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# Literature for the working class through Sweeney Todd by James Malcolm Rymer : the penny dreadful as a new vision of victorian society and an outlet of the working-class oppression

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# Mémoire

Présenté pour l'obtention du grade de

## MASTER

**« Métiers de l'Enseignement, de l'Éducation et de la Formation »**

**Mention 2nd degré, Professeur des Lycées et Collèges, Anglais**

# Literature for the Working Class through *Sweeney Todd* by James Malcolm Rymer: The Penny Dreadful as a New Vision of Victorian society and an Outlet of the Working-Class Oppression

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## Introduction

If this period is renowned to be related to Queen Victoria's Reign, the era not only saw the birth and the death of a queen but also the presages and the bearings of the Industrial Revolution. As a result, multiple forms of consumption goods appeared and among these a corresponding form of literature: The penny dreadful. Also known as penny horrible, penny awful, penny number or penny blood it is now recognised as a proper genre of literature (Springhall, 567) but during the Victorian era - corresponding to the dates of the accession to the throne of England by Queen Victoria in 1837, to her death in 1901- penny dreadfuls were only considered as bloody stories, more or less inspired by actual events and published in serialized papers for the working class. These serialized papers are hence considered as one of the first means of popularization of literature, which was until then a prerogative of the upper classes. However, the very nature of this type of literature, what built the possibility of its popularity and the fact that is was so cheap (James, 12), was also what eventually contributed to its decline, its paper. "Penny bloods" stories were printed on low quality paper which made their cost cheaper, so -hence the name- it only costed one penny (Rose, 490). But today, what is left of this type of literature which permitted to a large fringe of the population not only to access reading (Jones, Preface) but also to exorcise the greatest horrors of their everyday lives? One of the most famous but also one of the last remnants of this ephemeral literature genre has a story as sinuous as its contents. Here is the story of *Sweeney Todd*.

The book under scrutiny in this memoire is known under numerous names among these are *The String of Pearl, The Sailor's Gift, the Barber of Fleet Street* but the most well-known of its names is the eponymous title *Sweeney Todd.* This book was originally published from November, 21st 1846 to March, 18th 1847 as a penny blood, it was thus serialized and anonymous. (Collins, Preface *Sweeney Todd*, Revised Edition) It was then very difficult to determine who its author was as the only known information was that its publisher was a man named Edward Lloyd. However, this was a very vague clue as it referred to the most prolific penny dreadful publisher of the Victorian era. Nevertheless, after years of research, Helen Smith and Louis James succeeded in attributing the writing to an author: a very creative and productive penny dreadful writer named James Malcolm Rymer (Smith, 9). But the strange history of the story did not end here. Regarding the popularity of the serial, the editor could not get enough with the initial chapters, as the serial was building the popularity of his journal. If the original story counted eighteen publications, the text was finally serialized and enhanced

into ninety-two publications in the forms of chapters resulting in an increase from the original thirty-nine chapters to one hundred and seventy-three in the finalized version (78). In accordance with its serialized substantial existence, relying on getting the Victorian working-class reader addicted to its plot, the book is full of twists, cliff-hangers and thrills and its structure is as labyrinthic as the Victorian London popular areas where it is set; the Temple, from Fleet Street to St Dunstan church and Bell Yard.

The multiple styles of writing within the novel - enhanced by some chapters which seem to be imbricated in the book without affecting the initial plot – such as the entire chapter XXII, entitled "Mr Fogg's Story at the Mad-House to Sweeney Todd" from page 168 to page 180 - can only make us meditate on the industrial Victorian habit of collaborative writing and hence plural authors. (Stone & Thompson 15-16) Some of the side-tracking of the story may then be the result of the necessity to fill the pages of the journal when Rymer was late in his work or when he was sick. Some specialists claim to recognize in some portions of the book Thomas Peckett Prest's writing for instance. (Fraysse, Foreword of *Sweeney Todd,* VII)

Whether the plot is solely due to only James Malcolm Rymer's imagination or not, the book *Sweeney Todd* can be considered as one of the first detective novels as it relates the tale of a hideous man with legendary immorality, a barber residing in the very heart of a darkly depicted Victorian capital echoing a gothic universe.

Throughout the ages the story of Sweeney Todd has known numerous successes as it was for example adapted theatrically by George Dibdin even before the final twist of the serial was released. From musicals to plays and films, numerous adaptations by famous filmmakers materialized, among them were Peter Haining, Stephen Sondheim or even Tim Burton, but through these multiple appropriations of the plot, Sweeney Todd became a tearful lover or a traumatized soldier and excuses were gradually found to his legendary depravity.

In this memoire we shall focus on the original story of Sweeney Todd in order to bring to light the worth of a forsaken artwork.

In a first part entitled '**The Penny Dreadful- Popular or Unpopular Literature'**, we shall focus on the penny dreadful as a literary form caught between popularity as it was destined to the working class and an unpopularity as it was highly criticized. This first part is divided into three subparts: First, **A Revolution That Was Not Only Industrial** focusing on the major events occurring during the Victorian era which led to the emergence of a new type of literature; the penny dreadful. Next, **Cheap Literature** focusing on the form, the destination as well as the vision of the penny dreadful. And finally, a third subpart entitled **Unpopular Popular**

**Denunciation**, which underlines the denunciation aspect of the book.

In a second part entitled '**Gold and Glory'**, we shall focus on the upper classes. In a first subpart entitled **Bankable Victims** we shall depict the profile of the victims as well as the portrait of their executioner. Next, in the second part entitled **Gold Digger** we shall analyse the motive of the executioner, swinging between gold and glory. Finally, in a final subpart entitled **Capital Punishment for Deadly Sins** we shall focus on the victims as culprits.

In a third and final section entitled '**All that Glitters is not Gold'**, we shall focus on appearances as a deception tool in the book. In a first part entitled **Behind Glitters** we shall focus on the games of appearances in the book, as nothing is as it seems to be at first sight. In a second part, **Speech is Silver but Silence is Gold**, we shall focus on language as a deception tool from the characters but also from the authors, but above all as a vehicle of humour. Finally, in a third part entitled **Don't Judge a Book by its Cover**, we shall focus on the game of appearances played by the author through this book which raises numerous contradictions and unsolved questions.

# I – THE PENNY DREADFUL – POPULAR OR UNPOPULAR LITERATURE

In this first part we shall focus on the penny dreadful as being at the same time a popular and an unpopular literature. Popular as being destined to the lower class of society or as being loved which enters in contradiction with unpopular as being highly criticized. In a first part entitles **A Revolution That Was Not Only Industrial** we shall hence analyse the major events occurring during the Victorian era which led to the emergence of a new type of literature; the penny dreadful. After that, we shall dig deeper into that particular genre in a part entitled **Cheap Literature** by focusing on the form, the destination as well as the vision of the penny dreadful. Finally, in a part entitled **Unpopular Popular Denunciation**, we shall underline the denunciations of both the Victorian industrial minding as well as the conditions of the workers.

## 1- A Revolution that was not only Industrial

Ever since its invention, printing had been- by definition- an example of mass production. But only in the course of the 19th century did it really become an industry. With the Industrial Revolution, successive waves of mechanization affected papermaking, the printing press and typesetting ended on spectacular increases in productivity (Mokyr 1). Combined with a series of laws leading to an extended access to education, the huge progresses of the printing industry stemming from the Industrial Revolution paved the way for another major change, an extending access to literature.

### A- The popularization of literature

During the Victorian era, literature was not as we know it today and resided mostly in newspapers. The press market was, of course, mainly settled in the capital city of the country: London. And as a consequence of industrialization, the working-class population of London was growing proportionately to the need of new workers. However, access to print remained largely the prerogative of better-off town dwellers and the nobility and literature was only little by little spreading in the countryside and to other sectors of the population. A huge market was then remaining unexploited right under the eyes of industrials. It did not take long before the press became a major industry, helped by technical progress and more liberal politics.

Newspapers had now become commonplace and started to diversify into different social, geographic and ideological markets. Mass circulation papers (sometimes several millions a day) became less political to attract a wider readership. Newspapers were more and more a form of entertainment and the press was now an industrial product and a cheap commodity. The press market was then ready to face new challenges and to meet its own revolution.

By the 1830's, laws on the freedom of the press brought about a sharp increase in the number of titles, at the same time as free compulsory state education brought about a corresponding increase in the number of potential readers. The above mentioned working-class population of London was hence not only growing proportionately to the need of workers but also in adequacy to the potential reading public. The extension of the urban population and more widespread access to education were increasing the demand for reading material during an era described according to Louis James in *Fiction for the Working Man* as 'the Age of Benevolence'.

> A most important part in the coming of the new urban working classes was played by the increase of popular literacy. It has been generally accepted that a significant working-class reading public came into being only with Forsters' Education Act of 1870 but major popular educational movements were taking place as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century. (2)

That enormous increase of the readership occurred partly thanks to the rapid spread of literacy encouraged by the enactment of new laws combined with the repeal of others: Among these, the repeal of the so called 'taxes on knowledge' as well as the removal of the stamp duty in 1855[1]. At the same time, laws preventing the poor from accessing education and reading material suddenly vanished. All of these united with an increase of the speed of printing, machine manufactured paper and cheaper paper-making materials, helped bringing cheap fiction before a mass audience. By the 1830s all the conditions were combined so that the working class would be able to access reading, except the reading material which would answer their interest.

### B- 'Manufactured to please you'

In order to fill the working-class's expectations and to attract them towards reading, industrials had to adapt and to manufacture a new product. As until then the working class had

[1] In Britain by the early 19th century, the cost of newspapers was beyond the working class means because of government taxes. Radicals and social reformers argued that these taxes prevented the working man from access to news and most importantly, knowledge. They described it as a 'Tax on Knowledge'. http://www.historyhouse.co.uk/articles/tax_on_knowledge.html

been excluded from reading apart from religious tracts, the new product had to enter in opposition with that boring material. Moreover, it had to be cheap, easy to read, exciting and with images (Springhall, *Disseminating* 571). The penny blood was then born as an answer the new demands of the Victorian consumer society. There were illustrations of monsters and villains, the images were violent, bloody and explicit for the sake of most of the readers who could actually barely read. Titles multiplied and format grew in size to attract the reader, it took little by little the appearance of what we still know today, with large sheets, texts and headlines in columns.[2] Attracting the poor towards reading was easy. What is more attractive than something which was until then forbidden? The most challenging issue was to keep the reader; to retain the customer. That is what led to the creation of serialized fiction. The interest in the penny bloods increased rapidly from the mid nineteenth century onwards so that the penny blood publishing trade generally became a significant aspect of London's commercial development (Springhall, *Disseminating* 567). A capital phenomenon had appeared, the first serialized fiction for urban masses of which influence is no longer to prove today: according to Egoff 'in format, illustration, content and popularity penny dreadful were matched only by the rise and influence of the comic book in the mid twentieth century".

Even though we are starting to prove the interest of the penny blood as well as its increasing value nowadays, by the Victorian Era it has often been considered as cheap literature.

## 2- Cheap Literature

As it had been manufactured for the working class, penny bloods had always been literature for the poor. An easy short cut would be then to label it as cheap literature. The penny bloods were definitely not expensive but does it mean they were worthless?

### A- 'It isn't worth a penny!'

At a time when a 'penny saved was a penny earned', the penny blood had a huge success mainly thanks to its competitive price - from where it took its name. That price was due to the fact that the penny dreadful was edited on cheap paper. Read in instalments, it was then the greatest source of reading material in a place for one penny. Unfortunately, the reason why it was so cheap was also the reason why only a moiety of this literature has survived:

[2] The Museum of Printing and graphic communication, a team-player in the graphic arts, Lyon. February 2018

> It was printed on easily torn paper, and the quality of illustration and repetitive story left no encouragement to readers to preserve the weekly instalments once they had been read. There were too many uses for papers. (…) Moreover, Museum had no interest in these works, especially as they were not copyright, and today their scarcity gives the few surviving copies inflated values (James XVII).

Thanks to and maybe partly because of its price, that reading material was exclusively dedicated to the working class. Always according to Louis James in his study on popular literature, it had neither been nor dedicated nor read by any other readership than the one it was destined to (James XVII).

In spite of its numerous qualities, and among these the fact that it helped popularizing literature, the penny dreadful remains today an unknown genre. If by the 1830's the penny dreadful became by far 'the most alluring and low-priced form of escapist reading available to ordinary youth' (Springhall, *Healthy* 107), by 1890 the interest in penny bloods, stamped as 'Edward Lloyd style penny bloods'[3], already started to decline with the advent of cheap Sunday newspapers and weekly illustrated magazines also publishing serialized novels. This gave to the reader three or four times as much reading material of the same kind for the same price (Hitchman quoted by Raven 820) and the huge innovation which was the penny blood was quickly replaced by another huge innovation. Such is consumer society.

That short period of popularity combined to the fact that only few penny bloods are remaining today may be the reason of such a lack of knowledge of the genre itself. However, penny bloods mustn't be considered as 'cheap literature' as they well represent the fringe of society to which it was dedicated during a certain amount of time: the Penny Boys.

### B- Penny Boys

By 1860, the potential juvenile (aged between ten and twenty) reading public represented more than 20% of the population with the largest concentrated target group for the penny dreadful in London (more than 30%). That extension of the penny blood reading public in London was induced by an increasing demand for boy labour, relying on well-paid but unskilled errand boy jobs (typical characteristics of the late Victorian London economy).

The fringe of the population targeted by the penny bloods was the working-class young boys newly arrived in London and working as then "there was no languishing young lads" in the streets (Rymer 1). A readership profile which can only remind us of the character of Tobias in

[3] Denomination derived from the very name of one of the most prolific Londonian publisher who published Sweeney Todd, a label coined by Springhall, John. "'Pernicious Reading'?' The Penny Dreadful' as Scapegoat for Late-Victorian Juvenile Crime." *Victorian Periodicals Review* 27.4 (1994): 349.

the book except Tobias wished he had one of these "eventful daily lives".

In this respect, Tobias is a young lad, willing to learn and to work as he seems to be the only man to support his mother, a laundress in the temple. He is a boy, when we meet him for the first time, who is not even introduced by the narrator while we find him in the position of a victim, standing "in an attitude of trembling subjection" (3) before Sweeney Todd. The last name of Tobias being Ragg, a parallel is easy to draw with the noun 'rag' which stands for 'a newspaper, typically one regarded as being of low quality'[4]. Ragg in a rag, Tobias is the ideal subject of a penny dreadful, an all set character for identification. More commonly, a rag is 'a piece of old cloth, especially one torn from a larger piece, used typically for cleaning things'. Tobias Rag(g) is indeed part of a larger scale as he is the archetype of the Victorian lad. His portrait is ultimately drawn through his first dialogue with Todd:

> 'You are now my apprentice, that you have of me had board, washing, and lodging, with the exception that you don't sleep here, that you take your meals at home, and that your mother, Mrs Ragg, does your washing, which she may very well do, being a laundress in the Temple, and making no end of money: as for lodging, you lodge here, you know, very comfortably in the shop all day. Now, are you not a happy dog?'
> 'Yes, sir,' said the boy timidly.
> 'You will acquire a first-rate profession, and quite as good as the law.' (*sic* 3).

Without a doubt, Tobias had filled for a while the leisure time of some 'languishing young lads' during the Victorian era. In this respect, he certainly had some importance for them as not only did he embody them -the principal readership of the genre - but he also helped them to exorcise their thoughts and feelings. Ultimately, Tobias's story opened the 'penny boys' toward new perspectives: a criticism of their own position in society combined with the pleasure of reading.

### C- 'A penny for your thoughts'

For many men and women coming from the working class, the discovery of the world of books and more precisely of the penny dreadful was intensely exciting. William Lovett, on first going to a literary study group, declared that his 'mind seemed to be awakened to a new mental existence; new feelings, hopes and aspirations sprang up within me' (James 5). Penny dreadfuls had undeniably had a huge impact on literature in general and on readership as it helped educating people by alphabetization through the popularization of literature.

[4] English Oxford Dictionary online, definition of the word 'rag', https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/rag

According to Adam Smith in *The Wealth of Nations*, the popularization of literature and ultimately of education is capital for society as 'an educated man is an expensive machine which in the question of education, the stream of returns from a stock of education is monetized as an income flow' (118). His theory is appropriated by Stephen and Jacqueline M. Nicholas in *Male Literacy, "Deskilling," and the Industrial Revolution*, in which societies are shown to be more developed and efficient if they are educated: 'illiterate societies are likely to be poorer and slower growing: societies that are less able to adjust to structural changes than literates ones' (2). Here is an interesting case of intermingled revolutions with a drastic change stemming from another one: the industrial revolution paved the way to the access to literature, which accordingly nourished that industrial revolution. The new access to literature was hence considered as a great progress for society but that progress was not entirely altruistic. Society was waiting for a return on investment.

