

he asked her where he could be found. Nancy described Fagin's place, but asked that the other thieves not be arrested. "They may be wicked people," she said, "but they are all I have." The young lady and the gentleman promised to leave the other thieves alone. The young woman asked Nancy to return with them, but she refused. Finally, they left Nancy on the bridge, and went on their way. The boy saw Nancy return home. Quickly he went to Fagin's house, and told him what he had heard.

Fagin didn't sleep that night. It did not matter to him that Nancy had asked for mercy for him and Sikes. He did not trust her. He was full of anger and hatred. Then he heard the password, "Plummy and slam!"

It was Sikes. Fagin looked at him with an evil smile.

"Bill," he said, pointing to where the Dodger lay asleep, "if that boy was going to give us up to the police, what would you do?"

The word "police" made Sikes furious. "I'd kill him!"

Fagin smiled again. "And what if I did it," he asked. "What would you do if I did it?"

"You!" said Sikes in disgust. "I would smash your head."

Suddenly Fagin jumped up and screamed in Sikes face. "Well, it's not me, and it's not the Dodger – it's Nancy who has betrayed us!"

Sikes stared at him, shocked, and then he rushed out of the door. When he got home, Nancy was still in bed.

"Get up!" he said rudely. He grabbed her by the throat and dragged her across the room.

"Did you think I wouldn't find out?" he screamed. "You were followed!"

"Listen to me!" cried Nancy, "We have both been wicked people, but we can change! Think of it! We could go to a foreign country, far from here, and start a new life!"

Sikes grabbed his pistol. Then he realised the shot would be heard and with all his strength he beat the barrel against Nancy's face. She fell to her knees, and then Sikes lifted a club and struck her down.

