

Oliver didn't like that place at all, but then his companion pushed open the door of one of the houses, pulled Oliver in, and called out: "Plummy and slam!"

This seemed to be a secret code, because an unseen voice told them to enter. The room was black with age and dirt and an old man was cooking sausages in a corner. He had unwashed red hair and was wearing a dirty old shirt. The table was set for dinner, and there was also a large pile of purses on it.

"Fagin," said the Dodger to the old man, "This is my new friend, Oliver Twist."

"We are very glad to see you, Oliver, very," said Fagin, and smiled. They had dinner together. Fagin seemed to like the Artful Dodger very much, and praised him for being a hard worker. Oliver realised this was because the Dodger had brought home the pile of purses on the table. The Dodger must make purses, he thought. Oliver asked if he could learn how to make purses, too. For some reason, Fagin and the Dodger laughed very hard.

"Certainly, my dear Oliver. In a few days, the Dodger will show you how."

Some days later, the Dodger and Oliver set off for a rich part of London. The Dodger walked very slowly, looking around. He didn't seem very keen to get to work. Then, as they entered a square, he suddenly grabbed Oliver's arm and pointed.

"Do you see that old man by the bookstall?" Oliver looked and saw an old gentleman reading a book. "He'll do," said the Dodger.

Oliver had no idea what he was talking about. The Dodger slowly walked towards the old gentleman. Watching in amazement, Oliver saw the Dodger put his hand into the gentleman's pocket, and pull out a purse, which he then put into his own pocket! Busy reading his book, the man took no notice of what had happened.

Suddenly Oliver understood everything. His new friends, Fagin and the Dodger, were thieves and pickpockets! Shocked, Oliver turned and ran. At the same instant, the old man by the bookstall put his hand in his pocket and realised that his purse was missing. When he saw Oliver running, he cried out "Stop thief!"