Actually, if the period was called the 'Age of Benevolence', according to Merriam Webster Dictionary the word 'benevolence' stands for the desire to do good to others, charitableness, an act of kindness, a charitable gift. During the industrial revolution, the education of the population was hence considered as a charitable gift from the government or maybe from the upper classes of society. The reading of cheap juvenile fiction for the urban masses was hence not well regarded and turned out to be finally opposed to the 'reward book literature which adults in power felt that they (the poor boys) should read' (Springhall, *Disseminating* 576). Controversely, serials about low life crime and mystery were often reprinted as they 'held a vicarious appeal for young metropolitan readers seeking a romantic escape from eventful daily lives' (576), which was in no way recommended for education. This is how and why the 'dreadful' label was adopted into common discourse. It happened on purpose in order to 'amplify social anxiety or moral panic over the latest commercial innovation directed at the young' (567). Penny dreadfuls represented the profusion of melodramatic and sensational, but generally harmless, serial novels but it was nevertheless, first and foremost a controversial commercial business.

How could a genre be plebiscited by an entire class of the society and decried by the rest of the population? That strong contrast between classes forces us to dig dipper and to this end to discover that the popular concerns depicted within the penny bloods may be seen as a denunciation of the exploitations endured by the working class during the Victorian Era.

## 3- An ‘Unpopular’ popular denunciation

Tobias’s above mentioned first introduction ‘in trembling subjection’ gives a clue on the entire oppressive atmosphere of the serial. During his first meeting with Sweeney Todd, Tobias’s already-admitted subjection is reinforced by a fatal threat uttered by the barber, as if trembling subjection was not a sufficiently submitted position: 'I'll cut your throat from ear to ear, if you repeat one word of what passes in this shop, or dare to make any supposition, or draw any conclusion from anything you may hear or see, or fancy you see or hear. Now you understand me - I'll cut your throat from ear to ear -do you understand me?' (Rymer 4). That deadly threat is emphasized, at the same time, by repetitions and a chiasmus (more precisely an antimetabole which is the repetition of words in successive clauses, but in transposed order; with ‘hear or see’ and ‘see or hear’). In that extract which is the first dialogue of the book, the theme is given for the entire serial.

If it is now an established concept that fictions can be used to give shape to, and exorcize, anxieties related to the period in which they are written. In the case of *Sweeney Todd,* a popular narrative dedicated to the future of the working class (the poor boys) it can be seen as a pamphlet to denounce the exploitation of the working class under a utilitarian minding and a doctrine of profit maximization at the end of the industrial revolution. While the new context of mass production and the rigid social system led to a logic of disparity and exploitation, the working class became an exploited category. From Tobias-Sweeney’s relationship, to Mrs Lovett’s dictate, the book gives an overview of the working-class situation.

### A- Peep through workhouse door

In the book, exploitation is mainly symbolized by Mrs Lovett’s cooks, who work alone with machines, isolated from the rest of society. At a time when people sold themselves to the workhouses in order to be able to survive, the story echoes popular Victorian concerns (Crowther 76).

The scene is settled in a hell-like underground factory and the workshop representation asserts the terrible working conditions, glossing over the savoury vapour – which we know to be the smell of cooked human flesh:

> There is a cellar of vast extent, and of dim and sepulchral aspect - some rough red tiles are laid upon the floor, and pieces of flint and large jagged stones have been hammered into the earthen walls to strengthen them; while here and there raise rough huge pillars (…) Here and there gleaming lights seem to be peeping out from furnaces, and there is a strange,

> hissing, simmering sound going on, while the whole air is impregnated with a rich and savoury vapour (85).

In the Victorian Era, workhouses were widespread and often depicted as dark, gloomy and oppressive. The comparison with a subsidiary of hell is pointed out by the sepulchral description of the place reminding of a cave, numerous allusions to the devil: 'Oh what an evil chance it was', 'house of terror', 'Mercy! What the devil do you mean by mercy?' entering in sharp contrast with invocations of God: 'Gracious Heavens!'. To some extent the smell of the pies combined with the vivid description of the noises coming from the ovens 'stewing, hissing, and spluttering' would echo the smell of the flesh as well as the groans of the damned roasting in fire and brimstone. These comparisons can be seen as a denunciation of the workhouses, which are depicted as inhuman, in the sense that it was not bearable by any human soul. Moreover, the horror of the situation did not entirely reside in the setting but first and foremost in the working conditions.

### B- The worker's portrait

The above mentioned all-industrialized manufactured environment is no other than Lovett's pie manufactory beneath the pavement of Bell-yard. The description of the work occurring there, takes place during a night-batch and richly depicts everyday working conditions. That vivid depiction enters in sharp contrast with the presence of a lonely man pointed out by an anaphora in 'there is but one':

> 'There is but one miserable light, except the occasional fitful glare that comes from the ovens where the pies are stewing, hissing, and spluttering in their own luscious gravy. There is but one man, too, throughout all the place, and he is sitting on a low three-legged stool in one corner, with his head resting upon his hands, and gently rocking to and fro, as he utters scarcely audible moans. (…)
>
> It seems astonishing that such a man, even with the assistance of Mrs Lovett, could make so many pies as are required in a day; but the system does wonders, and in those cellars there are various mechanical contrivances for kneading the dough, chopping up the meat, &c., which greatly reduce the labour.' (85)

Here, it is striking to discover that a lonely man is able to produce as many pies as London can eat but this is justified in the extract by the advance of mechanical contrivances which started to appear during the Victorian era. However, those new technologies are here no well portrayed as at the same time, they helped our poor cook to produce more and more but it also demotes him to very rank of a machine itself. Indeed, as a result of the maximization of profit, the cook progressively loses his own identity. He is depicted as a miserable object with a sad and soul-stricken wretched appearance with a pale and haggard face, deeply sunken eyes, 'a more perfect

picture of horror could not have been found'. Indeed, the man physically embodies his moral and mental malaise as he is forced to survive while he cannot fill any of all human needs: he is deprived of his freedom, his free will and his freethought as well:

> The new Cook 'I understand all that madam, … But how does the meat get there?'
> Mrs Lovett: 'that's no business of yours; so long as you are supplied with it, that is sufficient for you; and now I will go through the process of making one pie… and you will find with what amazing quickness they can be manufactured…' (89).

While the second cook outrages himself stating that he cannot stand this sort of thing, that he cannot 'be made into a mere machine for the manufacturing of pies' (158), being a worker and Mrs Lovett's employee and prisoner, he must not question the proceedings established by the owner. The maximization is well represented here with the notion of manufacturing quickly - don't think just do what you are asked for - which seems to precede assembly-line work and Fordism (a standardized social system based on mass production and mass consumption) [5]. This vision of unending consumption is dramatized through the serial with the consumption of the poor -who are exploited - by the scavengers (i.e the rich).

All in all, that unending circle of consumption is taken to the extreme with the chain of cooks. As a matter of fact, manufacturers are used by Mrs Lovett who is consuming them against their will and discarding them for a new one every two months (88). Here the consumer society is lengthened to the maximum with the poor being turned into a consumer good at the disposal of the rich. The whole story can then be seen as if it were all about the bleeding of the working-class in a work or starve, factory like environment, while they have no other issue for their survival. The wretch, under the name of Jarvis Williams is willing to take any job so as not to starve because he has no other choice: 'I am ragged wretch and, moreover, quite destitute (…) I am so situated that I am willing to do anything for a mere subsistence' (83).

With a complete portrayal of the Victorian worker depicted as demoted to the rank of machines, showed as a consumption good which is ultimately emphasized by dead ends. James Malcolm Rymer denounces at the same time the extreme industrialization of society and the working conditions with the exploitation of the poor by the rich.

[5] According to Meriam Webster dictionary, Fordism is a technological system that seeks to increase production efficiency primarily through carefully engineered breakdown and interlocking of production operations and that depends for its success on mass production by assembly-line methods

### C- Maximization of profit

On top of that, the book goes beyond a simple denunciation of the philosophy of capitalism by extending the maximization of profit not only to the workers but also to the physical body.

With the disappearance of the corpses of Sweeney Todd's victims the book echoes a contemporary working-class issue, which being the poorer portion of society, was the most likely to suffer the consequences of the 1832 Anatomy Act.

By 1st August 1832 the Anatomy Act 'C A P. LXXV', was passed in order to regulate schools of Anatomy. The act is divided within different points among these the rules of nomination of surgeons and practitioners in colleges (I), the nomination of inspectors of places (II) divided into districts (III) as well as the amount of their salary (VI). But the point VII, VIII and IX are the most interesting ones as they state that unclaimed bodies should be removed for Anatomical Examination in order to train future surgeons and hence solve the problem of shortage of supply of anatomy subject, but as well to stop the criminal activities related to it such as body trade, resurrectionism and murders (Leblond 113).

After the enactment of the act, there were strong conditions to claim a body. Among these you had to have expressed in writing during your lifetime that you did not want your body to undergo any medical examination after your death and the family had to have the money to bury the body within the 48 hours following the death. Regarding the particular case of the workhouse (VII), bodies of dead inmates could go to surgeons as the workhouse master became the legal owner of the body in case no one claimed it. The conditions to claim a body only relied on the family's ability to pay the convenient burial that is why the act only targeted the poor. The concept at the chore of this process is that the poor had lived at the ratepayers' expense during their lives that is why in death they had to return the favour and contribute - be useful to society (Hutton 126).

Theoretically, in free and competitive markets maximising profits ensures that resources are not wasted. The concept of maximization of profits genuinely extends here to the physical body, turning the corpses from a source of expense into a source of bodies for dissection and ultimately in the book, in food. In this respect, the core of the plot revolves around Mrs Lovett's pie shop, supplied by an underground factory turning human dead bodies into food. Then these delicious pies are sold to clerks among the quarter.

## Conclusion

By hinting at the economy of the Industrial Revolution, the book touches upon such broad topics as the division of labour, productivity, and free markets. Such topics which are covered by Adam Smith in the *Wealth of Nations*. According to Adam Smith the economic system is automatic, and, when left with substantial freedom, able to regulate itself. This is often referred to as the "invisible hand" meaning the ability to self-regulate and to ensure maximum efficiency. That economic vision with the invisible hand of Sweeney Todd, reaches its maximum efficiency regarding the maximization of profits through both the usage of the working class as a consumption good and an industrial tool, and murder: the dispossessing and recycling into food of Sweeney's clients.

Here in *Sweeney Todd* with no substantial but consequential freedom, the economic system reached its highest efficiency but it happens regardless of any moral code.

More than just a simple reverberation of *The Wealth of Nations*, through this book, James Malcolm Rymer denounces the struggle of the poor within a class-ridden society, a position which can remind us of the Marxian theory[6]. This political reading linked to the context of serialization of the book relies on the renewal of the working classes at that time when - having now access to education, being able to access reading and to have common cultural references - 'they ceased being called "the poor" and were referred to as "the working class"'. They thus became increasingly aware of their own position in society and above all they became aware of their unity.

After that, we shall follow the path of the common saying 'from rags to riches' to study the representation of the middle and upper classes within *Sweeney Todd*.

[6] According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, Marxism is a theory and practice of socialism including the labor theory of value, dialectical materialism, the class struggle, and dictatorship of the proletariat until the establishment of a classless society

# II – GOLD AND GLORY

Even if the book underscores and denounces the situation of the poor through the Victorian industrial exploitation, the rich are nonetheless neither unscathed nor forgotten. In this second part entitled **'Gold and Glory'**, we shall focus on the upper classes with the rich depicted both as victims and culprits. In a first part entitled **Bankable Victims** we shall depict the profile of the victims as well as the portrait of their executioner. In the second part entitled **Gold Digger** we shall then analyse the motive of the executioner, swinging between gold and glory. Finally, we shall focus on the victims as culprits since they seem to be condemned to **Capital Punishment for Deadly Sins.** This second part permits us to paint the most precise portrait possible of this upper class, echoing how it is showed within *Sweeney Todd.*

## 1- Bankable victims

If the link between the serial and its context intensifies the vision of a literary denunciation of the conditions of the poor, on second thoughts we shall take notice of the fact that the poor - disregarding the manufacturing process - are not the victims of that machination. As far as pies are concerned, the meat comes from the barber's victims who do not belong to the poor category otherwise they would not possess anything so enviable capable of attracting Sweeney's attention- such as a string of pearls, a great amount of money or just a nice (but ostentatious) accessory or piece of clothing.

In this part we shall focus on Sweeney's home as a **Dragon's Lair**, next by comparing and contrasting Todd and a dragon we shall be able to know more about Todd in a part entitled **The Wings of the Dragon** and finally we shall draw a parallel between Sweeney's and J.M Rymer's lives in a part entitled **Father of the Dragon.**

### A- The Dragon's Lair

In chapter XV entitled 'Tobias's Adventure during the Absence of Sweeney Todd', Tobias forces the door of Sweeney's cupboard in which he eventually finds all Sweeney's trophies. Among these feature: 'a volley of all hats of all sorts and descriptions, some looped with silver, some three cornered, and some square, that they formed quite a museum of that article of attire' (132). The accumulation of hats is emphasized by the repetition of 'some' which could be glossed by 'a certain quantity of'. Indeed, the article 'some' is unspecified as the speaker (Tobias) is not able to give an exact quantity of what he sees.

Furthermore, 'some' has an 'update value'[7] as it bestows existence upon an object especially if that existence was not proved until then. Here the use of the article 'some' asserts that Tobias's suspicion was right, now he has proof.

By going further into his investigation, Tobias discovers a series of rooms 'all partially furnished' (136) each of them dedicated to some categories of accessories sorted by genres:

> 'in the corner was an enormous quantity of walking sticks, some of which were of a very costly and expensive character, with gold and silver chased tops to them, and in another corner was a great number of umbrellas- in fact at least a hundred of them. Then there were boots and shoes lying upon the floor, partially covered up as if to keep them from dirt; there were thirty or forty swords of different styles and patterns many of them appearing to be very firm blades, and in one or two cases the scabbards were richly ornamented.' (133)

This long enumeration highlights the accumulation of objects which are a result of course, of an accumulation of crimes. After that discovery it seems obvious that the reason why Todd refuses to lease some parts of the house – including the two upper floors of the shop, is because he uses it to store numerous objects which belonged to his victims. Moreover, these objects seem to be of great value to him as he classifies them and protects them from dust and intruders. There is no mystery surrounding the origins of these items: "How could Sweeney Todd come by these articles, except by the murder of their owners?" (133). What's more, when he undertakes further research, Tobias finds in a locked old-fashioned-looking bureau of great size 'a great number of watches, gold chains, silver and gold, snuff-boxes, and a large assortment of rings, shoe-buckles, and brooches, all articles of great value.' (133).

By this proceeding Sweeney shows himself as the typical serial killer who not only gathers gold in a bulimic sort of way, as he cannot stop always wanting more, but also keeps trophies as a reminder of his victims (Canter, 27). The series of dark and bare rooms reminding one of a cave combined with the accumulation of gold and all kind of wealth in it, the very scene of the discovery of Sweeney's house mirrors a dragon's den.

If Sweeney's habits remind the reader of those of the mythical creature, we shall focus on the origins of the dragon in order to be able to further understand Sweeney's motive and moral code. By comparing and contrasting the two monstrous creatures we shall be able to perceive what put wings on the dragon.

[7] From the French 'vertue actualisatrice' by Lapaire and Rogé in *Linguistique et Grammaire de l'Anglais*

### B- The Wings of the Dragon

Originally, the dragon is a Chinese mythical creature supposed to bring luck. However, the dragon - as we, westerners, know it – comes from the Anglo-Saxon culture and more precisely from a Viking myth. It is from this myth that the fantasy, relying on an obsession for gold and an accumulation of richness, comes from: Fafnir, the brother of the king of the dwarves, 'had been rewarded with hoard of gold and gems by the gods. He was so afraid of losing it that he hid in a cave with it, and over the years he turned into a dragon form because of his obsession with the gold.' (Eason 48). In other versions however, it is after killing his own father in order to take the treasure he owned, and hiding in a cave with that gold that Fafnir, because of the evil he did, is transformed into a dragon. Regardless of the original myth, the habits of Sweeney Todd strongly recall the one of the old lizard. From this point, as in Fafnir's legends, there are two possibilities: either his obsession with gold is a result of his original depravity, or his depravity is a result of his need of wealth. And after having a look at his lair, it is hard to believe that Sweeney's unique aim is to make money in order to be able to escape his miserable existence someday.

