It is not surprising that the most remembered scene in *A Tale of Two Cities* is the last, for this novel is dominated, even haunted, by its ending. From the opening chapter in which the “creatures of this chronicle” are set in motion “along the roads that lay before them,” while the Woodman Fate and the Farmer Death go silently about their ominous work, those roads lead with sinister inevitability to the revolutionary scaffold. To an unusual extent, especially given the expansive and centrifugal nature of Dickens’s imagination, this is an end-determined narrative whose individual elements are ordered by an ending which is both their goal and, in a sense, their source. In a historical novel like this there is a transparent relationship between narrative form and historical vision, and the formal features of *A Tale*—its emphatic linearity, continuity, and negative teleology—define a distinctive vision of history. As Robert Alter has argued in his fine critical account of the novel, it is not the particular historical event that ultimately concerns Dickens here, but rather a wider view of history and the historical process. That process is a peculiarly grim one. As oppression is shown to breed oppression, violence to beget violence, evil to provoke evil, a pattern emerges that is too deterministic to owe much to Carlyle and profoundly at odds with the conventional complacencies of Whig history. Instead of progress there is something more like the catastrophic continuum that is Walter Benjamin’s description of the historical process: the single catastrophe, piling wreckage upon wreckage. And when, in the sentimental postscript of Carton’s prophecy, Dickens finally attempts to envisage a liberation from this catastrophic process, he can only do so, like Benjamin, in eschatological terms. For Benjamin it was the messianic intervention of a proletarian revolution that would bring time to a standstill and blast open the continuum of history; for Dickens it is the Christ-like intervention of a self-sacrificing individual that is the vehicle for a vision of a better world which seems to lie beyond time and history. The parallel with Benjamin

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cannot be pressed beyond the common perception of a pernicious historical continuum and the common desire to break it, but the coexistence of these two elements in *A Tale* is, I wish to argue, important for an understanding of the novel, lending it a peculiarly haunted and contradictory quality as Dickens gives expression to a vision of history which both compels and repels him at the same time.

In Carton’s final vision of a world seemingly beyond time, the paradigm of the apocalypse mediates between what is known of history and what may be hoped for it. That hope is not to be dismissed as mere sentimentality, whatever the manner of its expression. However inadequately realized Carton’s prophecy may be in imaginative terms, it is significant as a moment of resistance to the grimly terminal linearity and historical determinism of the preceding narrative. That resistance is not confined to the last page of the novel, for, as I shall show, it manifests itself in other places and in other ways, creating a faint but discernible counter-current to the main thrust of the narrative. This is not to say that Dickens presents a thorough-going deconstruction of his own narrative procedures and version of history in *A Tale*, for the process at work here is more ambiguous and tentative than that. There is a struggle with sombre fears that gives rise to contradictions which cannot be reduced to the internal self-contradictions of language. What the novel presents is, rather, the spectacle of an imagination both seized by a compelling vision of history as a chain of violence, a catastrophic continuum, and impelled to resist that vision in the very act of articulation, so that the narrative seems at the same time to seek and to shun the violent finality of its ending in the Terror. The nightmare vision is too grim to accept without protest, and too powerful to be dispelled by simple hopefulness, and the work bears the signs of this unresolved and unresolvable contradiction.

In his preface Dickens maintains that the idea of the novel had “complete possession” of him, and the state of imaginative obsession in which *A Tale of Two Cities* was written can be sensed in two rather different aspects of the work: in the way that it presses on relentlessly toward its violent ending, and in the way that particular scenes take on a visionary intensity, seemingly charged with obscure and powerful emotions that are neither fully controlled nor comprehended. The scenes of frenzied collective violence are the most striking examples of this kind of writing, but there are
other moments, less obviously related to the main track of the story, when images and ideas erupt into the text with a spontaneous energy that arrests rather than furthers the momentum of the narrative. The first-person meditation on the death-like mystery of individuality which opens Chapter Three ("The Night Shadows") is just such an intervention:

