

After travelling all day, they came to a small village outside London. Sikes wrapped a dark shawl round his neck and put on a black cloak. He took a heavy bag with tools and at about one-thirty in the morning, they set out in the darkness.

Oliver was terrified when he saw the house that was their target. He started walking more slowly. Sikes realised that he was hesitating, and he pulled out his pistol and pointed it at him: "Go on, or I'll shoot you." Trembling, Oliver crossed the lawn with Sikes.

Sikes took an iron bar and quietly forced open a small window. The opening was too small for a man, but Oliver could fit through it easily, "Now listen," whispered Sikes. "Take this lantern, go up the stairs in front of you, along the hall, and then unlock the front door and let me in. And keep quiet!" he added with a threatening look. "Do you understand?"

"Yes," Oliver said, as Sikes lifted him through the window.

"Sssh! I heard something!" Sikes suddenly said. "No, it's nothing," he said a while later. "Let's get to work!" Oliver was now in the house, trying to get used to the darkness around him.

Suddenly Sikes cried aloud: "Back! Back!" Startled, Oliver saw a light at the top of the stairs, and two men. There was a flash – a loud noise – smoke – a crash somewhere, and he went back to the window. Sikes pulled him out.

"Blood! They shot you!" He said. "We've got to get out of here!"

As they fled from the house, Oliver heard shouts and shots from guns, and he realised that he was being carried away. Then a cold deadly feeling crept over him, and he lost consciousness.

Sikes ran as fast as he could, but carrying Oliver slowed him down. Behind him, he saw the men chasing him. They seemed to be coming closer. He dropped Oliver in a ditch and covered him with his cloak. Then he ran as fast as he could.