With the strange chapters based on the first intent to sell the necklace (chapter VII entitled 'The Barber and the Lapidary') and after that, the subterfuge to achieve its goal (chapter XVI ; 'The Barber makes Another Attempt to Sell the String of Pearls'), it is incontestable that Sweeney's inner aim is to be rich as 'there can be no doubt but that the love of money was the predominant feeling in Sweeney Todd's intellectual organization' (128). But we can only wonder why he would do so: if at the beginning Sweeney Todd just wanted to escape his everyday life, the fact that he kept all these trophies in his own house, permits us to assume that money was not his unique motive.

We can assume that he kept all these proofs by vanity because if his real motive was money, he would have no reason to keep them. Perhaps he was afraid of being caught if he sold them – someone could follow this evidence which would eventually lead to him. We can also imagine that he may have kept these items only by pleasure of killing, as trophies.

### C- Father of the Dragon

After that portrait of Sweeney Todd and asking these questions about his life leitmotiv, we shall focus on the father of the dragon[8]: James Malcolm Rymer. Indeed, after wondering about Sweeney Todd's aim for killing we shall wonder about James Malcolm Rymer's aim for

[8] Title borrowed to Daenerys Targaryen, "the Mother of Dragons" in the TV series Game of Thrones

writing.

If it was already difficult to determine that the serial was written by him, it is no surprise that we do not know much about James Malcolm Rymer's life. According to the *Introduction to the Revised Edition of Sweeney Todd* written by Dick Collins in 2008, Rymer belonged to the working class as 'his father was an engraver, his mother a milliner and he was born in the third most deprived parish in England'. Even though it is said everywhere that he had been a civil engineer, he did not have any formal training and he does not appear in any professional register (IX). That is why we can reflect on his aim at writing. The fact that he was writing in order to earn a living is a strong possibility which is emphasized by the fact that he was quite young when the book was published. His working-class position seems to be complementary to his writer's statute as most of the penny dreadful writers, in spite of a huge business of publication, were not paid enough and hence "lived in the many courts or squared of Fleet street itself" (James 570). Just like Sweeney Todd it seems that James Malcolm Rymer's first motive in writing was to earn a living. However, if we deal with his story in depth we realize that even if he lived 'close to the infamous slum of Saffron Hill, he was a clerk in a Foreign office' (Collins VII). If he was a clerk then what was his reason for writing? From now on, we could ask the typical philosophical questions on art, was it for the sake and beauty of art itself, just for pleasure or else for the profit motive?

## 2- The Gold Digger

As in any investigations after having settled the process and the profile of the killer, we shall uncover his motives or his final aim. What is Sweeney's inner concern, what is his reason for becoming a serial killer? Gold, or glory? In a first part we shall focus on **The Profit Motive** of the villains, after that we shall draw a parallel with that profit motive and the typical businessman mindset in a part entitled **Fired by Profit,** finally we shall discover the final aim of these villains in a part entitled **Vying Among the Noblest.**

### A- The Profit Motive

If we dig deeper into the above-mentioned theory of maximization adopted by Mrs Lovett, it leads us to its compatible capitalist current in which resides 'the profit motive'. The 'profit motive' is the reason for a business existence to reap profit, the ultimate goal of the business being to make money. In short, it is the theory that individuals tend to pursue what is in their own best interests. Accordingly, businessmen seek to benefit themselves by maximizing

profits. That is what led Sweeney and Mrs Lovett to settle the perfect money-making business, based on the trade of human meat. He can hence conclude that profit was for both of them a motive for committing crimes. But was it their only motive?

Of course, Sweeney's first motive was money. It is emphasized in the book by the paragraph stating that Sweeney Todd had been, for the greater part of his life, 'aiming at the possession of extensive pecuniary resources, and, no doubt, by the aid of a superior intellect, and a mind full of craft and design, he had managed to make others subservient to his views' (129). However, if we go further through this analysis, according to the definition of the profit motive, by pursuing profit, the businessman 'pursue what is in his own best interest'. Regarding Sweeney Todd we can tightly wonder if he really pursued his best interest- in any other sense than pecuniary interest.

Making profit was not only Sweeney Todd's motive, but also Mrs Lovett's. Although Sweeney does not care about the acts he has to commit to be able to reach his aim, that is not the case of Mrs Lovett, which perhaps makes them different types of business partners. Even though Sweeney choses his victims in accordance with their wealth, he has, without a doubt also pleasure in killing.

### B- Fired by Profit

The need of wealth paving the way to the discovery of the pleasure of killing combined with his criminal past drew Sweeney Todd towards a vicious spiral of immorality and reprehensible acts:

> 'By a strange style of reasoning, such men as Sweeney Todd reconcile themselves to the most heinous crimes upon the ground of what they call policy. That is to say, that having committed some serious offence, they are compelled to commit a great number more for the purpose of endeavoring to avoid the consequences of the first lot.' (129).

As a matter of fact, his behaviour follows no moral code. The extract underscores an unending circle of moral depravity which can only lead to terrible consequences on a human heart: 'he looked like some fiend in human shape, who had just completed the destruction of a human soul.' (128). Sweeney Todd does not suffer at all the consequences of his forfeit. He does not feel guilty nor ashamed, which could be in fact, the sign that his soul had been entirely destroyed. Which is not the case of Mrs Lovett who, in the end, suffers the consequences of her acts as she has 'dreams', 'trembles violently', she looks 'very, very unwell' and 'is forced to drink or she would kill herself, or go mad' (242) and according to Sweeney, the worst enemy she ever had is in her head.

We could analyse this extract by stating that if you wanted to be a successful businessman during the Victorian era, you had to act without a moral code otherwise you would not entirely succeed. It is ultimately the case of Mrs Lovett who is finally killed by Sweeney through the bad habits she had as she is poisoned with her own Brandy. She is, in the end, finally punished for her crime, showing that the 'invisible hand' regulates the amount of exploitation by making the villains eliminate each other. This theory will be in the end, even more backed up by the fact that Sweeney's end will be brought about by this famous string of pearl. Even though Sweeney was really happy to have it back three times in a row, the string of pearls ends up precipitating Sweeney's fall, as if it were cursed.

Both Sweeney Todd and Mrs Lovett seemed to have attained the profit they were craving for with £20,000 for each of them: their pecuniary need has then been filled long ago. In the book the unending quest for wealth in business is shown as leading to awful consequences as it is always made in spite of any moral code. However, this lack of morality with the help of the invisible hand, of God, of fate, or maybe destiny, is ultimately punished. Before their fall Sweeney and Lovett could have ended their business partnership, in spite of Sweeney's love of killing but it seems that they could not get enough money which ultimately became to them an addiction as much as alcohol to Mrs Lovett. With that money, what was then their final prospect?

### C- Vying Among the Noblest

The final prospect of Sweeney Todd is unveiled at the second it seems to impose itself in his criminal mind, in the obviously-entitled chapter XIV: 'The Great Change in the Prospects of Sweeney Todd'. It seems that, after having enjoyed the pleasure of rich pomp under a disguise, the barber simply decided to start a new life among the rich – 'I am fully capable of vying with the highest and the noblest, let them be who they may'- an easy fresh start in a world dominated by appearances. If this prospect appears to be new regarding the character of Sweeney Todd, as for the character of Mrs Lovett she has always dreamt of appearing in the saloons of Paris (240). Their final prospects echo each other with the aim not only to earn money but as a consequence of it, to improve their social rank and integrate the upper spheres of society, placing thus, cultural life, manners and appearance at the centre of life, which is a reminder that the best achievement during the Victorian era was to reach a higher social status.

Once again, the inner aims of the villains echo the very story of the author himself. Even though J. M Rymer was from the working class, he was said to be 'a snob, a dilettante, a writer who talks down to his audience whom he despises' (VIII) which enters in sharp contrast with

the fact that 'whatever his inspirations, he was writing for *people like himself*'. This new light on James Malcolm Rymer's life asserts the fact that the author may have written in order to improve his statue in society by considering (as well as Sweeney Todd) that he was fully capable of vying with the noblest.

From now on, it is certain that the principal character of the plot has plenty of common points with its author. If James Malcolm Rymer and Sweeney Todd both wanted to earn money in their prospects, they also wanted to earn fame in order to be able to mix with the upper classes of society. They seem to be both fascinated by Gold and Glory. Let's hope that their common points end here. However, we will not be able to say so as we know more about Todd than about Rymer.

By settling in this part that the invisible hand ultimately regulates the balance between good and evil by punishing the villains, it is striking to discover that in spite of the gloomy plot, God and a strong sense of morality are omnipresent in the serial. That sense of morality embodies the condemnation of numerous sins of society by the writer himself. Indeed, it is often said that during the process of writing the author gives shape to his own vision of the world and can hence through the peregrinations of his characters carry on the reign of his own morality. In short, he is the God of his book.

## 3- Capital punishment for deadly sins

From a working man's point of view, guided by the vision of the writer himself, the reader cannot help thinking that on the one hand Sweeney is a mad fiend and the worse kind of serial killer, and on the other hand that maybe the victims partially deserved what happened to them. In the book the rich are far from being depicted as being "as good as gold". As a matter of fact, their encounter with Sweeney Todd and Mrs Lovett can be seen as a punishment for the cardinal sins they have previously committed, among these **Pride, Envy and Lust, Greed**, **Gluttony**, **Sloth and Temptation**, known on the seven deadly sins, with a pun on the word 'deadly' obviously! [9]

[9] We shall remind the reader that Temptation is not a Cardinal Sin; the seventh sin being Wrath. However, temptation is a recurrent issue in the bible especially when Jesus fasted for 40 days and nights in the Judaean Desert. During this time, Satan appeared to Jesus and tried to tempt him but Jesus having refused each temptation, the Devil finally departed.

### A- Pride, envy and lust

As already one can assume that the social rank of the victims is definitely a criterion for their selection as preys in Sweeney's mind, as he ultimately envies their position and their social success. More than just a treasure, it is their vanity and their bluster that kill Sweeney Todd's victims: most of them made the unfortunate decision to chat about their luck or to put their possessions before the eyes of Sweeney Todd. By Sweeney's envy they are punished for their imprudence. Their glowing presence ultimately enters into sharp contrast with what is left of them after 'the shaving': 'the vacant chair where the customer had been seated' (6).

### B- Greed

The rich or a least the middle classes were not only once but twice the victims of Sweeney Todd, indeed if some of them are slaughtered by the razor, the rest – anyone able to spend a certain amount of money for a pie - is fattened with human flesh at his expense. Indeed, we shall shift our focus on one of the abovementioned accomplices of Sweeney Todd: the greedy Mrs Lovett and her lucrative pie shop in Bell Yard; The entire business residing in the perfect money-making process.

Regarding this gloomy process of earning money, we shall wonder where the idea came from, a morbid imagination or an actual event? There are no records of Sweeney Todd in any court documents (no Mrs Lovett nor Tobias Ragg either), and no record of a barber shop located on Fleet Street. There's no birth certificate and no death certificate. However, it is striking to discover that the story was not entirely a figment of James Malcolm Rymer's imagination as it comes from a real event which occurred in Paris during the XV century. The scene happened in the rue des Marmousets and relies on the collaboration of two men: a barber and a baker; The barber killing his clients sending the hatched meet to his neighbour through a trap door and the baker making pies with it (Du Breul). Was it also by greed that James Malcolm Rymer chose to appropriate this story, which he decided to set in London, his city, in order to encourage the addiction and identification of the working-class reader and hence become popular.

### C- Gluttony

During the Victorian era the expression 'Bags o' Mystery' was commonly used. It is a term dating back to1850 and referring to sausages - because 'no man but the maker knows what they are made of.'[10] That is the case of Mrs Lovett's delicious pies – maybe we

[10] From the website oxford reference on15th May 2018
http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199640249.001.0001/acref-9780199640249-e-1434

could call them crust of mystery - the entire area, especially the clerks working in the Temple, are addicted to them – as 'high and low, rich and poor, resorted to it; its fame had spread far and wide; and it was because the first batch of those pies came up at twelve o'clock that there was such a rush of the legal profession to obtain them.' (26). However, no one knows what they are made of, believing in a grim trade secret based on a well-protected recipe or a secret ingredient. That secret special touch is nothing other than human flesh. The first description of the pies is preceded by a sort of trailer, the mysterious narration of a major event occurring in the area and leading to a stampede. This event is emphasized by a breathless enumeration combined with rhetorical questions and anaphors in 'no' and 'all this' as well as a series of nominalizations:

> 'Bell-yard is almost choked up, and a stranger would wonder what could be the matter, and most probably stand in some doorway until the commotion was over. Is it a fire? is it a fight? or anything else sufficiently alarming and extraordinary to excite the members of the legal profession to such a species of madness? No, it is none of these. (…) No, the enjoyment is purely one of a physical character, and all the pacing and racing - all this turmoil and trouble - all this pushing, jostling, laughing, and shouting, is to see who will get first to Lovett's pie-shop.' (26).

Any yielding to temptation can be forbidden as long as it is reasonable and reasoned. This does not apply to the Clerks as their gluttony does not end here. No one forced them to consume so many pies, but they still 'went on consuming the pies until they were almost ready to burst' (27).

### D- Sloth & Temptation

The clerks of the quarter are addicted to the pies and many of them, who supposedly came only for lunch, stayed to dine (26). Which finally leads us to think that the clerks rather prefer giving in to temptation and to sloth to working and earning a living. In fact, everybody in the area is punished as everybody is yielding to the call of the pies at lunch time, which literally creates an exodus to Bell Yard reminding us of the exodus towards the promised land in the bible, only here it is just for pies. When the pies finally come to light - come to light is here the right saying, as we must remind the reader that they are manufactured in a dark and gloomy underground factory – even a simple depiction makes our mouth water as their description honours the reputation they are said to deserve. However, we shall here follow our metaphora by stating that if the pies come from an underground factory, they may as well come from hell. Here 'the

flavour is never surpassed, and rarely equaled. The paste of the most delicate construction impregnated with the aroma of a delicious gravy that defies description' (26) can be seen as manufactured by the devil itself. This attraction towards temptation cannot help reminding us of the episode of Adam and Eve yielding to the temptation of the apple which ultimately led them to be expelled from the Garden of Eden. By yielding to temptation and into numerous sins, the Golden boys of the Temple could not imagine that they were fattened from human flesh in order to, when their time had come, be turned into a pie too. By turning their backs on the light in order to enjoy a life of sin, their death can then be seen as the appropriate punishment.

## Conclusion

After such an analysis, death seems to be the 'right' punishment for such an accumulation of sins. Indeed, in the serial, death is omnipresent and unfortunately for the lot is the ultimate destiny of all. However, it might happen sooner than expected as 'now that his views were answered' Sweeney's accomplices are 'no longer required'. More than that, Sweeney Todd's vision for the future is incompatible with the survival of his previous life:

> 'They shall die,' said Sweeney Todd, 'dead men tell no tales, nor women nor boys either, and they shall all die, after which there will, I think, be a serious fire in Fleet Street. Ha! ha! it may spread to what mischief it likes, always provided it stops not short of the entire destruction of my house and premises.' (129).

On the comparison of Sweeney with the dragon, a final parallel is easy to draw between the mythical creature and Sweeney's fantasy to reduce Fleet Street to ashes.

# III- ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT GOLD

If only one saying must be chosen to describe the entire content of Sweeney Todd it will be 'don't judge a book by its cover'. Overall, we highlighted the fact that the penny blood genre shouldn't be judged as an inferior genre of literature and that the smallest piece of rag can be used to denounce the conditions of a class of society and the behaviour of another. More than that, throughout the book a game of appearances is played. This distortion occurs through dialogues, appearances and writing, and the characters are not the only ones to be deceived: it is also the case of the reader. While the penny dreadful appears from now on as a denunciation of the conditions of the poor, humour is nonetheless omnipresent in the serial. It gives to *Sweeney Todd* a tone of levity which is very welcome regarding the controversial content of the writing.