A wonderful fact to reflect upon, that every human creature is constituted to be that profound secret and mystery to every other. A solemn consideration, when I enter a great city by night, that every one of those darkly clustered houses encloses its own secret; that every room in every one of them encloses its own secret; that every beating heart in the hundreds of thousands of breasts there, is, in some of its imaginings, a secret to the heart nearest it! Something of the awfulness, even of Death itself, is referable to this. No more can I turn the leaves of this dear book that I loved, and vainly hope in time to read it all. No more can I look into the depths of this unfathomable water, wherein, as momentary lights glanced into it, I have had glimpses of buried treasure and other things submerged. It was appointed that the book should shut with a spring, for ever and for ever, when I had read but a page. It was appointed that the water should be locked in an eternal frost, when the light was playing on its surface, and I stood in ignorance on the shore. My friend is dead, my neighbour is dead, my love, the darling of my soul, is dead; it is the inexorable consolidation and perpetuation of the secret that was always in that individuality, and which I shall carry in mine to my life's end. In any of the burial-places of this city through which I pass, is there a sleeper more inscrutable than its busy inhabitants are, in their innermost personality, to me, or than I am to them?

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Both the form and the substance of this meditation set it clearly apart from the surrounding narrative. The brooding first-person voice is never heard again in the novel, even though the same sombre note is struck by the impersonal narrator. The directness and urgency of the first-person utterance invite us to look for a significant relationship between these reflections and the main themes of the novel, but it is not easy to find one. The passage is only awkwardly related to the scene on the Dover road which it punctuates, since its insistence on the essential, metaphysical mystery of individuality is out of proportion to the condition of the passengers in the coach. Their mutual suspicion and ignorance are occasioned simply by the hazards of the journey. Nor can it be said to illumine the general condition of life as it appears in this novel.

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Although there is some connection between the separateness of individuals and the characters and fates of Dr. Manette and Carton, Dickens’s handling of character is basically at odds with such an absolute assertion of impenetrable otherness. His imperious command of his characters is never subject to epistemological uncertainty, and even the most estranged figures, like Dr. Manette and Carton, are in the end not mysterious but knowable and known. Except in its tone the excursus is altogether out of place: Dickens here steps out of his own fiction to generalize about character and individuality in life rather than in books, while paradoxically using the metaphor of the book to do so.

This reflection on character and the metaphor that it employs cast a significant light on Dickens’s own practice in the novel. By implication, both his presentation of character and his use of an ending are identified as simply matters of literary convention. To see death in terms of the premature closing of a book is to raise the possibility of different relationships among death, narrative, and endings from those presented by A Tale itself. Discontinuity is a fact of life and, implicitly, a narrative possibility, and to imply as much is to challenge both the conventional structure of this particular narrative and the vision of historical determinism that it projects. The challenge is only momentary and implied, but the moment is not entirely isolated. Although Dickens primarily uses the death of Carton and the ending of the novel to complete a pattern of meaning rather than to effect a premature closure, there are occasions in the novel when the desire for such a closure surfaces in the text as if in reaction to the chain of violent events that leads relentlessly to the guillotine. The first-person plural dramatization of the Darnays’ flight from Paris (386–7) provides, for instance, a kind of alternative premature ending for those privileged characters who are allowed to escape the logic of the historical process. The scene is both related and opposed to the “Night Shadows” meditation and Mr. Lorry’s journey to Dover: this time the characters in the coach are not suspicious, but united by love and shared apprehension; they are not mysterious and unfathomable, but familiar and transparent. Nevertheless, the “awfulness of death” threatens them from without, and, as the narrative assumes the urgency and immediacy of the first-person plural and the present tense, the scene comes to suggest a flight of the imagination from the foredoomed finality of the guillotine and the novel’s preordained ending. It is a flight which necessarily carries the
characters beyond the boundaries of the novel, which is headed to only one conclusion, and they never again appear directly in it. Pursued not by the Revolution but, as it turns out, only by a reflection of their own fears, they may be said to be escaping from history: “the wind is rushing after us, and the clouds are flying after us, and the moon is plunging after us, and the whole wild night is in pursuit of us; but, so far we are pursued by nothing else” (387). In fleeing the ending of the novel they have fled beyond the process of history.

There is a less direct and more complex suggestion of flight from the grim logic of the historical process in the scene of the mob around the grindstone, observed by Mr. Lorry and Dr. Manette. What they witness is an appalling spectacle of bestial violence and moral degradation as Dickens lets his wildest and deepest fears rise to the surface. The chain reaction of violent oppression and violent rebellion has passed beyond human control, and in this mass frenzy all distinctions of individuality and even sex are submerged:

The eye could not detect one creature in the group free from the smear of blood. Shouldering one another to get next at the sharpening-stone, were men stripped to the waist, with the stain all over their limbs and bodies; men in all sorts of rags, with the stain upon those rags; men devilishly set off with spoils of women’s lace and silk and ribbon, with the stain dyeing those trifles through and through.

