

CHAPTER 7

TWO DAYS AFTER THE BURGLARY, SIKES HAD NOT YET COME TO see Fagin, so Fagin went to his house. Nancy answered the door.

"Bill was here last night," she told Fagin, "but he left this morning, and I don't know where he went."

"Was Oliver with him?" Fagin asked. Nancy said no. "He lost the boy! That stupid, useless fool!" Fagin cried, suddenly very angry.

Nancy looked at him. "Are you worried about Oliver?" she asked. "I think he is better off dead than he is with you. And I hope I shall never see him again." She looked in Fagin's eyes. "His innocence reminds me of how wicked I am, and how wicked you are, too."

Fagin looked at her angrily. "I don't like your attitude," he told Nancy. "And tell Sikes he must find the boy, otherwise he's in trouble!"

"Why is that?" Nancy wondered.

"I'll tell you," roared Fagin. "Oliver Twist is worth hundreds of pounds to me, and now maybe - " Fagin stopped suddenly. Quickly he said goodbye to Nancy and told her to let him know immediately if she saw Oliver.

Nancy was curious. Why was Oliver worth hundreds of pounds to Fagin? She felt that a big secret surrounded the boy, so she put on her bonnet and shawl and followed Fagin.

Fagin reached home and he was opening his door, when a man in a black cloak came out of the shadows and tapped him on the shoulder.

Fagin jumped with fright. Then he recognised the man. "Monks dear," he said, "I am sorry if I kept you waiting." "Hurry up and let me in," the man called Monks ordered Fagin. "I must talk to you in private." He looked nervous and kept looking over his shoulder. Fagin opened the door and went ahead into the dark house. Monks followed him, and the door suddenly slammed shut