In a first part entitled **Behind Glitters** we shall focus on the games of appearances in the book, as nothing is as it seems to be at first sight. In a second part, **Speech is Silver but Silence is Gold**, we shall focus on language as a deception tool from the characters but also from the authors, but most of all as a vehicle of humour. Finally, in a third part entitled **Don't Judge a Book by its Cover**, we shall focus on the game of appearances played by the author through this book which raises numerous contradictions and unsolved questions.

## 1- Behind Glitters

In this first part we shall try to erase the glitters in order to be able to see the naked truth. We shall hence not only point at **Distortion** as a medium to abuse the reader's attention, but also at **A game of Appearances** with the characters of the book having physical appearances echoing more or less their true nature.

### A- Distortion

Throughout the serial, a tight stratagem is settled to abuse the reader's attention, especially through the description of the staging. It occurs particularly when the lector starts to skim the abominable plot based on the entente between Lovett and Todd. As a consequence of the need to entertain suspense, the pies secret ingredient is concealed behind a refined description of Lovett's pie shop which is depicted as the hub of Fleet street. It is actually the crossroads where all of our characters eventually meet without noticing each other, a place of

work of appointments but also a place where gossiping first circulate, and where all the problems of the world are solved – twice in the books characters are in trouble and are recommended to have a pie as a solution: '"I don't know what to do." "Have another pie." (28) - all of this in a good-natured atmosphere. This atmosphere is even described as being 'magic' (27) with Mrs Lovett's renowned smile, the customers are shown as 'lucky to be here', their fortune brought to light by the form of the inn: the shape of a horse-shoe. And, even Tobias, our hero, cannot resist the call of the pie.

Notwithstanding, clues are spread to the reader in order for him to watch his step. From the beginning of the book the reader's trust swings as he does not know whom he should trust. Indeed, one of the recurrent questions the reader asks himself is: is the narrator reliable? As a matter of fact, while the story unfolds, the narratee if often evoked as he is considered by the narrator as a friend or an accomplice, for instance during chapter four: 'but possibly our readers guessed as much'. The narratee's evocations are often glosable by 'you know what I mean' but the fact is that the reader does not know at all, as he does not have the global vision of the story that the narrator has.

Namely, at the beginning of the serial, the lector starts to learn to know Sweeney Todd and almost gets used to his wickedness especially towards his apprentice. What a surprise then, when Sweeney shows himself conciliatory when he sees Tobias arriving late with a pie in his hands:

> ''well, Tobias! so you could not resist the pie-shop?'
>
> 'How does he know?' thought Tobias. 'Yes, sir, I have been to the pie-shop, but I didn't stay a minute.'
>
> 'Hark ye, Tobias! the only thing I can excuse in the way of delay upon an errand is for you to get one of Mrs Lovett's pies: that I can look over, so think no more about it. Are they not delicious, Tobias?'
>
> 'Yes, sir, they are'" (30).

After that, the reader is not able to decide whether Sweeney is, in fact, able to be kind and conciliatory with his apprentice…or if one trick is being played here, and as a simple witness he is not able to perceive it. Because when the lector needs the narrator's comment to understand the scene, there is none. In short, the narrator is a strong deception tool in the serial at he comments on the scene only to distil doubt in the reader's mind and hence to foster suspense. Moreover, not only the descriptions of the scenes by the narrator are deceptive but also the appearances of the characters.

### B- 'Don't Take Things at Face Value'

The deception of appearance is a typical Victorian game played by our two villains (Attar 125). We shall focus first on our eponymous hero, Sweeney Todd, for, be that as it may, his appearance is not deceptive at all:

> The barber himself was a long, low jointed, ill-put together sort of fellow, with an immense mouth, and such huge hands and feet, that he was, in his way, quite a natural curiosity; and, what was more wonderful, considering his trade, there never was seen such a head of hair as Sweeney Todd's (Rymer 2).

Sweeney Todd is here depicted as monstrous and his description is the one of an ogre which can only give the reader a clue of his scavenger nature. His terrible appearance is not at all shaded by any quality and is only darkened by some sudden traits:

> He had a short disagreeable kind of unmirthful laugh (…) It was evident that the remembrance of some very strange and out-of-the-way joke must occasionally flit across him, and then he gave his hyena-like laugh, but it was so short, so sudden, striking upon the ear for a moment, and then gone, that people have been known to look up to the ceiling, and on the floor, and all round them, to know from whence it had come, scarcely supposing it possible that it proceeded from mortal lips (2).

His portrait is thus even more emphasized by sudden burst in his behaviour, a demoniac laugh to a joke he is the only one to understand, and which seems to be inhuman. His physical appearance should have been seen by his victims as a warning of his inner depravity. Whereas a common saying states that 'you shouldn't judge a book by its cover', it is wrong with Sweeney who is even uglier on the inside than he is on the outside. 'With such a man, then, no question of morality or ordinary feeling could arise, and there can be no doubt but that he would quite willingly have sacrificed the whole human race, if, by doing so, he could have achieved any of the objects of his ambition.' (128).

In the book one character enters into sharp contrast with Sweeney as she seems to be, physically as well as morally, his entire opposite. It is Johanne Oakley. Her purity is only echoed by her flawlessness as she depicted as "a creature of the rarest grace and beauty" (10), and her 'pure soul' is named numerous times throughout the serial. As much physically as morally she seems to be the complete opposite of the character of Sweeney Todd and can be, as for her, compared and contrasted with the interesting character of Mrs Lovett.

In fact, pages of description are devoted to this particular character who embodies the deception of appearances so well because at first sight, she seems to be everything but evil:

> 'There was a Mistress Lovett, for what but a female hand, and that female buxom, young and good-looking, could have ventured upon the production of those pies. Yes, Mrs Lovett

> was all that; and every enamoured young scion of the law, as he devoured his pie, pleased himself with the idea that the charming Mrs Lovett had made that pie especially for him' (27)

The description of Mrs Lovett which looks flattering, and seductive at first sight cannot help reminding us of the Apple evoked earlier in this memoire. Mrs Lovett appears to be the forbidden fruit, as much as the pies she bakes (which would eventually lead the clerks to commit another cardinal sin; for instance, the lust for sexuality). More than compared with the apple itself, Mrs Lovett can be assimilated to the snake in the bible as 'the serpent who tempts Eve to eat of the Tree'. That vision combines the idea of a religious contempt with the game on appearances as, such as Mrs Lovett, the snake 'was more subtle than any beats of the field' (Gen.3.1) The comparison of Sweeney Todd with a dragon is here echoed by the comparison of Mrs Lovett with a snake, both of them being cunning and sly.

If she looks seductive and attractive at first sight, throughout page 27 and the conduct of her introduction, the discovery of her features turns gradually sour and seems to echo her reptilian, cold-hearted morality:

> 'there were others of a more philosophic turn of mind, who (…) declared that her smile was cold and uncomfortable - that it was upon her lips, but had no place in her heart - that it was the set smile of a ballet-dancer, which is about one of the most unmirthful things in existence'.

Until the reader ultimately discovers that he should – as well as most of the characters in the serial- beware, since people are not often what they seem to be: 'others again swore that Mrs Lovett had quite a sinister aspect, and that they could see what a merely superficial affair her blandishments were, and that there was 'a lurking devil in her eye'" (27).

Inasmuch as Sweeney Todd's sinister features reflect his inner ugliness – he is said to be 'as ugly as the very devil'- Mrs Lovett's appearance is deceptive at first sight and the reader shall discover throughout the serial that not only the narrator's descriptions are deceptive but also appearances. Whereas Mrs Lovett has a natural shape willing to dissimulate her sinister mindset of a witch fattening her victims, that is not the case of Sweeney Todd who needs to be disguised in order to abuse the rich – he would not make the effort to do so with his fellow Templers.

In this respect, numerous references to appearances as a typical feature of the upper classes are made in the book. Throughout chapter XVI entitled 'The Barber Makes Another Attempt to Sell the String of Pearls', Sweeney goes through all the possible categories of self-care to distort and embellish his image: a suit of clothes, shoes, silk stockings, gloves, lace, cravats, ruffles, a carriage, make up and a valet are bought (120). This entire chapter is dramatized by the fact that Tobias takes delivery of all this material which is all crafted and delivered by the poor, among them tailors and of course the recurrent feature of the Victorian

boy. In spite of the sharp contrast, humour emanates from the scene thanks to Tobias' misunderstanding of Sweeney's scheme and ultimately Sweeney's appearance. Indeed, Sweeney relies on all possible clichés in order to turn himself into a living caricature of the rich:

> 'out came Sweeney Todd, attired in the very height of fashion for the period. His waistcoat was something positively gorgeous, and his fingers were loaded with such costly rings that they quite dazzled the sight of Tobias to look upon; then, moreover, he wore a sword with a jewelled hilt' (122).

All of these efforts are made to abuse John Mundel (which to the ear sounds like 'mondain'), so that he would lend Sweeney his money. This stratagem ultimately works since when the money lender's servant reported to Mundel that the equipage was a costly one, and that, in his opinion, the visitor must be a nobleman of great rank, John Mundel rolls out the red carpet to welcome Sweeney Todd (124) since from a mondain point of view, Sweeney seems to be someone not to miss, and someone to impress.

As much as a mean of deception, appearance is a means of denouncing the foolishness of the upper classes of society as well as the ruling class - which ultimately enter into sharp contrast with the working-class concerns. By caricaturing the rich as well as the politicians, the author can both criticize and mock them at the same time: 'great conquerors and great statesmen, (…) are now held to public ridicule with dabs of rouge upon their cheeks, a quantity of gunpowder scattered in for a beard, and some bristles sticking on end for eyebrows' (2). That depiction can have a multiplicity of interpretations. Among these, a way to emphasize the fact that the politicians are too busy enjoying the faste of their status to take care of the real concerns faced by society. Another effect of this caricature is to compare politicians to clowns with their tons of make-up, highlighting the fact that they are like puppets. Moreover, their appearance reminds us of the appearance of XVII century kings, such as Louis XIV, all powerful rulers facing neither criticism nor contestation.

Once again, the author is able to distort a serious subject to make the reader laugh. If appearances and description were an easy way to abuse the working-class new-born reader, the discovery of literature paved the way to the discovery of words and discourse in which an enormous amount of possibilities to create deception and humour resided.

## 2- Speech is silver but silence is gold

In this second part we shall have a look at the importance of humour through language. Among the possibilities offered by languages to create both deception and humour appear **Dramatic Irony** and **Double Talk** all of which, while well-handled ultimately lead to **Gallows Humour.**

### A- Dramatic irony

If you read the serial for the second or the third time, you will finally be able to notice the jumble of evidences leading to the understanding of the plot's mystery. Those are left by the narrator to the reader from the first chapter. This eventually leads the reader to understand the ins and outs of the plot. Indeed, the strong suspicion or intuition of the reader can finally guide him toward the remark and the understanding of dramatic irony. Dramatic irony is a literary device by which the audience's or reader's understanding of events or individuals in a work, surpasses that of its characters.[11] Throughout the story, humour is ubiquitous and resides principally in dramatic irony:

> 'I'll cut your throat from ear to ear, if you repeat one word of what passes in this shop, or dare to make any supposition, or draw any conclusion from anything you may see, or hear, or fancy you see or hear. Now you understand me - I'll cut your throat from ear to ear -do you understand me?' (4).

Once you have discovered the true plot of the book, which happens way before the characters do, you can only smile at such a quote. Little by little, you realize that - like the characters in the book- you have been deceived by that explicit double-talk you were not able to understand at first sight.

Another striking example of this strong deception though language is the episode occurring after Mr Wrankley paid a visit to his barber and mysteriously never came back. Mrs Wrankley decides then to look for him and pays a visit to Mrs Lovett in order to ask her if she has not seen him. At this moment, the reader – contrary to the protagonists of the book- is well aware of Todd-Lovett's business and knows that Mr Wrankley had been 'shaved' by Sweeney and was eventually turned into a pie. As the reader is now in on the secret, Mrs Wrankley is the only one not be able to detect the absurdity and the awfulness of the situation:

> 'I have not eaten anything since he went out'
> 'then buy a pie madam. (…) and you may take my word for it, you will soon see *something*

[11] Definition of 'dramatic irony' according to Britannica Dictionary online visited on the 16th May 2018 https://www.britannica.com/art/dramatic-irony

of Mr Wrankley. (…) I dare say you will know what has become of him someday, soon.' (244).

Here the humorous aspect based on dramatic irony is striking. The innocent Mrs Wrankley understands that Mrs Lovett is trying to comfort her by telling her that her husband will come back soon enough. On a second level of interpretation you understand that Mrs Lovett doesn't care about Mrs Wrankley's problems and is just here to sell pies. On a third level of interpretation you understand that if she buys the pie, Mrs Wrankley will get her husband back in the form of a pie. Finally, on a fourth level of interpretation the reader is able to fully understand the absurdity of the heartless suggestion of Mrs Lovett: If Mrs Wrankley buys and eats the pie which is made of Mr Wrankley – which she ultimately does – someday soon she will know what has become of him, suggesting that, Mrs Wrankley will be able to see her husband again… after digestion. Here, once again clues are given by the narrator to help the reader to understand the humorous aspect of the scene with the use of italics. Through '*something'* the narrator puts an emphasis on a word and attracts the reader's attention to it. At the same time, he puts the prosodic stress on it as if it were only the written transcription of the natural stress pattern, characteristic of a given speech and he makes the eye of the reader notice that this word has a particular signification which could once again be interpreted by 'you know what I mean'.

In this second part it is quite difficult to deal with dramatic irony without making the link with double-talk. Both of them are intermingled and it is the combination of the two which leads to such a humorous content.

### B- Double talk

Dramatic Irony is, indeed, in the serial upgraded by double-talk. When you refer to something someone says as double-talk, you mean that it can deceive people or is difficult to understand because it has two possible meanings.[12] Throughout the book, double-talk is omnipresent. For instance, the rest of the penultimate quote after Tobias had bought a pie at Lovett's: 'Yes, sir, I won't say nothing. I wish, sir, as I may be made into veal pies at Lovett's in Bell Yard if I as much as says a word.' (4). Poor Tobias is not able to detect that his unfortunate comparison was so close to the truth and the reader is not able to detect it either as he is not yet acquainted with the plot.

[12] Definition of 'double talk' according to Collins Dictionary online visited on the 16th May 2018 https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/double-talk

From page 1, numerous clues are left to the reader so that he would be able to guess the content of the plot and detect that double language – especially from Mrs Lovett who a mistress of speech. For instance, when the new cook tries to talk about his forbiddance to leave the factory with Mrs Lovett assuming that he would be able to leave anytime he wants with her consent, Mrs Lovett answers that 'everybody who relinquishes the situation, goes to his old friends, whom he has not seen for many years, perhaps' (89). Which leads to a first 'warning' from Jarvis Williams (i.e Mark Ingestrie) to the reader so that he would be able to understand what the character himself cannot: 'What a strange manner of talking she has! (…) There seems to be some singular and hidden meaning in every word she utters." (89). And indeed, while he understands that Mrs Lovett would let him go but only has a weird manner of putting words together, he is wrong, as it was a threat to kill him. It is only after the discovery of the plot (or after a second reading) that the reader is fully able to enjoy the dimension of double language emphasized by dramatic irony in which resides the entire humorous content of the penny blood.

After the study of all the double-talk present in the book, that reader is able to realize that one more time, the clerks are shown to deserve that trick Lovett and Todd played them. Moreover, through double-talk, clerks are somehow shown as accomplices of that extension of maximization of profit when one of them confesses: 'I'd eat my mother if she was a pork chop, done brown and crisp, and the kidney in it; just fancy it, grilling hot, you know, and just popped on a slice of bread, when you are cold and hungry.' (241).

The entire principle of dramatic irony resides, in deception. Mrs Lovett's clients are deceived by Mrs Lovett's appearance which is in sharp contrast with Sweeney Todd's appearance. Indeed, if Mrs Lovett is so good at double-talk it may be because her entire appearances is deceptive and it is precisely the only way for her to let go of her inner monstrosity.