Then, as if appalled by the terrors he has let loose, Dickens, in John Gross’s words, “reaches for his gun”.5

And as the frantic wielders of these weapons snatched them from the stream of sparks and tore away into the streets, the same red hue was red in their frenzied eyes; —eyes which any unbrutalised beholder would have given twenty years of life, to petrify with a well-directed gun.

All this was seen in a moment, as the vision of a drowning man, or of any human creature at any very great pass, could see a world if it were there. They drew back from the window, and the Doctor looked for explanation in his friend’s ashy face.

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Clearly signalled as the vision of a drowning man, the scene is the product of an imagination in extremis. It is a bourgeois nightmare of anarchy unleashed by the rebellion of the oppressed.6 Even if it is the logical culmination of the violent oppression that has

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preceded it, the violence is, when it eventuates, too great to bear. The "well-directed gun," with its sudden change of focus from dramatic scene to violent, judgmental reaction, looks like an au-
thorial intervention aimed at terminating the nightmare. The cu-
rious insistence on the eyes of the frenzied crowd emphasizes that
vision is the vital element, and the urge to "petrify" those eyes
can be read as the expression of a desire to put an end to that
vision. The action is transposed from subject to object: it is not
their eyes that Dickens the narrator wishes to close, but his own.
For a moment he seeks to retreat from his own vision of the his-
torical process.

There is, then, a form of resistance here to the catastrophic
continuum of history, but at the same time Dickens reveals some-
thing about the emotional dynamics of that historical process in a
way that is more penetrating than the melodramatic simplifications
of Madame Defarge and her desire for vengeance. The violent
reaction of the "well-directed gun," an answering of violence with
violence, implicates the writer himself in the very process he is
presenting. This is characteristic of the open and unguarded nature
of his procedure in A Tale: violent fears and violent reactions are
given direct, unmediated expression, so that unwitting parallels
emerge between the reflexes of the author/narrator and those of
the fictional characters. In this case there is an obvious affinity
between the "well-directed gun," with what has been aptly termed
its "true ring of outraged rate-paying respectability," and the re-
response of the blustering bourgeois Stryver to news of the Revo-
lution:

Among the talkers, was Stryver, of the King's Bench Bar, far on
his way to state promotion, and, therefore, loud on the theme:
broaching to Monseigneur, his devices for blowing the people up
and exterminating them from the face of the earth, and doing
without them: and for accomplishing many similar objects akin in
their nature to the abolition of eagles by sprinkling salt on the tails
of the race.

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The reaction of the character is held firmly in focus and identified
by means of irony as excessive and senseless, while the author/
narrator in the grindstone passage repeats that reaction without
the containing frame of any critical awareness. And both reactions
have the function—the one deliberate, the other involuntary—of
revealing the emotional resources that drive the catastrophic con-
tinuum of history. Dickens thus does more than simply project a deterministic vision of history; he shows how that determinism is rooted in commonplace and familiar emotions, how the potential for violence is not confined to a savage past and an alien setting, but lies very close to home. The effect is to detach history from the safety of the past and to suggest that its violent continuum may not have expired with the Revolution.

The persistence of that violence is amply demonstrated by Dickens's own susceptibility to the kinds of powerful emotions that are at work in the novel. As a caricature of the conquering bourgeois, the figure of Stryver belongs as much in the nineteenth century as the eighteenth, and Dickens himself could display distinctly Stryverish leanings in his response to contemporary events. In the same letter to Forster in which he outlines his intentions in *A Tale of Two Cities* and which he must have written about the same time as the grindstone passage, there is a revealing outburst of verbal violence. The letter begins with a discussion of the case of the surgeon Thomas Smethurst, found guilty of poisoning his bigamous "wife." The trial judge, Sir Jonathan Frederick Pollock, strongly supported the verdict in the face of public unease and of moves to persuade the Home Secretary to quash or commute the sentence. Dickens gives his fervent support to Pollock, and in doing so presents another example of an outraged, violent reaction to an act of violence:

