

Oliver Twist

By Charles Dickens

EPISODE TWO

- NARRATOR** It was early on the seventh morning when Oliver limped slowly into the little town of Barnet. He sat, with bleeding feet and covered with dust, upon a door-step.
- DODGER** Hullo, my covey! What's the row?
- NARRATOR** The boy who addressed this inquiry was one of the queerest looking boys that Oliver had ever seen. He was short of his age: with rather bow-legs and little, sharp eyes. He wore a man's coat, which reached nearly to his heels. He was, altogether, as roistering and swaggering a young gentleman as ever stood four feet six, or something less, in his boots.
- DODGER** Hullo, my covey! What's the row?
- OLIVER** I am very hungry and tired. I have been walking these seven days.
- DODGER** Walking for seven days! Oh, I see. Beak's order, eh? But, I suppose you don't know what a beak is, my flash com-pan-i-on.
- OLIVER** A bird's mouth?
- DODGER** Ha! How green! Why, a beak's a magistrate and when you walk by a beak's order, it's not straight forward, but always a-going up, and never a-coming down again. But come - you want grub and you shall have it. I'll fork out for us. Up with you on your legs. There! Now then!
- NARRATOR** Assisting Oliver to rise, the young gentleman took him to a nearby shop, where he purchased ham and a loaf. Taking the bread under his arm, the young gentleman turned into a small public-house.
- Here, a pot of beer was brought in and Oliver, tucking in at his new friend's bidding, made a long and hearty meal, during the progress of which the strange boy eyed him from time to time with great attention.
- DODGER** Going to London?
- OLIVER** Yes.



- DODGER Got any lodgings?
- OLIVER No.
- DODGER Money?
- OLIVER No.
- DODGER I suppose you want some place to sleep tonight?
- OLIVER I do, indeed. I have not slept under a roof since I left the country.
- DODGER Listen up then. I've got to be in London tonight - and I know this gentleman what lives there what'll give you lodgings for nothing - precisely - but only if you gets introduced by a gentleman he knows. And don't he know me?
- OLIVER Does he?
- DODGER Not in the least! By no means! Certainly not!
- NARRATOR And winking, as if to say to Oliver that he had been making a very fine joke the boy downed his beer in one gulp.
- DODGER Jack Dawkins is my name. Better known to my intimate friends as 'The Artful Dodger'.
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- NARRATOR London. Down a small street, down a little court by the side of a work-house. Although Oliver had enough to occupy his attention in keeping sight of his leader, he could not help giving a few hasty glances on either side of the way.
- A dirtier or more wretched place as they were entering he had never seen The very air was impregnated with filthy odours. The sole places that seemed to prosper were the public-houses. From several of the doorways great, ill-looking fellows were cautiously emerging, bound - to all appearance - on no very well-disposed or harmless errands. Oliver was just considering whether he hadn't better run away, when they reached the bottom of the hill and stood before the very dirtiest of the houses. The Dodger made a low whistle.
- The Dodger gave the password.
- DODGER Plummy and slam!



- NARRATOR And then the Dodger pushed Oliver in through the door.
- VOICE There's two of you. Who's the other one?
- DODGER A new pal.
- VOICE Where did he come from?
- DODGER Greenland. Is Fagin upstairs?
- VOICE Yes, he's a sortin' the wipes. Up with you!
- NARRATOR The walls and ceiling of the room upstairs were perfectly black with age and dirt. There was a table before the fire, upon which were a candle, stuck in a ginger-beer bottle, a loaf and butter and a plate.
- Some sausages were cooking in a frying-pan, which was on the fire and standing over them, with a toasting-fork in his hand, was a very old, shrivelled man, whose villainous-looking and repulsive face was obscured by a quantity of matted red hair.
- DODGER Fagin - meet my friend: Oliver Twist.
- OLIVER Sir.
- NARRATOR He was dressed in a greasy flannel gown and seemed to be dividing his attention between the frying-pan and the clothes-horse, over which a great number of silk handkerchiefs were hanging.
- FAGIN We are very glad to see you, Oliver, very. Dodger, take off the sausages and draw a tub near the fire for Oliver. Ah, you're a-staring at the pocket-handkerchiefs! Eh, my dear. There are a good many of 'em, ain't there? We've just put 'em out, ready for the wash. That's all, Oliver; that's all. Ha! ha! ha!
- NARRATOR Oliver ate his share of the supper and then the old man mixed him a glass of hot gin-and-water, telling him he must drink it directly. Oliver did as he was asked and immediately afterwards felt himself gently lifted on to one of the sacks and then he sunk into a deep sleep.
- It was late next morning when Oliver awoke. There was no other person in the room but the old man.
- FAGIN Oliver?



- NARRATOR Although Oliver was not thoroughly awake he saw the old man step to the door, which he fastened. He then drew forth from some trap in the floor a small box, which he placed carefully on the table. His eyes glistened as he raised the lid and took from it a magnificent gold watch, sparkling with jewels.
- The old man's eyes glint as brightly as the jewels until, at length, he lays them carefully back in the box and sighs.
- FAGIN Fine fellows! Five of 'em strung up in a row! What a fine thing capital punishment is. Dead men never bring awkward stories to light. Boy! Are you awake? What have you seen? Speak out! Quick! For your life!
- OLIVER I wasn't able to sleep any longer, sir. I am very sorry if I have disturbed you, sir.
- FAGIN You were not awake before?
- OLIVER No! No, indeed!
- FAGIN Are you sure?
- OLIVER Upon my word I was not, sir.
- FAGIN Tush, tush, my dear! Of course I know that, my dear. I only tried to frighten you. You're a brave boy. Ha! ha! You're a brave boy, Oliver. Did you see any of these pretty things, my dear?
- OLIVER Yes, sir.
- FAGIN Ah! They're mine, Oliver. My little property. All I have to live upon, in my old age. That's all. Now up and fetch the pitcher of water; it's by the door. I'll give you a basin to wash in, my dear.
- NARRATOR When Oliver returns the box is gone.
- He had scarcely washed himself when the Dodger returned accompanied by a very sprightly young friend, whom Oliver had seen the previous night and who was now formally introduced to him as Charley Bates. The four sat down to breakfast on the coffee and rolls and ham which the Dodger had brought home in the crown of his hat.
- FAGIN Well, I hope you've been at work this morning, my dears?
- DODGER Hard.