Nonetheless, if double talk is a deception emanating from the villains, dramatic irony is a strategy adopted by the author. The villains and the author seem then to be in connivance so that together they are able to deceive the reader and make him loose his way through pretence. Indeed, in *Sweeney Todd*, for the sake of humour both the reader and the characters are highly deceived, but the reader is never disappointed

### C- Gallows Humour

According to the Oxford Dictionary online, Gallows Humour is 'Grim and ironic humour in a desperate or hopeless situation.'[13] which seems to fit exactly the situation. Unfortunately, behind humour real truth hides and among these a reflection of the well settled social structure of the time. For instance, for the upper classes, the inner right to use and abuse society as they are superior. For example, they are shown as able to enjoy what the inferior fringe of society would not be able to appreciate at fair value:

> 'You see, some patients, who are low and melancholy mad, require stimulants, and their friends send them wine. (…) This wine, now, was sent for an old gentleman who had turned so melancholy, (…)and, as stimulants were recommended for him, they sent this wine, you see; but I stimulated him without it quite as well, for I drink the wine myself and give him such an infernal good kick or two every day, and that stimulates him, for it puts him in such a devil of a passion that I am quite sure he doesn't want any wine.' (166).

The extract under scrutiny is riddled with humour but it is however, hard to laugh at it if you take it at face value. As a matter of fact, gallows humour is not understandable nor appreciated by anyone and this controversial sense of humour may have caused James Malcolm Rymer's reputation to be posh and condescending towards the working-class. As already quoted on page 24 of this memoire, 'it has led to a view of him as a snob, a dilettante, a writer who talks down to his audience whom he despises.' Moreover, 'He was seen as a less successful, less talented Dickens, reduced as to his station in life and forced to peddle Lloyd's 'caviare to the general' (VIII). Seen from this point of view, *Sweeney Todd* can be considered as a precursor of the roman noir, etched with humour noir, all of this in the form of a serial in newspapers. A new genre which has no equivalent today and which has never been recognized as a proper genre of literature: the penny blood. But as it was already dangerous to denounce the state of society, could we laugh at it? All of this combined with gloomy and bloody stories? Can it be done in any paper? And by any author? We could here quote Desproges who stated that 'on peut rire de tout mais pas avec nimporte qui' which means, 'you can laugh at anything but not with anyone'. Indeed, by trying to handle gallows humour, James Malcolm Rymer took a risk which somehow revealed unsuccessful and which unfortunately did him wrong as it tarnished his reputation.

[13] Definition of Gallow Humour according to the Oxford Dictionnarieshttps://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/gallows_humour

## 3- **Don't judge a book by its cover**

As already proved in the first part of this essay, literature should not be labelled with genre as it led people to consider that penny bloods were cheap literature. Even though we proved that it was not so, we shall in this last part underline some oppositions among these the fact that *Sweeney Todd* may be a **Rag but** it is **not a Draft**, after that we shall back up this idea through an analysis of the **Contradictory References** present in the book so that we shall finally focus on the artistic dimension of the book under scrutiny in a part entitled **Beauty.**

### A- A Rag but not a Draft

As an echo to the setting in which the plot is set (Victorian London), the structure of the book is labyrinthic. All the stories of distinct characters who, at the beginning seem to have nothing to do with each other, are finally intermingled into one. Even though studies tend to say that penny bloods were often written from one day to the other, and that they were often the fruit of plural authors, it cannot be the case of Sweeney Todd. We shall accept the fact that some chapters may have been written by other authors as it is difficult to link them with the rest of the plot, but the overall story cannot be the result of a mere succession of chapters written in a hurry and imbricating at some point.

On account of the work on language and the allusion and clues left to the readers as the white pebbles of Hop-o'-My-Thumb toward the plot, there is no doubt that the intrigue had been well tied up and well thought out. Indeed, the puns and doubles talk left from the first page prove that from the very beginning the global plot had been settled.

From that point of view, we shall meditate on the aim of James Malcolm Rymer as a writer. For instance, at first sight from his working-class point of view, he denounces the situation of the poor and criticizes the rich. However, at the same time, he respects the codes and conventions of literature which had been settled by the upper classes of society. Among these: characterizations (with the book opening on the setting followed by the introduction of the most important characters), respect of the codes (spelling, grammar), respect of conventions with the use of shared and habitual ways of the system (chapters, titles, paragraph structure) … But even though Rymer respected the codes of literature he also went beyond them though the creation of a new genre of literature. Indeed, the serial imposes himself as the precursor of roman noir, etched with humour noir all of this in the form of a serial in newspapers.

If the writer supposedly came from the working class which during the publication of the book only had recently access to literature, how could he be such a master of language? And was his art accessible to the less educated and less cultivated fringe of population? If James Malcolm Rymer wrote for the poor and their concerns, he nonetheless showed a writing technique and references which were far from being those of a draft and which gave to *Sweeney Todd* all the ingredients for being a masterpiece.

### B- Contradictory References

The book is riddled with numerous references, in this memoire we already underlined the religious ones (which have no social borders and adressed to the entire Victorian population), as well as famous criminal affairs such as 'l'affaire de la rue des Marmousets'. However, other references in the book seem to be incompatible with one another, as on the one hand we can notice references destined to the poor and on the other hand, strong cultural references are quoted while they seem to be only accessible to the rich.

Among the references mostly accessible to the poor, we can notice the use of slang such as for example de word 'jarvey' (149) an expression coming from the Irish *dearbhaí* and used to talk about a cab-driver (in Rymer, footnotes 149). The use of slang is combined with the use of vernacular. Indeed, some of the dialogues seem to replicate oral language. In fact, in spite of the respect of the literary codes, in some chapters of the serial, dialogues are to the author, an excuse to break away from the limitations of formal and pompous language. The best example is the case of Big-Ben, the beef eater (a friend of Johanna's father); The low birth of the character and his statue of an outcast is then a pretext to his low speech: "Lor' Ma'am! I believe ye. Hilloa!' (98) and, as for him, the use of italic is compulsory as a great number of the words he utters are not well pronounced '*pisoned*' instead of poisoned (98) or may be of his invention in order to seem distinguished when he speaks while he cannot properly use the English language '*beastesses'* as the plural of beasts and '*cantankous'* instead of cantankerous (99). Always in favour of the working-class understanding, multiple references are made on people and places, such as streets and alleys, which were part of the Londonian cut throat and of poor people's everyday life. Not only the surroundings of Fleet Street are recognisable (cf. map in the annexe) as we are able to locate all the events of the book, but also precise places are evoked, among these shops or inns which were known by the entire working class such as a tobacconist shop evoked on page 244.

These precise descriptions made to the working class so that they would be able to set the action in their everyday life, are opposed to the introduction and description of places as if they had never been visited before. A description made for the upper classes: 'Sweeney Todd walked rapidly down Fleet Street, towards old Fleet Market, which was then in all its glory, if that could be called glory which consisted in all sorts of filth enough to produce a pestilence within the city of London.' (149). This idea of a description made for the upper classes is enhanced by multiple cultural references which would not be accessible to the poor. Among these quotes, we can recognize Shakespeare – *Richard III*: 'Smooth his wrinkled front.' (240) as well as *A Midsummer Night Dream*: 'The course of true love never yet ran smooth.' (47). References are also made to contemporary authors with an extract from *The Corsair*, a tale in verse written by Lord Byron in the 1820's: "walke'd the water like a thing of life" (17). If we go further into this analysis, from an upper-class point of view the plot may not be due to a mere French criminal affair but may stem from the Greek Mythology and more precisely from the myth of Itys: Itys was killed by his mother who served his remains as a dish during a dinner to her husband named Térée so that she would revenge her daughter Philomèle. When Térée finally asked where his son was, Procnée his wife, simply answered 'your son is inside of you' and threw Itys' head on the table (Patramani). This antic myth echoes the antepenultimate scene of the serial in which the baker (while he finally succeeds escaping the underground factory), exclaims in the Pie Shop 'Ladies and gentlemen, - I fear what I am going to say will spoil your appetites, but the truth is beautiful at all times, and I have to state that Mrs Lovett's pies are made of *human flesh!'* (Rymer 257) Here the final announcements of the trick played on the eaters (who are still eating), echo one another with a theatrical and nonetheless short and clear revelation.

Through these contradictory references, we can assume that James Malcolm Rymer did not exclusively write for the working-class. Indeed, it seems that both the lower and the upper classes were his target. He may have written first for the working class, as a means of earning a living but he may have had the hopes that he would be able to reach the upper class and seduce them through his references. Even though the references are contradictory, they are not incompatible as they are able to transform of the serial into a universal reading, all the more since anyone can appreciate beauty.

### C- Beauty

The very first page of the serial opens on Fleet Street which is not only a place but the most recurrent pattern of the story. After an overview, the narrator zooms in on Sweeney Todd's

barber shop doorway on which one can read “Easy shaving for a penny, as good as you will find any.” If we shall, of course, notice the structure of the verse in iambic tetrameter as well as the use of syllabic rhyme with ‘penny’ and ‘any’, the very quote is followed by a comment on these rhymes: ‘We do not put these lines forth as a specimen of the poetry of the age; they may have been the production of some young Templer ; but if they were a little wanting in poetic fire, that was amply made up by the clear and precise manner in which they set forth what they intended.’ (2). This is how a quotation extracted from the serial could be seen as a critique of the serial itself: ‘the writing is simple which facilitates the reader’s understanding regarding the aim of the author. Behind a sensational story, the Victorian class ridden society is denounced with nonetheless a pinch of humour. The denunciation and humorous aspect seem already difficult to imbricate that is why beauty (or poetic fire) may be left aside.’

However, even in the most terrible denunciation, beauty can be found (as, let’s quote Mark Ingestrie): “ the truth is beautiful at all times” (257). Indeed, the very vision of class superiority to others is asserted by the resignation of the working class through a very poetically settled philosophy accentuated by a chiasmus based on the word ‘fate’ and ‘face’ as well as an alliteration in ‘p’, ‘f’ and ‘t’ followed by rhyming verses: ‘I had to put up with my fate, and put the best face I could upon the matter. (…) You must put up with what you can’t help, it means, I take it. It’s a fine name for saying you must grin and bear it.’ (101).

## Conclusion

Whether it is the appearance of the characters in the book, the double meaning of the writing or the appearance of the serial itself, it is now well proved that appearances are deceptive and thus that a book should not be judged by its cover. As a matter of fact, when well-handled, appearances can be a tool used by the wrier to create comic and suspense but on the other hand it can also demean the vison of a book, which is ultimately the case of *Sweeney Todd*.

Indeed, the serial answers at the same time the different needs and demands of each fringe of the population without opposing them. From literary codes to cultural references and the beauty of writing, James Malcolm Rymer succeeded into making of his rag, if you dig into it, the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow which asserts of the fact that if all that glitters is not gold, things that don’t glitters can be.

# CONCLUSION

Throughout this memoire on James Malcolm Rymer's *Sweeney Todd,* it was proved that the link between the context and the setting of the book is striking. Hence the questions on the readership of the penny blood as well as on the impact of penny bloods on the population. This popular literature can be seen as an outlet and an escape hatch, denouncing a society oppressing the working class. However, thanks to his higher expectations (whether it is for his life or for the education of the working class through the reading of his book) James Malcolm Rymer is able to draw a link between the lower and the upper classes.

In spite of denunciation, mockery and art James Malcolm Rymer succeeds drawing a tender and gentle portrait of the society in which he evolves. By his testimony he deconstructs the usual vision we have of Victorian time and society. Indeed, in the serial the working-class author is highlighting the traits of everyday life heroes such as courageous working-boys or love-smitten maidens. That is how James Malcolm Rymer shows (as it is underlined by the character of Big-Ben the Beef Eater) that each part of the population has its own monument and that not only glory matters. That is why we should have a look beyond glitters and dig deeper than face value.

As it was destined to the working class, the penny blood was considered as not having much value, but in hindsight, now that we need multiple testimonies in order to be able to display history as close to reality as possible, we realize that this type of literature can indeed hold the field. Recent researches on the author are conducted and among these, my humble contribution, being the writing of this memoire. Without a shadow of a doubt the penny blood is now taking its rightful place among the most noble names of Victorian Literature.

# ANNEXE

## The Plot

The story opens on Fleet Street - which is not only a place but the most recurrent pattern of the story - after an overview, the narrator zooms in on his description of Sweeney Todd's barber shop where the reader is finally introduced for the first time, both to Sweeney Todd and to one of our heroes, his new apprentice Tobias Ragg. The scene focuses on their first encounter, as after blurred circumstances Todd needs a new apprentice to serve him. That very first chapter ends on Tobias's first observation of a client being shaved and on the conversation between Sweeney Todd and this above-mentioned client, chatting on the disappearance of a man called Mark Ingestrie. If we do not know it from the outset, as we go along, Mark Ingestrie appears to be a guiding line from chapter to chapter. As a matter of fact, Chapter II opens with another of our heroes, Johanna Oakley, "the spectacle-maker's daughter" -hence the title of the chapter- a young lady aged eighteen, "a creature of the rarest grace and beauty" (10), devastated by the disappearance of her unrivalled soulmate, Mark Ingestrie. As the plot unfolds, new chapters introduce us to new characters, among them:

- a sailor named Thornhill and coming back from a journey in the colonies with a priceless string of pearls in his pocket (Chapter II).
- a lady called Mrs Lovett who owns "the most celebrated shop for the sale of veal and pork pies that London ever produced" (26) (Chapter IV).
- a man named Colonel Jeffery - an acquaintance of Mark Ingestrie who announces his probable shipwreck in the Indian seas (Chapter VI).
- a ragged and desperate wretch and beggar named Jarvis Williams who begs Mrs Lovett for a job (Chapter XI).
- a young maid, Arabella Wilmot, a friend and confident of Johanna Oakley (Chapter XIII).
- an anonymous man locked in an underground "cellar of vast extent and sepulchral aspect" (84) forced to work in a factory beneath the pavement and Bell-Yard itself (Chapter X).

All of these chapters are alternately cut off by new events at Sweeney Todd's, as Tobias, his apprentice, realizes that when he is away, the clients mysteriously disappear.

As the plot unfolds, the reader discovers the intertwined relationships between the characters and devours the chapter with that awful presentiment which finally comes true. The mysterious underground factory is Mrs Lovett's kitchen where the pies are made. The wretch is finally hired to become the new cook. Sweeney Todd's clients disappear when they

have a possession that Todd wants, he actually decapitates them during the shaving. That is what he did to Thornhill to take the string of pearls, which was supposed to be a present from Mark Ingestrie to his fiancée Johanna Oakley. Poor Tobias, while he discovers that something is more than fishy with Sweeney, he is taken away into an asylum and a new assistant is needed. A young lad is required and no one other than Johanna Oakley dressed as a boy is enrolled - a brilliant idea from her friend Arabella, in order to investigate on Mark's disappearance. Mark as for him, believing than Johanna had an affair with Colonel Jeffery decided with anger and despair to become Jarvis Williams and to enrol as a pie maker, which means becoming a prisoner in Mrs Lovett's underground factory.

This is how the reader finally discovers the conspiracy: the pies adored and fought over by the entire Temple quarter are made by Mrs Lovett with the participation of Sweeney Todd. It is a brilliant and twisted machination: Sweeney Todd's victims, bloodily assassinated in order to rob them, are recycled into pies and eaten by their own kind.

If this plot is as twisted as Sweeney's criminal mind, it cannot help reminding us of the current concerns of the readership targeted by the penny dreadfuls. Hence, could a mere serail published in a journal for one penny could turn into a portrayal of the exploited fringe of society: the working class. More than that, the accomplished reader eventually realizes that not only the conditions of the working class are denounced but the upper classes are mocked too – while any form of criticism is dissimulated behind the innocent form of a rag. Thereby, the entire Victorian ideology is disrespectfully mocked and caricatured in *Sweeney Todd* and Victorian London becomes the backdrop of convoluted peregrinations emphasizing the labyrinthine cut throat Victorian workers had to put up with. Between denunciation, mockery and outlet of the working-class fantasies, through *Sweeney Todd,* James Malcom Rymer draws a gentle and distorted portrayal of the society he belonged to.

