

Wednesday 24th June 1836

Dear Diary,

What a horrific month it has been! I have found myself in the direst situation and I don't know what to do!

Firstly, I was sold from the workhouse. The other boys and I had been so desperately hungry that we pulled straws as to who would try and ask the master for more gruel at supper. Terrifyingly, it was me! I went through with it, but it was an awful mistake. The master was furious and I was immediately removed from the workhouse and sold into an even more desperate situation- I was to be Mr Sowerberry's apprentice. He was a cruel, harsh man whose other apprentices were horrid to me.

Because of this, a fight started between me and another apprentice. I knew I would be punished severely so I decided to escape, before this could happen. I ran and ran, with hopes of reaching London. For seven days and nights I traipsed down country roads on blistered feet, until finally, I reached the city. I was petrified, I had no one. I was cold and starving. What was I to do? Had I made an even bigger mistake?

That was until I was approached by the most peculiar boy. He must have been around my age, but he was wearing a gentleman's scruffy top hat that balanced on the top of his head, and he wore a long jacket that swamped him. He introduced himself as the Artful Dodger. I was puzzled by him, but I had no one else and I was grateful to him for finding me. Soon after, he took me with him to his home. We wandered through dingy streets and crowded walkways, through filthy puddles and loud cries of babies. The smell was powerful and stung my nostrils. Eventually, we arrived.

So I now find myself with Fagin. He is a crooked man with red-matted hair. I'm very wary of him, and I feel more like his prisoner than his guest. He has me locked up in his rooms with the other boys, but they are allowed to leave each day, and every night they return with items for him. I don't know where from. I am not sure what I would prefer- to stay here, or be back in the gloomy workhouse.

We will have to see what happens.

Oliver