CHARLEY As nails.

FAGIN Good boys, good boys! What have you got, Dodger?

DODGER A couple of pocket-books.

FAGIN Are they lined?

DODGER Pretty well. Here -

FAGIN Ingenious workman, ain't he, Oliver?

OLIVER Very indeed, sir.

FAGIN And what've you got, Charley?

CHARLEY Wipes. Here -

FAGIN Four. Well, they're very good ones, very, Charley. So the marks shall be picked out with a needle and we'll teach Oliver how to do it. Shall us, Oliver, eh? Ha!

OLIVER If you please, sir.

FAGIN You'd like to be able to make pocket-handkerchiefs as easy as Charley Bates, wouldn't you, my dear?

OLIVER Very much, indeed, if you'll teach me, sir.

CHARLEY He is so jolly green!

NARRATOR When the breakfast was cleared away the old gentleman and the two boys played a very curious game, which was performed in this way. The old gentleman, having placed a wallet in one pocket of his trousers and a watch in the other, buttoned his coat tight round him and trotted up and down the room with a stick, in imitation of the manner in which old gentlemen walk about the streets any hour in the day.

Sometimes he stopped and pretended that he was staring into a shop window. At such times, he would look constantly round him, for fear of thieves and would keep slapping all his pockets in turn, to see that he hadn't lost anything, in such a very funny and natural manner, that Oliver laughed till the tears ran down his face.



- NARRATOR All this time, the two boys followed him closely getting out of his sight so nimbly every time he turned round; until, at last, the Dodger trod upon his toes, while Charley Bates stumbled up against him and in that one moment they took from him, with the most extraordinary speed, both the wallet and the watch.
- At length, Charley Bates expressed his opinion that it was time to 'pad the hoof'. This, it occurred to Oliver, must be French for 'going out', for directly afterwards the Dodger and Charley went away together, having been given some money to spend by the amiable old man.
- FAGIN There, my dear. That's a pleasant life, isn't it? They have gone out for the day.
- OLIVER Have they done their work, sir?
- FAGIN Yes - that is, unless they should unexpectedly come across any more when they are out. And they won't neglect it, if they do, my dear, depend upon it. Make them your models, my dear. Take their advice in all matters, especially the Dodger's, my dear. He'll be a great man himself and will make you one too, if you take pattern by him. Is my handkerchief hanging out of my pocket, my dear?
- OLIVER Yes, sir.
- FAGIN See if you can take it out, without my feeling it - as you saw them do, when we were at play.
- FAGIN Is it gone?
- OLIVER Here it is, sir.
- FAGIN You're a clever boy, my dear. I never saw a sharper lad. Here's a shilling for you.
- OLIVER Thank you, sir.
- FAGIN If you go on in this way you'll be the greatest man of the time. And now come here, and I'll show you how to take the marks out of the handkerchiefs.
- NARRATOR For many days Oliver remained in the room, picking the handkerchiefs and sometimes taking part in the game already described. But at length, he began to long for fresh air until one morning, he obtained the permission he had so eagerly sought, Fagin placing him under the joint guardianship of Charley Bates and his friend the Dodger.



NARRATOR	The three boys went out. Where were they going, Oliver wondered; what sort of work would he be instructed in?
DODGER	Hold up.
OLIVER	What's the matter?
DODGER	See that old cove at the book-stall?
OLIVER	The old gentleman? I see him.
DODGER	He'll do. What do you reckon, Charley?
CHARLEY	A prime plant.
OLIVER	A what?
DODGER	Shut it, Follow me, look hard, ask no question.
NARRATOR	<p>The two boys slunk close behind the old gentleman. What was Oliver's horror to see the Dodger plunge his hand into the gentleman's pocket and draw from it a handkerchief! Then to see him hand the same to Charley Bates and then, finally, to behold them both running away at full speed!</p> <p>In an instant the whole mystery of the handkerchiefs and the watches and the jewels - and the old man - rushed upon the boy's mind. He stood, for a moment, confused, frightened, in terror. Then, not knowing what he did, Oliver made off, as fast as he could lay his feet to the ground.</p>
BROWNLOW	Stop thief!
VOICES	Stop thief! Stop the thief!
NARRATOR	Oliver is stopped at last!
VOICES	Stand aside! / Give him a little air! / Nonsense! He don't deserve it. / Where's the gentleman? / Here his is, coming down the street. / Make room there for the gentleman! / Is this the boy, sir!
NARRATOR	Oliver is lying, covered with mud and dust, bleeding from the mouth, and looking wildly round upon the faces that surround him.
VOICE	Is this the boy sir?
BROWNLOW	Yes, yes. He's hurt himself.



VOICE	I did that, sir, and cut my knuckle against his mouth. I stopped him, sir.
BROWNLOW	He's a child.
VOICES	He's a young devil. / Thief!
BROWNLOW	Don't hurt him.
VOICES	Get him up. / Take him to Fang
NARRATOR	And so Oliver, who can hardly stand, is at once dragged along the streets by the jacket collar. The crowd shouting in triumph as they go.