## The Map

Approximate locations of
the meeting between Colonel Jeffery and Johanna to talk about Mark Ingestrie
BARBER
Sweeney Todd's barber shop
Mrs. Lovett's pie shop
St. Dunstan's Church
zoom in on Fleet Street
BARBER
Temple
Bridewell
Prison
Fleet Street
Farringdon Market
St. Andrews
Chancery Lane
Smithfield
Newgate
O. Bailey
Apothecaries Hall
Blackfriars Road
Union Street
Bridge Street
High St.
Walcot Place
Walworth Road
Kennington Lane
Vauxhall Gardens
Commercial Road
Chelsea Ro
Pimlico
Piccadilly
Green Park
Oxford
Regent Street
Hampstead Road
New Road
Tottenham Court Road
Holborn
Gray's Inn Lane Road
Maiden
Tower Hill
Mint
Rosemary Lane
Blackwall Railway
London Dock
Danish Ch.
Ratcliff Highway
St. Catherines Dock
Bermondsey St.
Kent Road
Bermondsey
Walworth Road
Elephant & Castle
Newington Causeway
Borough
Lambeth
Vauxhall
Pimlico
Belgrave Square
Eaton Square
Pantechnicon
Tattersals
Bazaar
Manchester Sq.
Portman Sq.
Cavendish Sq.
Berkeley Square
Hanover Sq.
Grosvenor Sq.
Panorama
Leicester Sq.
Soho Sq.
Pantheon
Theatre
Church
Middlesex Hos.
Chapel
Russell Sq.
Queen Sq.
British Museum
Tavistock Square
Foundling Hospital
New Scotch Ch.
Spa Fields Chap.
Ho. of Correction
Sessions Ho.
Sadlers Wells
New River Head
St. John Street
Gray's Inn
Furnivals Inn
Smithfield
Fever Hospital
Reservoir
Regent's Park
Royal Botanical Gardens
Diorama
Colosseum
Madame Tussaud's
Mary-le-bone Ch.
Park Square
Portland Place
Cavendish Sq.
Hanover Sq.
Grosvenor Sq.
Berkeley Square
Bedford Sq.
Russell Sq.
Queen Sq.
Tottenham Court Road
Oxford Street
Regent Street
Piccadilly
Pall Mall
Strand
Fleet Street
Cheapside
Gresham Ho.
Bank
Lombard St.
Cornhill
Leadenhall St.
Aldgate
Minories

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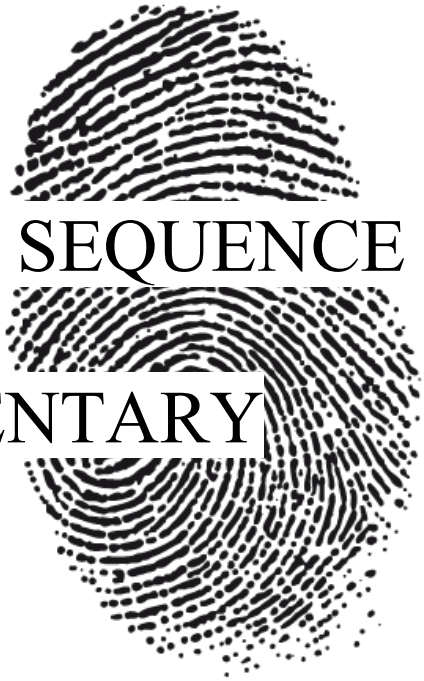


# PROJET DE SEQUENCE

# ELEMENTARY

Juin 2018 – Classe de Quatrième B
Collège Pierre Vernier à Ornans

<table>
<tr><td>Séquence n°7</td><td>Titre : Elementary</td><td>Nombre de séances : 10</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Objectif culturel :<br>Les classiques du roman détective<br>Découverte de Londres insolite, l’envers du décors</td><td rowspan="2">Notion du programme * : Langage : detective stories<br>Voyage (et migration) : Labyrinthic London</td><td>Classe : 4ème B</td></tr>
<tr><td>AL dominante : CE & EOC</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Thématique : Être capable de s’exprimer en continu de manière spontanée afin de décrire une scène et de tirer des conclusions ou exprimer des hypothèses.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">OUTILS méthodologiques et langagiers :</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Objectifs méthodologiques : - Les différents stratégies d’apprentissages, la construction d’outils personnels pour s'entraîner, réviser, mémoriser<br>- Le travail d’équipe en îlot : Partager les tâches, accepter la contradiction tout en défendant son point de vue, faire preuve de diplomatie, mettre au point de stratégies pour mobiliser et mettre en commun différents indices afin de le recouper.<br><br>Objectif citoyen : Sensibilisation contre les jugements de valeurs et les préjugés.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Objectifs linguistiques</td><td>Lexicaux</td><td>Rebrassage et enrichissement des descriptions des lieux et des personnes.<br><u>Les lieux :</u><br>les pièces de la maison : living room, kitchen, cellar…<br>la description : dark, messy, upside down, clean, unspoilt<br><u>Les personnes :</u><br>criminels et victimes : assasin, mugger, gangster, robber vs. thief<br>l’attitude : sad, crying, insensible, guilty, regretful…<br><u>Les scènes de crimes</u> :<br>les armes : handgun, gun, revolver, dagger, knife, candlestick, rope...<br>les dommages collatéraux / preuves : a broken vase, blood stains…<br>le crime : murder, assault, burglary, blackmail, domestic dispute, kidnapping, espionage, homicide, traffic<br>La police : cop, to be under arrest, resisting arrest, attempted murder, accomplice…<br>l’enquête : detective, suspect, guilty, witness, a corpse vs. a body, to be at large (on the loose), …</td></tr>
</table>

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Phonologiques** | Rebrassage des gap fillers: *Errr, well, I mean…* |
| | **Grammaticaux** | Rebrassage du preterit : V-ED (séquence RAP)<br>Rebrassage du présent perfect : Have-en (séquence Canadian Experiences)<br>Rebrassage des hypotheses: MAY, MUST, MIGHT (séquence Cliffhanger)<br>Le passé en Be + Ing : the victim was painting.<br>Le past perfect : Had- en<br>Organiser un discours avec les différents passés. |
| *Objectifs Pragmatiques* | **Compétence discursive** : Organiser, structurer, adapter son discours :<br>L'enchaînement « naturel » de phrases à travers l'angle<br>- temporel : *the victim felt and was hit – the victim was hit and felt.*<br>– de cause/conséquence *People heard them fighting, they think he is the murderer.* | |
| *Objectif Socio-linguistique* | S'exprimer à la manière de Sherlock Holmes et reproduire les stratégies langagière employées par l'enquêteur. | |

L'accent sera mis sur la réalisation de **l'objectif grammatical :** avec un rebrassage des différents temps et aspects du passé (ainsi qu'un aspect du présent, le présent perfect - Have-en) et leur articulation entre eux.

**Socle Commun -collège** *Bulletin officiel n° 17 du 23 avril 2015*

**Domaine 1** : **Les langages pour penser et communiquer (LVE),** Comprendre, s'exprimer en utilisant une langue étrangère
domaine qui permet l'accès à d'autres savoirs et à une culture rendant possible l'exercice de l'esprit critique ; il implique la maîtrise de codes, de règles, de systèmes de signes et de représentations.
***Objectif** : L'élève comprend des messages oraux et écrits, s'exprime et communique à l'oral et à l'écrit de manière simple mais efficace.*

**Domaine 2** : **les méthodes et outils pour apprendre**, domaine qui permet à tous les élèves d'apprendre à apprendre, seuls ou collectivement, en classe ou en dehors.
***Objectif** : L'élève sait se constituer des outils personnels grâce à des écrits de travail, y compris numériques dont il peut se servir pour s'entraîner, réviser, mémoriser.*

*L'élève travaille en équipe, partage des tâches, s'engage dans un dialogue constructif, accepte la contradiction tout en défendant son point de vue, fait preuve de diplomatie, négocier et rechercher un consensus.*

**Domaine 3** : **formation de la personne et du citoyen,** domaine qui permet à l'élève d'acquérir la capacité à juger par lui-même, de développer dans les situations concrètes de la vie scolaire son aptitude à vivre de manière autonome et à préparer son engagement en tant que citoyen.

**Domaine 4 : les systèmes naturels et les systèmes techniques,** domaine qui permet à travers un certain nombre de démarches scientifiques d'éveiller la curiosité de l'élève, son envie de se poser des questions, de chercher des réponses et d'inventer en se fondant sur l'observation, la manipulation et l'expérimentation.
***Objectif*** : *L'élève sait mener une démarche d'investigation. Pour cela, il décrit et questionne ses observations ; il prélève, organise et traite l'information utile ; il formule des hypothèses, les teste et les éprouve ; il manipule, explore plusieurs pistes, procède par essais et erreurs ; il modélise pour représenter une situation ; il analyse, argumente, mène différents types de raisonnements (par analogie, déduction logique...) ; il rend compte de sa démarche. Il exploite et communique les résultats de mesures ou de recherches en utilisant les langages à bon escient.*

**Tache finale : Expression Orale en Continu** (groups of 2)
Vous êtes inspecteurs de police et avez été appelés sur une scène de crime, à la manière de Sherlock Holmes, à voix haute, vous décrivez la scène et tentez d'imaginer ce qui a bien pu se passer, vous tirer de cette scène de crime, vos premières impressions et hypothèses sur le meurtre.

Afin de mettre en place une véritable situation de prise de parole authentique et spontanée, les élèves n'auront pas vu la scène de crime à l'avance.

**Final task:**
*You are famous investigators and you have been called to examine a 'fresh' crime scene, you must find the murderer! Look carefully, describe the scene, imagine what happened and draw your conclusions.*

**Niveaux du CECRL (A2 vers B1)**

**De A2 :** Je peux utiliser une série de phrases ou d'expressions pour décrire en termes simples ma famille et d'autres gens, ma formation, mon activité professionnelle actuelle ou récente.
> Utiliser des structures élémentaires constituées d'expressions mémorisées, de groupes de quelques mots et d'expressions toutes faites afin de communiquer
> Peut relier des groupes de mots avec des connecteurs simples.
> Utilise de façon assez exacte un répertoire de structures et « schémas » fréquents, courants dans des situations prévisibles ou étudiées.

**Vers B1** : Je peux m'exprimer de manière simple afin de raconter des expériences et des événements, mes rêves, mes espoirs ou mes buts.
Je peux brièvement donner les raisons et explications de mes opinions ou projets. Je peux raconter une histoire ou l'intrigue d'un livre ou d'un film et exprimer mes réactions

Focus sous la sous-catégorie : **Aisance à l'oral**
Niveau visé : L'élève peut s'exprimer avec une certaine aisance. Malgré quelques problèmes de formulation ayant pour conséquence des pauses pour chercher ses mots et se corriger, ainsi que des impasses, il est capable de continuer effectivement à parler sans aide.

**Ingrédients de la tache finale :**
- Être capable de décrire la scène en termes simples *there is the corpse of a woman on the floor, there are blood stains…*
- décrire la scène avec was -ing telle qu'elle devait se passer à l'aide d'indices : *there is paint, the woman was painting, they were having tea…*
- introduire des éléments au passé simple: *when she was visited by the murderer*
- introduire des éléments avec had -en *: he had taken a gun*
- tirer des conclusions avec MIGHT et MUST combiné a des temps et des aspects : *he must have taken the purse*

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2"><u>Exemple de tâche finale</u><br>There is the corpse of a woman on the floor with a lot of blood and a gun too<br>It was, for sure, left by the murderer after he committed the crime<br>There is paint, the woman was painting before she was killed.<br>There are two tea cups, the victim and the murderer were probably having tea together, so the victim knew her assailant<br>Plus, the money is still in the room so it was not a simple burglary<br>There is a broken vase on the floor… While they were having tea, they may have gotten into a fight<br>But the murderer shot her so he had taken a gun with him.<br>That is why I can say that it must not be a mere accident but a premeditated murder.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Supports retenus :<br>Scène de crime mis en place dans la salle de classe<br>Véritables formulaires de Police : Police Report sur le site de la police de SF<br>Montage image crime scène réalisé par moi<br>Rapports de police pré remplis avec les coordonnées de tous les personnages culturels (réel ou fictifs) rencontrés au cours de la séquence réalisés par moi<br>Fiche de participation orale par ilots bonifiée réalisée par moi<br>Fiche police team pour que les élèves prêtent serments et apposent leurs empruntes réalisées par moi<br>Blasons de la police trouvés sur les différents sites de comptés Britanniques<br>Challenge du comportement à l’aide de post-its cachant un indice sur le crime final réalisé par moi<br>Montage des ‘suspects de la séquences’ avec tous les personnages culturels rencontrés réalisé par moi<br>Couplage d’extraits écrits de l’enquête de Sherlock Holmes A Study in Scarlet par Arthur Conan Doyle et d’extraits vidéos et captures d’écran de l’épisode 1 de la saison 1 de la série Sherlock – A study in Pink.<br>Pictogrammar – <u>la prononciation du -ED</u> extrait de English Pictogrammar par Dahm R.<br>Image sous forme de BD de Sherlock Holmes extraite du très vieux manuel Spring 4e</td><td>- <u>ACTIVITE SPECIFIQUE A LA SEQUENCE</u><br><br><u>Nouveau rituel :</u> Investigation of the Day<br>Visionnage d’une vidéo très courte posant un dilemme, une intrigue, un crime à résoudre en quelques secondes.</td></tr>
</table>

| | |
|---|---|
| Audio Spring 4e sur cassette<br>Vidéo Youtube: Test you Awareness- Whodunnit?<br>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ubNF9QNEQLA&t=1s<br>*Pictogrammar* – le Crime Etait Plus-que-Parfait extrait de *English Pictogrammar* par Dahm R.<br>Mini enquête basée sur le *Pictogrammar* – May Might ou Must extrait de *English Pictogrammar* par Dahm R.<br>Etude de la vidéo Brooklyn Nine Nine – Backstreet Boys- I Want it That Way<br>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1tofEyT8Jg<br>Expression Orale en Continu basée sur les affiches de Film d'Hitchcock<br>Enquête sur Sweeney Todd basée sur des descriptions extraites du roman | |

**Profil de la Classe :**

La classe de quatrième B est une classe reconnue comme étant très difficile : alors qu'elle est constituée de 28 élèves, 1/3 de la classe a moins de 8 de moyenne générale. Seulement 4 élèves ont de très bons résultats mais ils ne prennent pas la position d'éléments moteurs de la classe. Lors du dernier conseil de classe, les deux tiers de la classe ont reçu des avertissements soit au travail soit au comportement soit les deux. 2 élèves sont en situation de décrochage scolaire.

Suivant ses humeurs, cette classe est soit passive, soit turbulente. Les élèves ne sont attirés que par la compétition et le jeu, sans récompense ou menace il n'y a aucun travail. Pour deux tiers des élèves le travail fourni est inexistant. Les élèves de la classe de quatrième B sont très agités et ne pensent qu'à s'amuser. Depuis le début de l'année j'ai rédigé cinq rapports d'incidents.

Approximativement 1/3 des élèves n'a pas eu anglais l'année dernière pour cause de professeur absent. Le niveau global est très faible.
Les élèves ne manifestent aucune autonomie et ne peuvent travailler qu'avec un guidage serré. Lors de la dernière évaluation, 8 tâches finales étaient manquantes.

Dans cette classe de quatrième B, les élèves ne sont aucunement sur une logique de réussite. Aucun effort n'est fourni et il existe très peu de cohésion dans la classe même. Cette classe témoigne d'un manque évident de respect pour les règles, pour leurs camarades et pour leurs professeurs. Ils n'ont aucun recul sur les apprentissages, il est possible ponctuellement de générer un peu de motivation chez eux par le jeu ou des sujets pour lesquels ils témoignent de l'intérêt mais face à leur absence de maturité, les élèves se lassent et décrochent très rapidement. De nombreux élèves de la classe de nature timide ou réservée et ayant un niveau scolaire correct sont en souffrance dans cette classe et n'ont qu'une hâte, que l'année scolaire se termine.

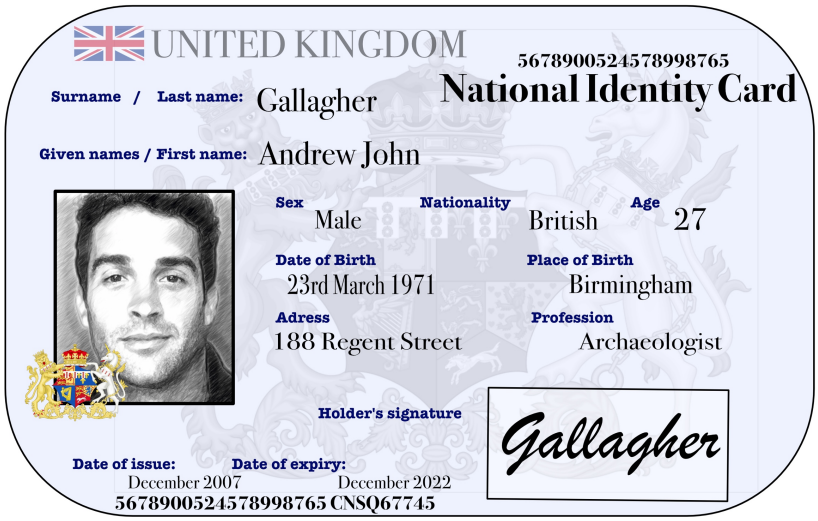
Face à ce profil de classe et à de nombreux échecs tout au long de l'année, absence d'implication dans les projets, comportements irrespectueux... j'ai décidé de mettre en place cette séquence afin qu'elle soit très ludique. La séquence ayant lieu très prochainement, elle sera mise en place après l'arrêt des notes et doit donc être assez ludique et intéressante aux yeux des élèves pour pouvoir capter et maintenir l'attention des élèves.

