

---

MACMILLAN READERS  
INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

---

CHARLES DICKENS

# The Old Curiosity Shop

Retold by Helen Holwill



MACMILLAN

# Contents

---

<i>A Note About The Author</i>	4
<i>A Note About The Story</i>	5
<i>The People In The Story</i>	7
1 The Old Curiosity Shop	8
2 Unwanted Visitors	11
3 Fred and Richard Make a Plan	17
4 Quilp Uncovers a Secret	19
5 Everything Changes	23
6 The Long Journey Begins	27
7 A New Beginning for Kit	31
8 Chance Meetings	35
9 Nell Gets a Job	38
10 Nell has a Terrible Shock	41
11 Richard Gets a Job	45
12 The Single Gentleman	48
13 Nell is Given Hope	51
14 Quilp Makes a Plan	54
15 A Village Life	57
16 There are Problems for Kit	59
17 There is Hope for Kit	66
18 Quilp's Luck Changes	68
19 The Single Gentleman Shares his Story	71
20 Nell and her Grandfather are Found	75
21 The End	79
<i>Points For Understanding</i>	81
<i>Glossary</i>	89
<i>Useful Phrases</i>	97
<i>Exercises</i>	99

## *The Old Curiosity Shop*

**I**t was a dark, rainy night in the city of London and the light from a lamp could be seen through the front window of The Old Curiosity Shop. The room that was lit by the lamp was full of old and curious things for sale of all shapes and sizes.

In a small sitting room at the back of the building sat a man with long grey hair, whose face looked old and tired. Nearby a pretty girl with bright blue eyes was carefully preparing dinner for them both.

‘Oh, Nell,’ said the old man, smiling warmly at the child. ‘You are such a good girl and you look after us both so well. You know that I love you, don’t you, Nell?’

The child went to the old man and put her arms around him.

‘Grandfather,’ she replied, ‘of course I know that you love me!’

The old man’s face was full of worry and sadness as he spoke. ‘You have spent most of your life living alone with me here and looking after me. I am sometimes afraid that you have a difficult, lonely and unhappy life.’

‘Grandfather!’ cried the child in surprise.

‘You are poor now,’ the old man continued, ‘but you are a sweet and innocent girl, just like your mother was, and I won’t let you be poor and die young like she did. The time is coming when you will be rich. It has been a very long time coming, but it must come at last. Yes, it must certainly come. It has come to other men who do nothing but waste<sup>10</sup> their lives, so why wouldn’t it come to me? When *will* it come to me?’

‘I am very happy as I am,’ said the child, who could see that her grandfather was becoming upset.

At that moment there was a knock at the front door and Nell said cheerfully, 'Kit must have come back at last!'

The old man picked up a lit candle<sup>11</sup> and went to open the door. When he came back, Kit was following him. Kit was a shy boy with an unusually wide mouth, very red cheeks, a turned-up nose and untidy hair. He stopped suddenly in the doorway to the sitting room, resting himself now on one leg, then nervously moving to the other and then back again, all the while turning his old hat on his hand. Nell laughed out loud at the sight of him and Kit laughed in return.

'It was a long way I sent you, wasn't it, Kit? Did you deliver the letter to Mr Quilp?' asked the old man.

'Yes, master<sup>12</sup>. I did,' replied Kit.

'You must be hungry,' said the old man, and he gave Kit a slice of bread and meat and a drink. Kit went to a corner of the room and began to eat quickly.

Soon, the old man said, 'Now, Kit – it's nearly midnight. Go home, but be here on time in the morning because there's work to do. Say goodbye to him, Nell, and then get me my hat and cloak<sup>13</sup>.'

'Goodnight, Kit,' said the child, her eyes full of happiness and kindness.

'Goodnight, Miss Nell,' replied the boy, and he left the room.

Nell helped her grandfather with his cloak and followed him to the front door. When they reached the door the old man put his arms around his granddaughter and kissed her on the forehead. A tear<sup>14</sup> came to Nell's eye. She hated being alone in that big, dark place all night long, not able to sleep because she was worried about her grandfather. Every night he would go out and leave her on her own, and yet he never told her where he went or what he did. Then he would return early the next day, tired, worried and sad.

'Sleep well,' he said in a low voice. 'Be safe, my sweet. I will be home early in the morning.'

*The Old Curiosity Shop*

---

The child opened the door for him to leave. The old man waited outside the door for a moment while it was closed and locked from the inside. When he was certain that the door had been locked, he walked away. At the corner of the street he stopped and looked around, perhaps to make sure that no one had seen him leaving the house, and then he disappeared into the darkness.

Macmillan Education

4 Crinan Street

London N1 9XW

A division of Macmillan Publishers Limited

Companies and representatives throughout the world

ISBN 978-0-230-46038-6

ISBN 978-0-230-46041-6 (with CD edition)

Text, design and illustration © Macmillan Publishers Limited 2014

This version of *The Old Curiosity Shop* by Charles Dickens was retold by Helen Holwill for Macmillan Readers.

The original author and the adapter have asserted their rights to be identified as the authors of this work in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

First published 2014

All rights reserved; no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form, or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publishers.

Designed by Carolyn Gibson

Illustrated by Jérôme Brasseur

Cover photograph by Getty Images / Science & Society Picture Library

These materials may contain links for third party websites. We have no control over, and are not responsible for, the contents of such third party websites. Please use care when accessing them.

Although we have tried to trace and contact copyright holders before publication, in some cases this has not been possible. If contacted we will be pleased to rectify any errors or omissions at the earliest opportunity.

Printed and bound in Thailand

without CD edition

2019    2018    2017    2016    2015    2014  
10      9      8      7      6      5      4      3      2      1

with CD edition

2019    2018    2017    2016    2015    2014  
10      9      8      7      6      5      4      3      2      1