

NIGHTWALKING
A Nocturnal History of London
Chaucer to Dickens

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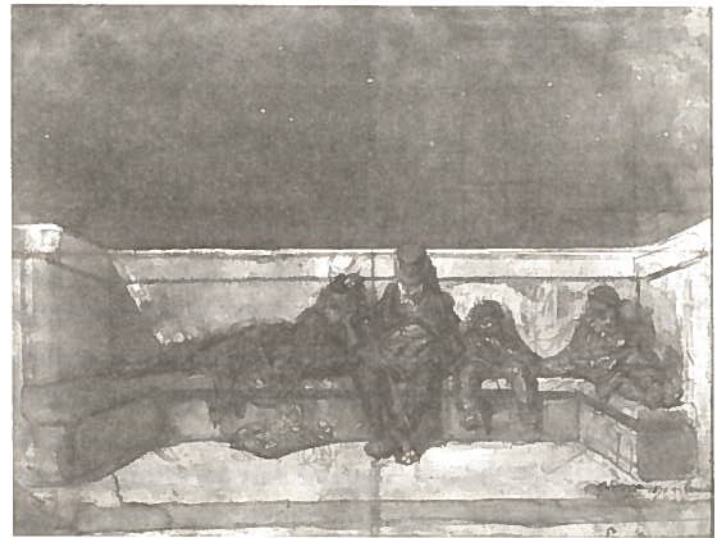


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The Dead Night

Dickens's Night Walks



Secrets of the Gas

In *Great Expectations* (1861), Pip at one point visits Miss Havisham in her home in Kent in order to inform her and her ward Estella, with whom he is still madly in love, that he has finally discovered the identity of his benefactor, the convict Magwitch. Pip confirms that, because he now knows Miss Havisham was not responsible for his transformation into a gentleman, he realizes that she and Estella have all along treated him not as their protégé but 'as a kind of servant, to gratify a want or a whim'.¹ It is on this

occasion, too, that Estella admits she is to be married, as Pip feared, to the odious and oafish aristocrat Bentley Drummle.

Thus discarded, and in a deeply disconsolate state of mind, Pip escapes from Satis House and, as the afternoon light thickens, hides himself for a time 'among some lanes and bypaths'. Then, in a moment of decision, he strikes off 'to walk all the way to London'. 'I could do nothing half so good for myself', he decides, 'as tire myself out'. It is 'past midnight' when he eventually crosses London Bridge. From there he threads his way to his lodgings in Whitefriars, once the site of the 'liberties', weaving a path through 'the narrow intricacies of the streets'. When he arrives at the gate, 'very muddy and weary', the watchman gives him a note. It reads: 'DON'T GO HOME'. He doesn't. Instead, Pip retreats to the Hummums, a hotel in Covent Garden, where he endures an almost sleepless night in which, seeing the phrase 'DON'T GO HOME' wherever he looks, and whatever he thinks, he is beset by 'night-fancies and night-noises'.²

Three or four years earlier, Charles Dickens had made roughly the same journey on foot, in reverse. One night in October 1857, when he was in his mid forties, Dickens retired to bed in the family home in Bloomsbury, but found himself completely unable to get to sleep. He had suffered from intermittent insomnia throughout his adult life, but on this occasion he felt particularly agitated. He did not feel at home at home. So at 2 a.m. he climbed out of bed, dressed in warm clothes, and set off through the gas-lit streets of the city. 'The streets of London, to be beheld in the very height of their glory, should be seen on a dark, dull, murky winter's night', Dickens had written more than two decades earlier, 'when the heavy lazy mist, which hangs over every object, makes the gas lamps look brighter.'³ In the damp silence of the autumn night, beneath the scuffing sound of his boots on the stone pavements, he would have heard the gas whispering its secrets in the softly rasping pipes.

'The seduction of the gaslit night', writes Lynda Nead, 'lay in its invitation to leave the security of the everyday world behind and to experience the hallucinatory images of illuminated darkness.'⁴ In *Gaslight and Daylight* (1859), Dickens's young friend, the journalist George Augustus Sala, who also used to 'walk about

the streets at night', celebrated the occult magic of gaslight in the city streets – above all its 'endless and always suggestive intercommunings'. 'Gas to guide my footsteps', Sala's encomium continued, 'not over London flags, but through the crooked ways of unseen life and death of the doings of the great Unknown, of the cries of the great Unheard.' Dickens too was attentive to 'the secrets of the gas', whose flickering light offered insights into the hidden life of the city.⁵ The novelist often pursued the 'crooked ways of unseen life and death' in the streets of London at night.