## Étape 1 : Anticipation :

Les élèves entrent dans la salle alors qu'en scène de crime a été mise en place au centre. Cela permet de créer chez eux un besoin langagier et de les faire entrer directement dans le thème de la séquence : l'enquête sur un crime.

Les élèves se verront tous distribuer un rapport de police vierge qu'ils devront remplir à l'aide d'indices présents sur la scène de crime.

Par exemple, la carte d'identité de la victime.




Donner dès le début de la séquence le 'rapport type à remplir' permet de mettre les élèves en contact avec le vocabulaire qui n'aurait pas pu émaner d'eux.

Par le jeu, les sont mis sans le savoir dans une situation d'apprentissage.

Nous procèderons à un brainstorming récapitulatif de questions en -WH pour dresser le profil de la victime : *When was he born ? Where does he live ? How old is he ?*

# POLICE
# CRIME REPORT FORM

London Police Service, 601 Dundas Street, London ON N6B 1X1

Please complete all four sections below and sign: ONLY one report per request form. Please provide as much information as possible. This form may be delivered in person by the police officer to the police department.
Please include a name and a registration number. Crime Report Fees .....

## The victim identity :

First Name: _____ Last Name _____

Address: Street Number _____ Street Name _____
City State _____ Zip Code _____
Country _____ .

Date of birth : _____ Place of birth: _____

## Traffic / Accident / Crime Report

Date of Incident: _____

Location : _____

## Circumstances of death

☐ Natural ☐ Accident ☐ Homicide ☐ Suicide ☐ Undetermined yet ☐ Other: _____

## Offender

Number of offenders: ☐☐ *Use 00 for unknown*

☐ assassin ☐ murderer ☐ gangster ☐ robber ☐ thief ☐ assailant

First Name: _____ Last Name _____ ☐ unknown

☐ Has been taken to the police station ☐ Has been taken to the mortuary ☐ Is on the loose

## I certify that I am an Authorized Representative of the law:

name of the agent: signature:

registration number:

CR889043LHUI78372D557H

## Étape 2 : Brainstorming

Pour aider les élèves à décrire la scène de crime un brainstorming sera réalisé autour de l'image suivante, ce qui permettre d'inférer le vocabulaire le plus simple :

Parmi le vocabulaire attendu : *Crime scene, proof, evidence, clue, corpse, body, victim, detective, policeman, footprints, blood stains, knife, weapon, criminal, murderer*
Que nous prendrons soin de classer dans une boite à outil dans le cahier.

## Étape 3 : Confection des groupes de travail

Afin de confectionner des groupes de travail en îlots mixes et équitable, chaque élève se verra distribuer un rapport de police pré rempli mais avec des zones masquées, il devra donc enquêter dans la classe afin de trouver qui travailler sur la même enquête que lui et donc les autres membres de son îlot.
Après s'être retrouvée par groupes, les élèves devront recouper les informations qu'ils ont sur la victime afin de dresser un profil le plus complet possible.

Les différentes victimes sont tous les personnages rencontrés dans la séquence ce qui permettra à chaque ilot à un moment de la séquence de faire une courte présentation de la personnalité abordée. Parmi les personnalités figurent : Sherlock Holmes, John Watson, Arthur Conan Doyle, Alfred Hitchcock…

# POLICE
# CRIME REPORT FORM

London Police Service, 601 Dundas Street, London ON N6B 1X1

Please complete all four sections below and sign: ONLY one report per request form. Please provide as much information as possible. This form may be delivered in person by the police officer to the police department.
Please include a name and a registration number. Crime Report Fees 778

## The victim identity :

*Exemple de zones dissimulées qui seront présentes sur un autre rapport*

**First Name**: Arthur **Last Name** : [redacted]

Address: **Street Number:** 223 **Street Name** : Victoria Road
**City State:** London **Zip Code :** WC2N 5DU
**Country** : [redacted].
**Date of birth** : 22nd May 1859 **Place of birth:** [redacted]
**Profession:** Author, writer, physician

## Traffic / Accident / Crime Report

**Date of Incident:** 1st December 1871

**Location** : London, England

## Circumstances of death

☐ Natural ☐ Accident ☐ Homicide ☐ Suicide ☐ Undetermined yet ☐ Other: _____

## Offender

Number of offenders: ☐☐ *Use 00 for unknown*

☐ assassin ☐ murderer ☐ gangster ☐ robber ☐ thief ☐ assailant

First Name: _____ Last Name _____ ☐ unknown

☐ Has been taken to the police station ☐ Has been taken to the mortuary ☐ Is on the loose

## I certify that I am an Authorized Representative of the law:

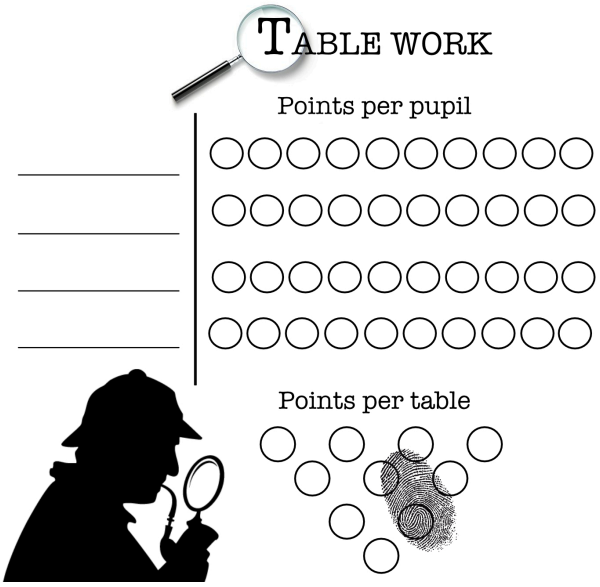
name of the agent: signature:

registration number:

CR889043LHUI78372D557H

## Étape 4 : Fiche d'îlot

Après avoir trouvé leur 'squad' les élèves se verront attribuer les fiches habituelles de participations en îlot bonifié :



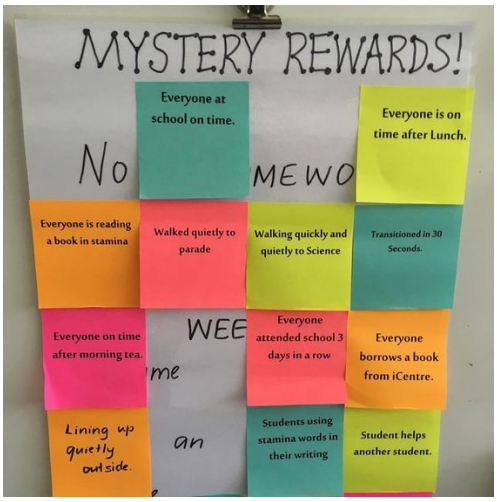

Parallèlement, ils devront remplir leur fiche de 'squad' en y apposant leurs noms, leurs empreintes et leurs signatures :

## Étape 5 : Serment

Enfin, les élèves prêteront serment et devront respecter les valeurs présentes sur la fiche qu'ils viennent de signer parmi lesquelles *fairness, integrity, respect…* Toutes des valeurs qui manquent à cette classe difficile.

A l'issue de la séance les élèves se verront remettre l'insigne de leur squad qu'ils devront présenter tel une carte de membre à chaque entrée en classe :

## Étape 6 : Challenge du Comportement




Suite aux serments, les élèves devront mettre en place des challenges à réaliser en groupe classe quant au comportement, ces défis seront écrits sur des post-its. Nous pouvons déjà imaginer : 'que personne ne dise de grossièreté pendant 1h de cours'
'que la salle soit propre à la sonnerie'
'attendre dans le couloir, alignés et dans le silence'…
Ces post-its seront alignés sur un poster afin de cacher un indice qui servira à la tâche finale, à chaque fois qu'un défi sera réalisé, le post-it sera enlevé et révèlera une partie de l'indice.

## Étape 6,5 : Rituels de séquence

Les élèves seront finalement introduits au niveau rituel de séquence : une courte vidéo sur une enquête intitulée Riddle me This. Il s'agit de très courtes enquêtes logiques à résoudre en un temps imparti.

## Étape 7 : Guess who

En guise d'anticipation à la séquence d'accompagnement personnalisé, les élèves auront une description de Holmes, Watson et Conan Doyle, les élèves ayant eu les rapports sur eux en début de séquence devront les présenter à la classe.

Pour le cours suivant, les élèves se verront attribuer la lettre envoyée par l'inspecteur de la police à Sherlock Holmes, pour lui demander son aide lors de l'enquête : *A Study in Scarlet*

"My dear Mr. Sherlock Holmes: "There has been a bad business during the night at 3, Lauriston Gardens, off the Brixton Road. Our man on the beat saw a light there about two in the morning, and as the house was an empty one, suspected that something was amiss. He found the door open, and in the front room, which is bare of furniture, dis- covered the body of a lady, well dressed, and having cards in his pocket bearing the name of 'Janet. M. Drebber, Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A.' There had been no robbery, nor is there any evidence as to how the woman met his death. There are no marks of blood in the room, and there is no wound upon his person. We are at a loss as to how he came into the empty house; indeed, the whole affair is a puzzler. It is the third suicide in a row we have absolutely no explanation…
If you can come around to the house any time before twelve, you will find me there. I have left every- thing *in statu quo* until I hear from you. If you are unable to come I shall give you fuller details and would esteem it a great kindness if you would favour me with your opinion.

— "Yours faithfully, "Tobias Gregson."

## Étape 8 : séance d'AP

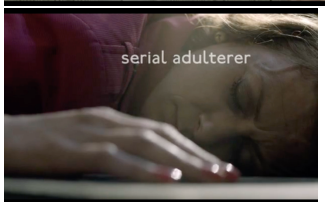
Cette séance sera basée à la fois sur des éléments empruntés à la série Sherlock (saison 1 épisode 1) *A Study in Pink* et à l'œuvre de Arthur Conan Doyle *A Study in Scarlet.*

Durant cette séance les élèves seront mobiles et devront tourner de table en table

Un ilot sera dédié à la morgue avec des indices sur le corps,
Un ilot sera le commissariat sur lequel il figurera des rapports et impressions des inspecteurs
Un ilot sera le cabinet avec les conclusions de Watson
Sur un ilot il y aura les indices (la valise retrouvée plus loin dans une décharge)

La conclusion est simple la valise n'était pas sur la scène ça ne peut donc pas être un suicide.

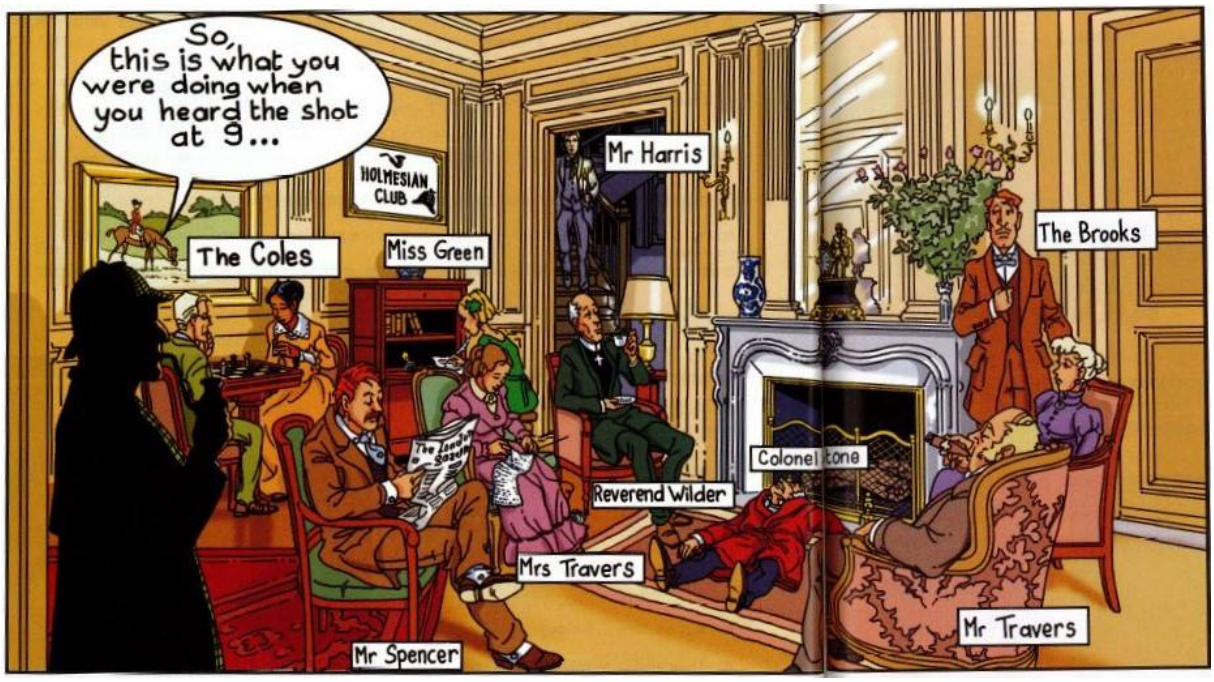
Ceci mènera à une étude de la scène durant laquelle l'art de la science de la déduction est expliqué.




**Étape 8 : Récapitulatif phonologique**

S'en suivra un rebrassage de la prononciation du -ED déjà étudiée lors de la séquence précédente.

## Étape 9 : PRL sur was -ing




En se basant sur cette image nous procèderons à une pratique raisonnée de la langue sur le prétérit en -ing et ses valeurs, cette étude sera prolongée à l'aide de l'étude du document oral associé.