I followed the case with so much interest, and have followed the miserable knaves and asses who have perverted it since, with so much indignation, that I have often had more than half a mind to write and thank the upright judge who tried him. I declare to God that I believe such a service one of the greatest that a man of intellect and courage can render to society. Of course I saw the beast of a prisoner (with my mind's eye) delivering his cut-and-dried speech, and read in every word of it that no one but the murderer could have delivered or conceived it. Of course I have been driving the girls out of their wits here, by incessantly proclaiming that there needed no medical evidence either way, and that the case was plain without it. Lastly, of course (though a merciful man—because a merciful man I mean), I would hang any Home Secretary (Whig, Tory, Radical, or otherwise) who should step in between that black scoundrel and the gallows.

The protestations of his mercifulness are convincing only as a respectable garment for his Stryverish pugnacity, and the emotional pattern of the passage recapitulates that of the grindstone scene

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so closely as to provide striking evidence for taking the “well-directed gun” as an authorial intervention. What is more interesting, however, is that the violence spills over into his account of his intentions in writing A Tale:

But I set myself the little task of making a picturesque story, rising in every chapter with characters true to nature, but whom the story itself should express, more than they should express themselves, by dialogue. I mean, in other words, that I have fancied a story of incident might be written, in place of the bestiality that is written under that pretence, pounding the characters out in its own mortar, and beating their own interests out of them. If you could have read the story all at once, I hope you wouldn’t have stopped half way.11

As violent an exception is taken to conventional forms of storytelling as is taken to an alleged murderer, and when Dickens writes of “pounding” and “beating” his characters it seems that violence is not only central to his vision of history in this novel but is also inherent in his means of expressing that vision. This formal violence, which could be interpreted in one sense as the forcible subordination of character to the story of incident, is as revealingly related to the creation of a narrative and historical continuum as is the earlier emotional violence. The expressed intention is to prevent the reader from stopping halfway, to maintain a compelling momentum in the narrative, and this momentum also serves the vision of historical determinism by subjecting individuals to a sequence of violent events that is beyond their power to control.

What exactly Dickens means by beating his characters’ own interest out of them is open to question. It might be taken to refer to the way in which they are forcibly harnessed to allegorical meanings, like Darnay with the “Everyman” implications of his original family name, or the sentimental equation of Lucie Manette with a “golden thread.” But the only character who has any real interest to be beaten out of him, Carton, is not the object of any direct allegorizing. Indeed, in his case meaning is deliberately withheld rather than allegorically asserted, and no cogent reasons are offered for his alienation. This mystification has the effect of directing the search for significance away from the personal life towards the general condition of existence. Lukács’s contention that Carton’s fate is the one that least of all “grows organically out of the age and its social events”12 is justified only if the wider historical pro-

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cess is ignored, for it is as a victim of general social values and forces—and hence, by implication, of the historical continuum—that interest and significance are beaten out of him. As Lukács sees, he is a marginal figure, but he can be said to be significant precisely for that reason: he has been marginalized, so to speak, by the energy and values embodied in Stryver who, more properly than Darnay, is his alter ego. In his gloomy estrangement Carton suggests the neurotic price that may be exacted by the aggressive pursuit of individual success, by the bourgeois ethos of individual endeavor in its most crassly careerist form. The accusation that he levels at Stryver evinces a social as much as a personal truth: "You were always driving and riving and shouldering and pressing, to that restless degree that I had no chance for my life but in rust and repose" (120-1). A world dominated by the energy and purpose of such as Stryver claims its moral and psychological victims within the dominant class. The triumph of the bourgeois will creates its opposite in the aimless, drifting existence of a character whose self-image—"I should ask . . . that I might be regarded as an useless . . . piece of furniture"—(237)—betrays the marks of a reified consciousness. And to the extent that Stryver partakes of the violent spirit which is at work in the larger historical events, Carton comes to stand, too, as the victim of the catastrophic continuum of history, a role which he then, at the end, consciously assumes.

