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**OLIVER TWISTED**

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# Oliver Twisted

A two-act spoof of Dickens' classic story



by Craig Sodaro and Tim Kelly



Meriwether Publishing Ltd.

**Contemporary Drama Service**

PO Box 7710 • Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7710

# Oliver Twisted

A two-act spoof of Dickens' classic story

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## ***CAST OF CHARACTERS***

**CHARLES “CHUCK” DICKENS**, *private eye*  
    **NANCY**, *his secretary*  
**AGATHA LOW**, *a very wealthy society matron*  
    **ART DODGER**, *a young thief*  
        **BRAINS**, *another*  
        **GIGGLES**, *another*  
            **TINY**, *another*  
            **SWIFTY**, *another*  
    **OLIVER TWIST**, *an orphan*  
        **MAVIS**, *a saleslady*  
        **DARLA**, *an orphan*  
            **CARLA**, *another*  
            **MARLA**, *another*  
**MRS. BUMBLE**, *head of the orphanage*  
    **MRS. PEPPERCORN**, *a lady*  
    **FAY GUNN**, *a beautician and thief*  
    **MONK**, *a young man of mystery*  
    **BILL SIKES**, *a thief*

## ***SETTING***

Dickens Detective Agency is permanently set Down Right against proscenium or stage wall. Entrance Up Right or across stage to left. Office consists of desk facing the audience with chair behind it and client chair to the left of desk. Coat rack stands Up Right. Light switch on wall. On the desk is a phone.

Orphanage scene consists of a long bench and a small table set with bowls and a large cereal box.

Beauty Box salon needs a door frame center, but no door is needed. Two chairs as in a waiting room sit left with a small table between them set with magazines. At right is client chair facing the audience. Small table right holds usual beauty shop items such as combs, brushes, mirror, and so on.

1  
2  
3 *ACT I*

4 **SETTING:** The office of private detective CHUCK DICKENS. The  
5 office is permanently set at Stage Right and consists of a desk, a  
6 chair behind desk, and a client chair to left of desk chair.  
7 Telephone on desk and a coat rack Up Right. There can be a  
8 suggestion of a wall behind the “office” to create the illusion of a  
9 separate room.

10 **AT RISE:** CHUCK DICKENS, that famous private eye, enters Down  
11 Left, crossing slowly to office. He wears a hat pulled almost to his  
12 eyebrows and a belted raincoat. He surveys the audience, talks  
13 out of the side of his mouth.

14 **CHUCK:** You’re looking at Dickens. Charles Dickens. That’s me.  
15 But everybody calls me Chuck. In certain unsavory  
16 quarters I’m known as “The Dickens.” I know criminals  
17 and I know wisecracks. I’m always cracking wise. *(He makes*  
18 *fist and slams it into palm of his other hand.)* I’m a private  
19 investigator, a private eye, a private person. I’m tough.  
20 T-U-F-F. *(He takes cigarette from his pocket, pops it into his*  
21 *mouth, and immediately goes into a terrible coughing fit. It’s so*  
22 *bad he walks off left. We hear him almost strangling. He returns*  
23 *left without cigarette.)*

24 Funny thing about that. I don’t smoke. Never have.  
25 Never will. Once in a while I catch fire. When I’m working  
26 on a case, I mean. Tobacco is filthy stuff. Like booze.  
27 Myself, I never touch the sauce. *(He takes flask or bottle from*  
28 *inside pocket.)* But clients get edgy when they don’t see a  
29 private detective guzzle the grape. *(He holds up flask.)* So I  
30 oblige the image. I keep this filled with Dr. Pepper. I never  
31 get drunk, but I burp a lot. *(He pats flask.)* Sometimes I fill it  
32 with Bubble-Up or Diet Pepsi. Once in a blue moon, it’s  
33 cream soda. That’s something I’d like to see ... not the  
34 cream soda, no. I’ve seen that. I meant the blue moon. *(He*  
35 *puts flask away, takes out revolver.)*

36 But this ain’t no fantasy. I got a license to carry it. I’m a  
37 real pro. *(Phone rings. Instinctively, CHUCK spins around and*

1           *takes aim at phone.) Freeze or you'll look like Swiss cheese!*  
2           *(Telephone rings a second time and he realizes he's being silly. He*  
3           *pockets revolver and smiles sheepishly at the audience.) Sorry*  
4           **about that. But it proves I'm on my toes ... or I would be if**  
5           **I was wearing ballet shoes.**