## Étape 10 : Pour aller plus loin avec was- ing,

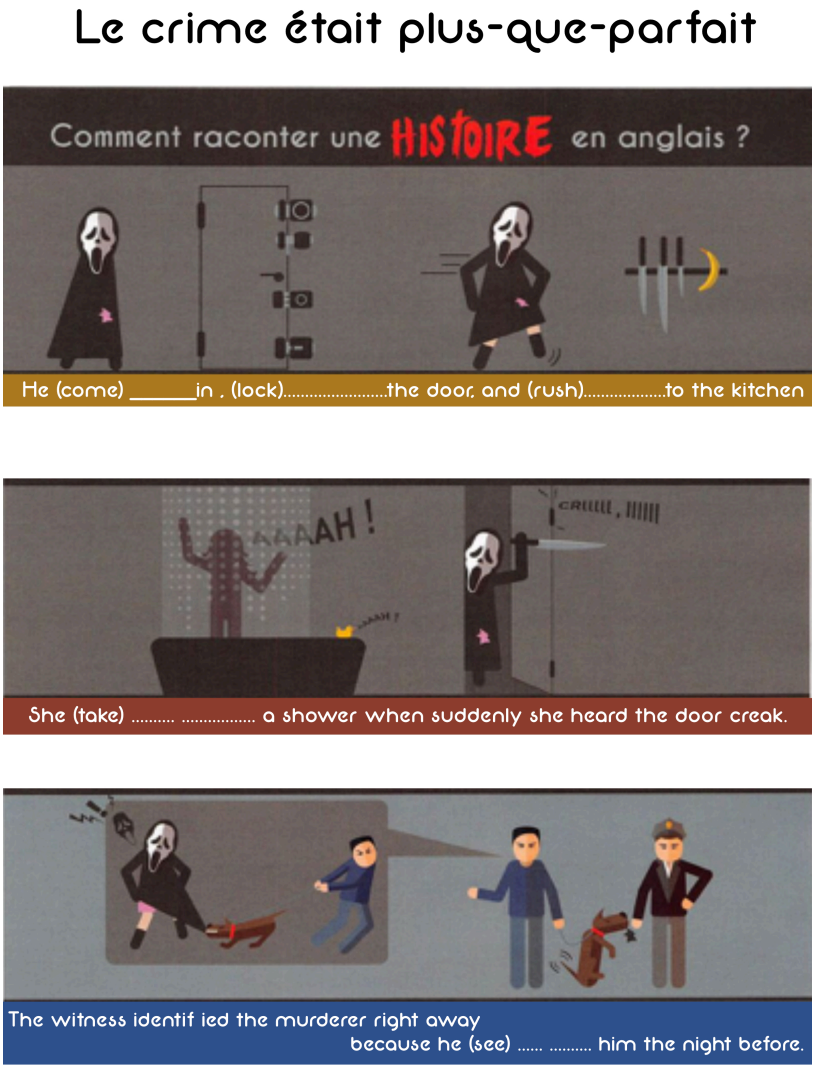
Tout d'abord nous prendrons soin de demander aux élèves s'ils sont de bons détectives, s'ils pensent être observateurs ou doués dans l'art de la déduction :

1) Nous ferons visionner le début de la scène une fois aux élèves sans montrer qui est coupable
2) Nous donnons aux élèves une capture d'écran des suspects ainsi que le script de la scène à compléter

*Clearly somebody in this room murdered Lord Smythe, who, at precisely 3:34 this afternoon, was brutally bludgeoned to death with a blunt instrument. I want each of you to tell me your whereabouts at precisely the time that this dastardly deed took place.*
*- I was polishing the brass in the master's bedroom.*
*- I was buttering His Lordship's scones below stairs, sir.*
*- I was planting my petunias in the potting shed.*
*- Constable, arrest Lady Smythe!*
*- Oh, but- how did you know?*
*- Madam, as any horticulturist will tell you, one does not plant petunias until May is out. Take her away. It's just a matter of observation. The real question is how observant were you?*

3) Nous leur demandons qui selon eux est coupable
4) Nous leur montrons la scène jusqu'à la désignation du coupable et leur demandons d'expliquer pourquoi le détective a désigné cette personne comme coupable
5) Nous leur montrons l'image
6) Nous leur laissons un visionnage pour essayer de relever les changements dans la vidéo
7) Nous leur montrons la vidéo complète

## Étape 10 : Pour aller plus loin avec la concordance de temps

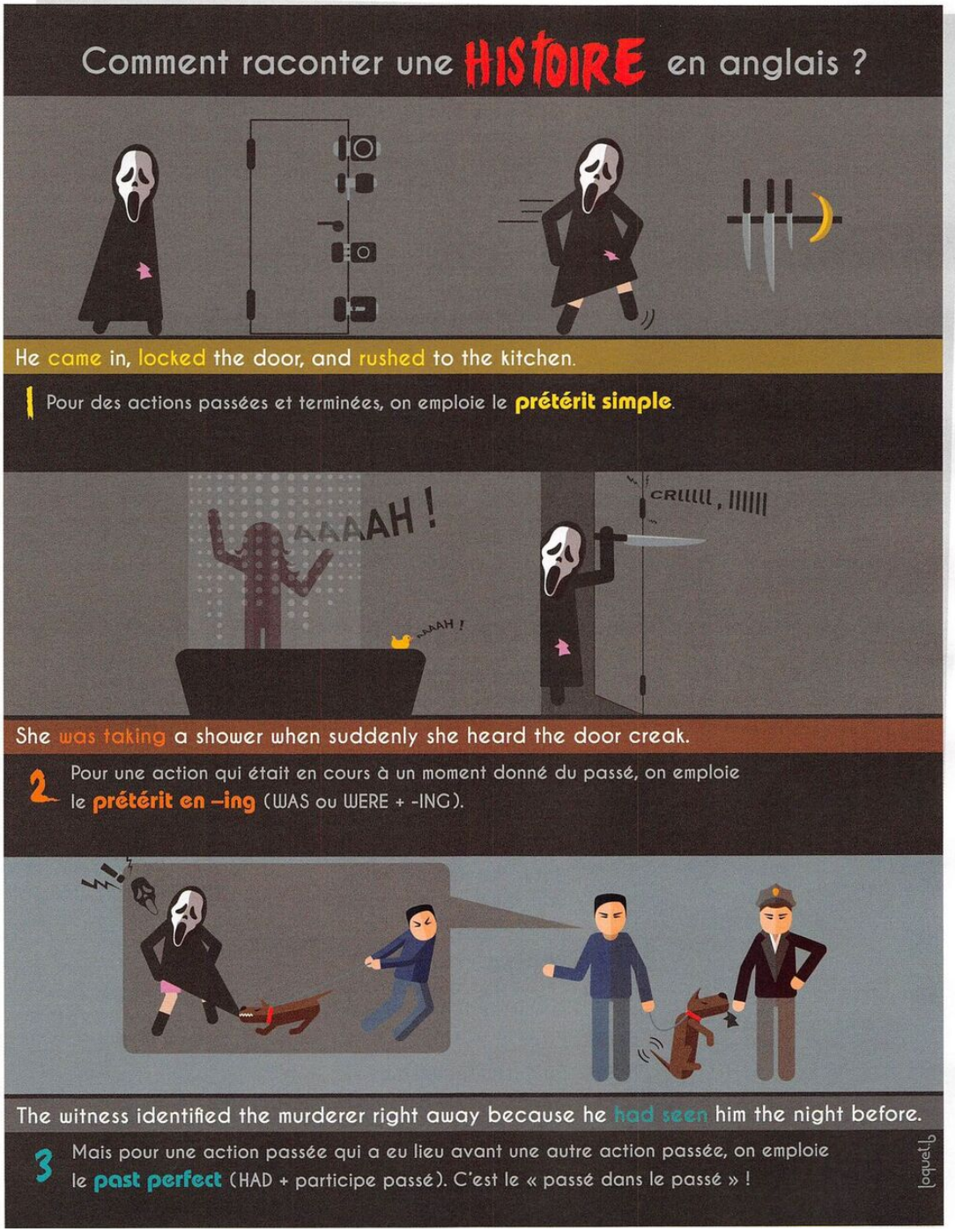



Afin d'étudier avec les élèves l'articulation des différents temps entre eux nous leur demanderons d'étudier les temps présents dans la script ci-dessus et de de déterminer comment ceux -ci s'articulent.

Afin de mettre en évidence l'utilisation de chaque temps nous utiliserons le pictogrammar suivant qui sera introduit comme un texte à compléter.

Après avoir complété l'infographique ci-joint, nous nous nous pencherons sur les valeurs de chaque temps.

# Le crime était plus-que-parfait



## Étape 11 : HITCHCOCK

1) En guise d'anticipation l'image suivant sera proposée aux élèves :

Le but est de faire émaner des élèves l'idée qu'il s'agit ici d'Alfred Hitchcock.

2) Les élèves ayant eu le rapport de crime sur Hitchcock en début de séquence devront récapituler rapidement les informations pour le reste de la classe

3) Par groupe de deux les élèves devront décrire leur image de film d'Hitchcock et raconter l'histoire qui selon eux, se passe derrière l'affiche du film.

Affiches proposées aux élèves :

**Étape 12 : He must be guilty**

Le but sera de faire émaner des élèves (tel qui vu précédemment) les auxiliaires modaux MAY MIGHT et MUST

# Might, may ou must ?

## Comment exprimer la probabilité ?

On emploie MIGHT, MAY ou MUST + base verbale.
Mais lequel choisir ? Tout dépend du degré de probabilité.

The witness

La police recherche l'auteur d'un cambriolage.
On sait qu'il porte des lunettes,
des chaussures noires
et un tatouage.

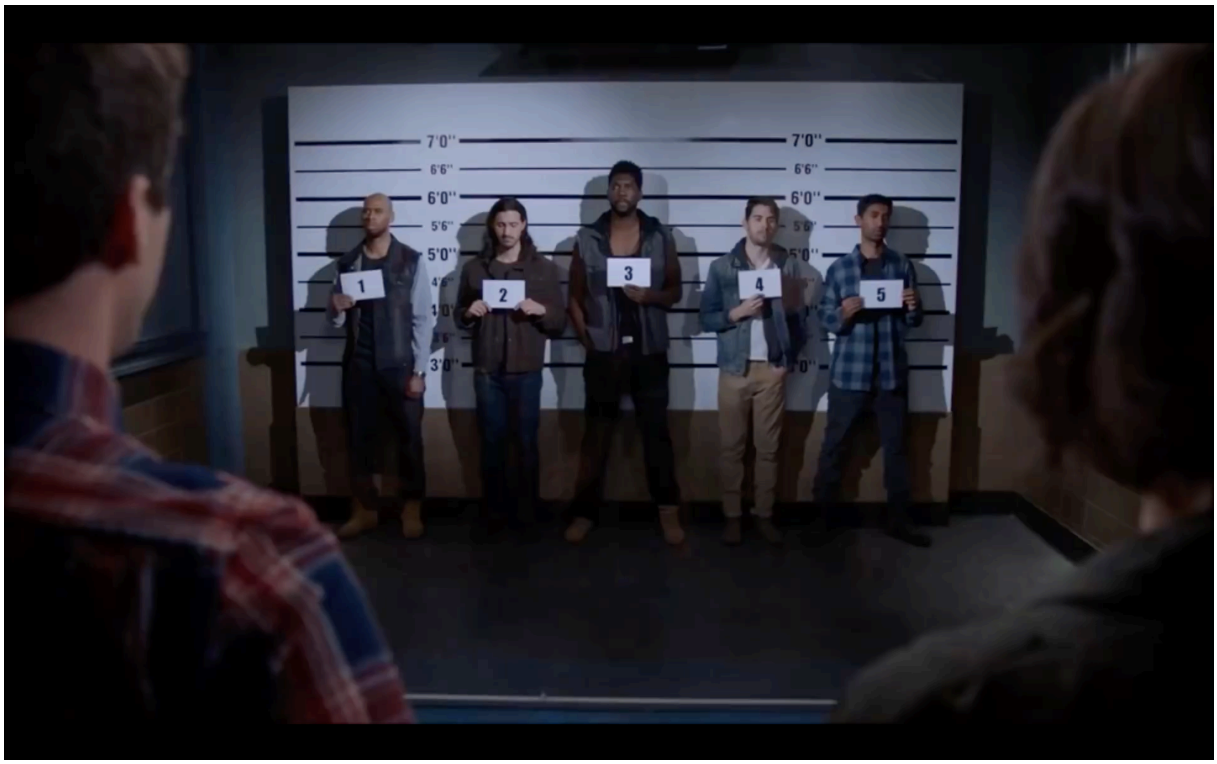
Parmis ces 3 suspects, lequel pourrait être le cambrioleur ?

| MIGHT 20% | MAY 50% | MUST 90% |
|---|---|---|
| probabilité très faible | probabilité faible | probabilité forte |

| Suspect nb 1 | Suspect nb 2 | Suspect nb 3 |
|---|---|---|
| He is wearing glasses. | He is wearing glasses and black shoes. | He is wearing glasses, black shoes and has a tattoo. |
| He might be the robber. | He may be the robber. | He must be the robber! |
| = pas sûr du tout | = tout à fait possible | = très probable |

## Étape 13 :  Backstreet Boys

Afin de réutiliser les auxiliaires modaux, la capture d'écran ci jointe sera donnée aux élèves, accompagnée de la description floue du coupable faite par la sœur de la victime



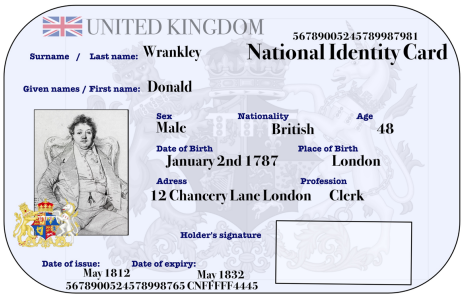

Après avoir travaillé sur may might et must, nous montrerons aux élèves la première partie de la vidéo avant de demander aux élèves ce qui pourrait bien se passer pour trouver qui est le coupable.
Finalement nous montrerons la vidéo humoristique complète aux élèves

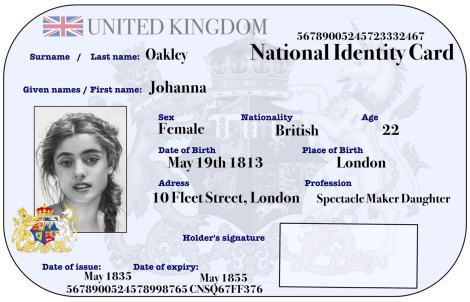
## Étape 14 : Sweeney Todd

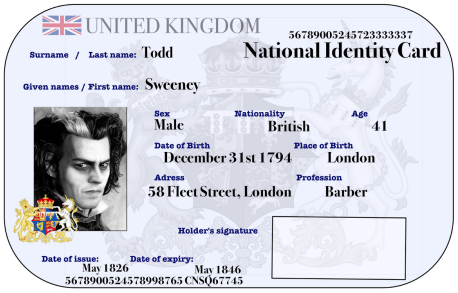
La familiarisation avec *Sweeney Todd* sera l'étape finale de la séquence, les élèves se verront distribué par îlot un seul profil de personnage : une carte d'identité, une description des personnages extraite du livre ainsi qu'un rapport de police. Certaines descriptions étant plus complexes et complètes que d'autres cela permettra de mettre en place une pédagogie différenciée : les îlots les plus forts se verront attribué Mrs. Lovett et Sweeney Todd, les plus faibles se concentreront sur Johanna Oakley.
Les élèves en plus d'extraits du roman et des cartes d'identité se verront distribué un rapport de police avec les conclusions d'un inspecteur et pour certains personnages des extraits choisis du roman.

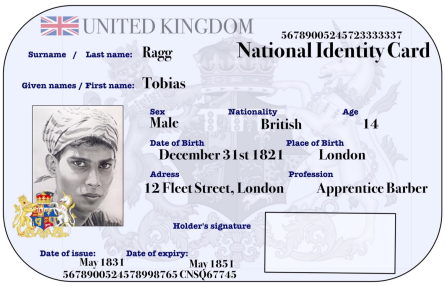
Les élèves devront collaborer ensemble car dans la solution finale de cette dernière enquête, est entrelacé entre les personnages à l'image du roman :

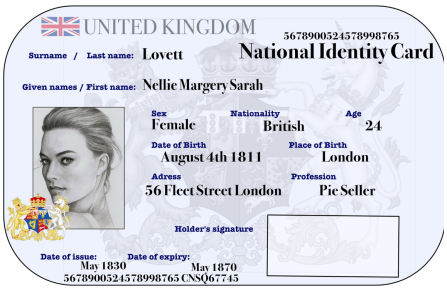
La victime de l'enquête étant Marl Ingestrie, celui-ci s'est disputé avec sa fiancée Johanna car sa barbe piquait, Mark Ingestrie s'est alors fait harponné par Tobias qui l'a emmené au Salon de Sweeney Todd, Swenney l'a froidement exécuté pour donner sa viande à Mrs Lovett, Jarvis Williamsn le cuisinier, l'a changé en tarte, Mrs Lovett l'a vendu et Mr Wrankley a quant- à lui fourni un faux témoignage (car il était trop occupé à surveiller Mrs Lovett du coin de l'œil et à s'empiffrer de tartes), il a finalement mangé la victime.

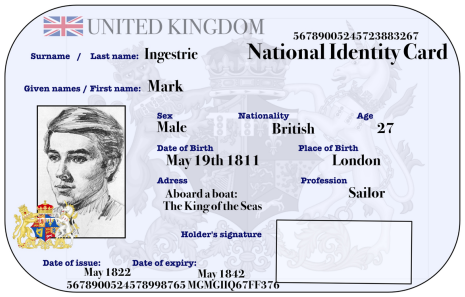


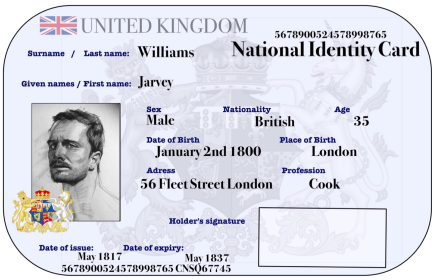



## Étape 15 : Tâche Finale

Une scène de crime sera de nouveau mise en place, les élèves seront inspecteurs de police et, à la manière de Sherlock Holmes, devront à voix haute, décrire la scène et tentez d'imaginer ce qui a bien pu se passer. Ils tireront de cette scène de crime, leurs premières impressions et hypothèses sur le meurtre.

Afin de mettre en place une véritable situation de prise de parole authentique et spontanée, les élèves n'auront pas vu la scène de crime à l'avance.