To define Carton in these terms is to spell out bluntly what is only intimated indirectly, for it is Dickens's refusal to define and explain precisely that gives Carton a greater degree of density and interest than the other characters. With Carton, indeed, Dickens comes closest to creating something like the mystery and opacity of individuality that he refers to in the "Night Shadows" meditation, but only up to a point, since in the final scenes of the character's transformation there is a movement back toward conventional coherence and transparency. If, as Benjamin argues, the meaning of the life of a character in a novel is revealed in his death, then Carton could be said to constitute himself as a character by choosing to die by the guillotine. He gives himself a goal and a purpose, and in so doing gives shape and meaning to his life. What has been aimless and indefinite becomes purposive and defined, and continuity is established between beginning and end, between promising youth and exemplary death. He achieves character in both a formal and a moral sense, and in the process realigns

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himself with the other representatives of English bourgeois life, exhibiting reflexes reminiscent of Stryver’s in sensing a desire to strike the life out of the wood-sawyer (341) and reflecting on the desirability of raising Madame Defarge’s arm and striking under it sharp and deep (371).

Carton’s transformation is clearly intended to be read as the redemption of a wasted life, but such a reading has to ignore the qualifying ambiguities that are involved in it. As he decides on his course of action, resolution is strangely mixed with fatalism:

“There is nothing more to do,” said he, glancing upward at the moon, “until tomorrow. I can’t sleep.”

It was not a reckless manner, the manner in which he said these words aloud under the fast-sailing clouds, nor was it more expressive of negligence than defiance. It was the settled manner of a tired man, who had wandered and struggled and got lost, but who at length struck into his road and saw its end.

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The term “end” carries a double meaning: in one sense it has to be read as “goal,” stressing Carton’s new-found sense of purpose and smuggling into the novel on the level of the individual life the positive teleology that is so markedly absent on the level of history. But the stronger meaning here is that of “conclusion,” and a conclusion that is approached with a sense of release rather than a sense of achievement. The “tired man” is simply seeking repose, and in his desire for an end he makes explicit that resistance to the narrative and historical continuum which has been intimated elsewhere in the novel and now surfaces as the deepest yearning of a particular character.

He wishes to escape but, significantly, the mode of escape he chooses merely confirms his status as a victim of socio-historical circumstances. The act of self-sacrifice—an idea which haunts Dickens’s imagination in this novel as powerfully and melodramatically as images of revolutionary violence—cannot be seen as simply the ultimate expression of altruism, since it is obscurely rooted in the same values that have significantly contributed to Carton’s estrangement in the first place. The puritan ethic of disciplined personal endeavor demands renunciation such as Carton has been neurotically making all along, and its final act is the renunciation of life itself.14 Thus the very step which makes sense

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of his life is as perverse as it is noble, as much a capitulation to the uncontrollable forces that have governed his life as a transcendence of them. To seek to escape sacrifice by sacrificing oneself is the expression of a truly desperate desire for an ending.

These more questionable implications of Carton’s self-chosen end are largely disguised by Dickens’s narrative and rhetorical strategies in the closing chapters. The polarization and pathos of melodrama are engaged to elicit acceptance of him as an exemplary altruist, while the Christian rhetoric of death and resurrection serves to present his self-sacrifice as a positive act of redemption rather than an expression of world-weary resignation. The character is, as it were, borne along by an affective and rhetorical current which obscures contradictions, and this same current is clearly intended to carry the reader, unquestioning, from Carton’s death under the Terror to the resurrection of civilized order in his prophetic vision of the future. This attempt to make the historical regeneration of France and the domestic happiness of the Darnays seem continuous with what has preceded them is, however, hardly convincing, as the only element of continuity is the continuing strain of imaginative resistance to the destructive historical continuum. That the historical process of escalating violence should issue in a benign future is scarcely conceivable in this context, and Dickens passes perfunctorily over how it could come about with a casual reference to “evil . . . gradually making expiation for itself and wearing out” (404). The suggestion of entropy in that last phrase is significant. It is not so much a vision of redeeming historical development that is bestowed on Carton as a vision of the end of time. “‘There is no Time there’” (403), he says to the seamstress of the “better” land to which both are going; and his own vision of a better land, with its “beautiful city” and “brilliant people” (404) rising from the abyss, appears similarly otherworldly, having a greater affinity with the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse than with nineteenth-century Paris. Indeed, the apocalyptic note in this conclusion stresses finality rather than resurrection, and death haunts even the conventional pieties of the domestic happy ending: Lorry is seen “passing tranquilly to his reward” and the Darnays, “their course done, lying side by side in their last earthly bed” (404). Lives are shown passing to a peaceful end, and all this individual and historical “wearing out” is envisaged by a man who is himself gratefully embracing death as a welcome release. Even in his famous

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mawkish last words it is not the heroic deed but the long-sought repose, the “far, far better rest” (404), that receives the final emphasis.