6           *(Telephone rings a third time as NANCY enters right. She*  
7           *carries a steno pad, has pencils stuck in her puffed-out hairstyle.*  
8           *She wears heels and a short skirt that gives her a mincing walk.)*  
9           **That's my secretary. My Girl Friday. Or she would be if this**  
10           **wasn't Wednesday. Name's Nancy. (Macho) Like most**  
11           **dames, she's in love with me. (Shrugs.) What can I tell you?**  
12           *(Phone rings again. NANCY sits on desk, crosses her legs, and*  
13           *picks up receiver.)*

14       **NANCY: The Dickens Detective Agency.** *(She listens to caller as*  
15           *CHUCK finishes his cross to office.)*

16       **CHUCK: I got a seedy office located in a seedy two-story**  
17           **building above seedy Hollywood Boulevard in a seedy**  
18           **section of Los Angeles. I like it that way. No frills. I like the**  
19           **climate in LA, too. It's tough, like me. Never rains. Just**  
20           **drips perspiration.** *(He takes his hat off and attempts to hang it*  
21           *on proscenium arch or stage wall. It falls to the floor. He takes out*  
22           *piece of chalk and draws a large hook. He puts chalk away, picks*  
23           *up hat, and places it on the "hook." NOTE: There is actually a nail*  
24           *already in the wall, which the audience can't see, so when the*  
25           *"hook" is drawn, the effect will be that the hat is hanging from*  
26           *CHUCK's sketch.)*

27       **NANCY: (Kicking one leg nonchalantly and writing on notepad) You**  
28           **can't miss it. It's a seedy office located in a seedy two-story**  
29           **building above seedy Hollywood Boulevard in a seedy**  
30           **section of Los Angeles.**

31       **CHUCK: (Moves to her as she hangs up.) Client? (NANCY is delighted**  
32           *to see him. She gets off the desk and giddily begins to mouth baby*  
33           *talk, running in place like a nervous racehorse.)*

34       **NANCY: Chuckie-Chuckie-Chuckie, kiss-kiss-kiss!** *(He grabs her*  
35           *and bends her so far back her hair is practically dusting the floor.*  
36           *Like a romantic lead in some ancient film on late-night TV, he*  
37           *plants a kiss on her waiting lips.)*

1     **CHUCK:** *(To audience)* Skirts. Can't live with 'em. Can't live  
2     **without 'em.** *(He lets go of his grip, and NANCY hits the floor with*  
3     *a thud. At the same time, CHUCK takes off his coat and walks to*  
4     *coatrack. Without looking, he "hangs up" his coat. However, he*  
5     *misses and it falls to the floor. He doesn't notice. CHUCK sits, props*  
6     *his feet on desk. NANCY stands.)* **Who was on the longhorn?**  
7     **NANCY:** I wrote it down.  
8     **CHUCK:** That don't tell me much.  
9     **NANCY:** *(Checking steno pad)* Mrs. Low. Agatha Low.  
10    **CHUCK:** *The Agatha Low?* The society dame from Beverly  
11    Hills?  
12    **NANCY:** Yeah. I hear her husband was in oil.  
13    **CHUCK:** *(Gives a low whistle, impressed.)* She's so rich the bags  
14    under her eyes are genuine alligator. What'd she want?  
15    **NANCY:** Said she'd tell you in person.  
16    **CHUCK:** When's she coming in?  
17    **NANCY:** Said she'd drive here as soon as she could. *(AGATHA*  
18    *LOW, an expensively dressed matron, enters right. She wears*  
19    *plenty of jewelry and carries a large purse.)*  
20    **AGATHA:** I'm Mrs. Low.  
21    **CHUCK:** *(To NANCY)* What's she drive? A jet?  
22    **AGATHA:** You can call me Agatha.  
23    **CHUCK:** If I do, what's in it for me?  
24    **AGATHA:** You're hard. You're realistic. The sort of man I need.  
25    *(Suddenly emotional)* You've got to help me, Mr. Dickens!  
26    **Boo-hoo! Boo-hoo! Boo-hoo!**  
27    **CHUCK:** Easy with the waterworks. I ain't got flood insurance.  
28    *(Indicates client chair.)* Park it, Agatha. *(AGATHA sits, dabs*  
29    *eyes with hanky.)*  
30    **AGATHA:** Thank you.  
31    **NANCY:** I'll take notes.  
32    **CHUCK:** Sounds reasonable. *(NANCY sits behind desk. Instead of*  
33    *picking up pencil, she takes out file from her hairstyle and begins*  
34    *to work on her nails.)*  
35    **AGATHA:** You must find him, Mr. Dickens! You're my only hope!  
36    **CHUCK:** Find who?  
37    **AGATHA:** Oliver.

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