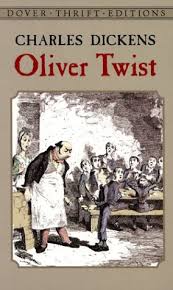
***Lyddie***

***Chapter 11 – The Admirable Choice***

Lyddie woke up again to start another day working in the factory.  Even though she wore Triphena's old boots, her feet still [swelled](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=110653&word=85791#curr)  and her ears still rang with the loud sounds of the machines.

Lyddie suddenly found herself singing and she didn't know why.  Then, she realized it was because she knew that when she got home later Betsy would read to her again and she was very excited.



A few weeks passed and Lyddie was beginning to settle into life working in the factory.  Betsy would still read to her most nights when she wasn't too tired and this was what kept Lyddie going even on her hardest days.

On Sunday's Amelia would force Lyddie to go to church with her, but afterwards Betsy would continue reading to her.  After a few weeks, Lyddie realized that Betsy was borrowing the book from a [lending](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=110653&word=85794#curr)  library and she was paying 5 cents a day to borrow it!

When Lyddie got her first [paycheck](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=110653&word=85792#curr) she gave 10 cents to Betsy to help [cover the cost](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=110653&word=85793#curr) of the book.

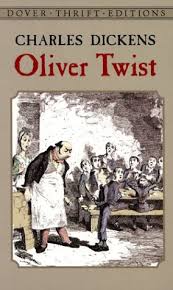


Before Lyddie knew it Betsy had finished reading Oliver Twist.  Lyddie couldn't believe the book was already over!

It was almost July and some of the girls were planning on going home for a vacation.  Lyddie was sad even hearing the word "Home" because she knew in her contract it said she must work over the summer and was not allowed to take a vacation and go home.

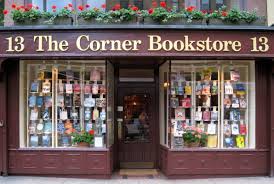


When all of the girls began leaving Lyddie was sad at first, but then became secretly happy because she realized with all of the other girls gone she could work extra looms and make extra money.  Lyddie hoped that with Diana gone too Mr. Marsden might give her two looms to work instead of one!



It was now July and all of the girls were gone.  It was so hot in the factory, but Lyddie worked away.  She rented her own copy of Oliver Twist and decided that she would read it on her own this time.  However, becasue Lyddie didn't know how to read she had to teach herself each word slowly.

Each day Lyddie would tape a page of the book to her loom and practice reading and saying the words in her head while she worked.



Halfway through July, Lyddie made a big decision.  She decided that she was going to buy her own copy of Oliver Twist. So, one evening Lyddie walked into town where she stopped at the book store and nervously said, "I-I come to purchase a book".  The man who worked at the store smiled and asked her "which book?".  Lyddie said "Oliver Twist" and the man said " [Mr. Dicken](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=110653&word=85799#curr) s, an [adirmable](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=110653&word=85800#curr)  choice".

Lyddie paid the man two dollars for her brand new book and felt she had spent her [hard earned](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=110653&word=85801#curr) money well.



One Sunday in July, Lyddie was walking down the street reading a page from Oliver Twist when she suddenly thought she saw Diana walking with a handsome,[bearded](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=110653&word=85804#curr) [gentleman](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=110653&word=85805#curr) down Merrimack Street.  Lyddie called out to Diana because she was sure that it was her.  However, the girl did not turn around and instead walked away.  Soon, Lyddie could no longer see the girl.  Lyddie was confused because surely if it had been Diana she would have stopped to say hello?

Lyddie walked back to the boardinghouse feeling [puzzled.](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=110653&word=85803#curr)

In Chapter 11, Lyddie is settling in at the mill.  She is more skillful with the looms, but the thing that is really making her happy is that in the evenings, Betsy has been reading to her from *Oliver Twist.*Lyddie is consumed by the story, and gives Betsy ten cents to help pay for the lending library fee.  Betsy is thankful, because she is saving her money to go to Oberlin, a college in Ohio that takes female students.

Betsy finishes reading the book to Lyddie as summer begins and many of the girls prepare to take time off to visit their families.  Lyddie is disappointed that she cannot go, but comforts herself by thinking of the extra money she can make.  Lyddie decides that to pass the time during the hot summer months when she is not at the mill, she will spend some of her precious savings to buy a copy of *Oliver Twist*so she read it again on her own, and improve her literary skills.  Lyddie spends every free moment she has alone in her room, reading and copying sections from her treasured book.

On the third Sabbath in July Lyddie attends the Methodist service at the urging of Mrs. Bedlow, although she spends the time reading some pages she has copied instead of listening to the sermon.  As she walks home she thinks she sees Diana with a gentleman on Merrimack Street, but when she calls to her, the Diana does not respond.

In Chapter 11, the plot centers on [Lyddie](https://www.enotes.com/topics/lyddie?en_action=hh_answer_body_click&en_label=%2Fhomework-help%2Fwhat-plot-chapter-11-lyddie-1423763%23answer-828068&en_category=internal_campaign)'s summer and her efforts at learning how to read.

At the beginning of the chapter, we learn that Betsy has been reading Oliver Twist to Lyddie. This is an important revelation, as the book is the means by which Lyddie learns how to read.

Lyddie also draws comfort from the story because Oliver Twist tells the story of an orphan who falls upon hard times. Like Oliver Twist, Lyddie is also a child laborer; she works 13 hour days at the cotton mill. The chapter reveals that Lyddie cannot go home for the summer because of the terms of her contract.

As she sees her fellow mill workers leave for the summer, Lyddie's only comfort is that she will make more money on account of all the extra looms to tend. The chapter ends with Lyddie purchasing her own copy of Oliver Twist.