Weariness, both of character and of creative imagination, is the keynote of this ending, and it betrays the intellectual and imaginative impasse in which Dickens finds himself. Since he sees revolution as just another link in the chain of violence and oppression, and presents the efforts of individuals, like Darnay’s journey to Paris, as powerless to influence the course of historical events, he can conceive no possibility, to use Benjamin’s phrase, of blasting open the continuum of history by social and political action. Unlike Benjamin, Dickens can advance no alternative vision of time and history. The claim once made for *Middlemarch* that it replaces “the concepts of origin, end and continuity” by “the categories of repetition, of difference, of discontinuity, of openness” can certainly not be applied to *A Tale of Two Cities*. Origin and end, feudal oppression and revolutionary retribution, are linked by a causal chain which affirms the predominance of continuity. Repetition, on the other hand, as Dr. Manette’s recurrent trauma illustrates, is here simply the mark of a mind imprisoned in the past, not a new, liberating category of temporal experience. Even the moments of discontinuity discussed earlier only challenge the narrative and historical continuum by revealing a desire to evade it. Carton’s prophecy is simply a final evasive move, and one that gives itself away by its weary insistence on death and its eschatological suggestion of the end of time. Only by turning away from the course of human history can Dickens find a refuge for hope, and to express hope in such terms is tantamount to a confession of despair. In this novel of imprisonments and burials alive the writer himself remains imprisoned in a rigorously linear, end-determined narrative and the grimly determinist vision of history which it articulates. The resistance he offers is that of a mind vainly struggling to escape and thereby confirming the power of that which holds it captive. This vision of history as a catastrophic continuum is only made more powerful by the clear indications in the text that Dickens is expressing what is deeply repugnant to, yet stronger than, all that he can hope and wish for.

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NOTES

1 A Tale of Two Cities, ed. George Woodcock (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), 37. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.
4 Alter, 138, gives an illuminating account of apocalyptic allusions in the novel.
6 Benjamin, in his opposition to the notion of historical continuity, stresses the importance of isolated moments of vision like this: "To articulate the past historically does not mean to recognize it 'the way it really was' (Ranke). It means to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger. Historical materialism wishes to retain that image of the past which unexpectedly appears to a man singled out by history at a moment of danger" (Illuminations, 257). Whereas Benjamin was thinking of the revolutionary proletariat as the subject of such a vision, recapturing the experience of its oppressed forebears, Dickens could be said to be presenting the bourgeois counterpart of such an experience, where the man singled out by history at a moment of danger relives the perennial fears of the property-owning class.
7 Gross, 192.
8 The weekly part containing the "Grindstone" chapter was published on September 24, 1859. In this letter of August 25, Dickens tells Forster that he has asked the publisher of All The Year Round to send him "four weeks' proofs beyond the current number, that are in type." The current number would be that of August 20: the four weeks in proof would cover the numbers up to 17 September, leaving the "Grindstone" part as not yet in type, and most probably either just completed or still being worked on. For the letter of August 25 see The Letters of Charles Dickens, ed. Walter Dexter (London: Nonesuch Press, 1938), 3:117–119.
10 Letters, 3:118.
11 Although this quotation comes from the same letter as the preceding one, I have here cited the text as given by Charles Dickens the Younger in his introduction to A Tale of Two Cities (London: Macmillan, 1902), xx. He points out that Forster, in quoting the letter in his Life, alters "bestiality" to "odious stuff." Dexter, Letters, 3: 118, follows Forster's diluted version.
13 Illuminations, 100–101.
14 The irrational act of self-sacrifice could thus be said to point to a general irrationalism in history and society at large, as is suggested in a different context by Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment, trans. John Cummings (London, 1973), 55: "The irrationalism of totalitarian capitalism . . . has its prototype in the hero who escapes from sacrifice by sacrificing himself. The history of civilisation is the history of the introversion of sacrifice. In other words: the history of renunciation."
15 Illuminations, 264.

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