded with five gold coins. What luck, thought Bumble. He copied Mr. Brownlow's address and went to see him at once. When he arrived, Mr. Brownlow and Mr. Grimwig were in the study drinking tea. "What do you know of Oliver Twist?" asked Mr. Brownlow. "He was born to low and vicious parents," said Bumble. "Since his birth, he has displayed nothing but treachery, ingratitude, and malice.

He attacked a boy and tried to murder others. He's nothing but a menace, I'm afraid." Mr. Grimwig looked at Brownlow with a smug smile. "Just as I suspected." Brownlow rang for Mrs. Bedwin. "That boy is an imposter. Never let me hear his name again." "I don't believe it! He's a gentle soul. A dear," said Mrs. Bedwin. "It can't be true." Mr. Brownlow dismissed Mrs. Bedwin, paid Mr. Bumble, and bid Grimwig a good evening. He went to bed that night with a heavy heart. Oliver's heart sank that night as well. He missed his kind friends. It was well for him that he didn't know what they had heard about him or it might have broken his heart outright.

Fagin was afraid Oliver would run away again, so he threatened him daily with beatings. It wasn't until Fagin went to see Nancy and Sikes about robbing a house that he allowed Oliver out of his tiny room.

"That house has all types of things for the taking. It's going to be ours," said Fagin. "The house is too hard to get into," said Sikes. "The windows are too small for Nancy to get through." "Then take Oliver," said Fagin. "He's small and should fit through fine." Nancy arrived to see Oliver the next night. "Sikes wants to see you." "What does he want me for?" asked Oliver. Nancy sighed. "I'm afraid he's up to no good. But you have no choice, Oliver. Neither do I." After Nancy brought Oliver to Sikes, they walked all day long. It wasn't until midnight that they landed in front of a house. One of Fagin's gang members, Toby, was waiting for them. "Lift him up to that window," said Toby. Oliver's eyes grew wide, for he realized that he was to rob a house! "Have mercy on me. Let me go and I won't tell anyone." They ignored Oliver's pleas. Sikes pushed him up to the window and threatened him with a pistol. "When you get inside, go to the front door and unlock it."

With a gun at his back, Oliver did what he was told. But when he let the two men in, he panicked and started to shout. At once, two half-dressed men appeared. There was a struggle and shots rang out. Oliver was wounded! He was bleeding badly as Sikes and Toby carried him out of the house. When they couldn't carry Oliver any farther, they threw him into a ditch to die.