Heading south in the direction of the Thames, on that night in October 1857, Dickens walked through London directly to Gad's Hill Place, his country residence in Kent. Like Pip's journey through the night, it was a distance of some thirty miles.

Elastic Novice

On the evening of this nightwalk, Dickens and his wife Catherine had probably quarrelled. They were becoming increasingly estranged, partly because of his relationship with the actress Ellen Ternan, who was then eighteen. For this reason, he visited Tavistock House, the house in Bloomsbury, only rarely at this time. He spent most of the autumn of 1857 at Gad's Hill Place, and, when he needed to be in central London, he tended to stay in a bachelor flat at the offices of his periodical, *Household Words*. It was probably shortly before or after this night that he insisted on partitioning the bedroom he shared with Catherine at Tavistock House so that they could sleep separately.⁶

A couple of years before this incident, in an earlier symptom of his deepening domestic unhappiness, Dickens had written to Maria Winter, the woman with whom he'd fallen in love when he was a twenty-year-old parliamentary reporter, to confess to her that, in his unrequited state in the early 1830s, he had repeatedly loitered outside her house at night. In a letter dated 22 February 1855 – some ten years after she became the wife of a saw-mill manager in Finsbury, prosaically enough – he informed her of these nocturnal walks in pathetic tones:

When we were falling off from each other, I came from the House of Commons many a night at two or three o'clock in the morning, only to wander past the place you were asleep in. And I have gone over that ground within these twelve months, hoping it was not ungrateful to consider whether any reputation the world can bestow, is repayment to a man for the loss of such a vision of his youth as mine.⁷

Claire Tomalin points out that 'this meant walking from Westminster into the City, and, having patrolled Lombard Street, setting off back to Bentinck Street', an excursion that 'must have taken two hours and got him home not much before morning'.⁸ It is tempting to speculate that, for Dickens, going 'over that ground' again entailed doing so physically as well as mentally, and that, in the state of anonymity that night afforded him, the most famous novelist of his generation haunted Lombard Street once again, finding an embattled form of refuge in his memories of Maria. For in the solitary streets at night, in the late 1850s as in the early 1830s, he nursed a profound and painful sense of remaining unfulfilled.

The nighttime journey on foot to Gad's Hill Place, driven by an acute sense of anguish and guilt, took Dickens little more than seven hours. He was a fast walker, who took pride in the fact that he could sustain a pace of at least four miles an hour across long distances. His friends, indeed, frequently complained of the speed and impatience with which he walked. 'Sometimes his perspiring companions gave way to blisters and breathlessness', writes one of his biographers.⁹ He himself was boastful of his feats as a pedestrian. 'So much of my travelling is done on foot', he professed in 1860, 'that if I cherished betting propensities, I should probably be found registered in sporting newspapers under some such title as the Elastic Novice, challenging all eleven stone mankind to competition in walking.'¹⁰ No doubt he secretly harboured dreams of bettering Captain Barclay, a celebrated athlete who, in 1809, when pedestrianism first became a sporting activity, walked a thousand miles in a thousand successive hours for a thousand guineas.

In the late 1850s, Dickens remained a fit man precisely because he insisted on walking, both in London and the countryside, whenever he could find the opportunity. Even so, he was increasingly

afflicted with ill health at this time. His symptoms included neuralgic and rheumatic pains. His feet also troubled him – 'first his left foot, and then his right, took to swelling intermittently, becoming so painful that during each attack he became unable to take himself on the great walks that were an essential part and pleasure of his life'.¹¹ Dickens probably had gout, though he was reluctant to accept the idea, claiming instead that he contracted the pain because he had incautiously walked in snowy conditions. This did not deter him from walking in all conditions, clement or inclement. G. K. Chesterton, identifying a 'streak of sickness' in Dickens, which he detected in the novelist's 'fervid' intelligence, nonetheless confirmed that 'he suffered from no formidable malady and could always through life endure a great deal of exertion, even if it was only the exertion of walking violently all night'.¹² Chesterton's understatement is deliberately comic.

For John Hollingshead, who had been apprenticed to Dickens on *Household Words*, and who therefore saw a good deal of him in the 1850s, this proclivity for 'violent walking' was itself a malady. He recalled in retrospect that 'when Dickens lived in Tavistock House he developed a mania for walking long distances, which almost assumed the form of a disease':

When he was restless, his brain excited by struggling with incidents or characters in the novel he was writing, he would frequently get up and walk through the night over Waterloo Bridge, along the London, New Kent and Old Kent Roads, past all the towns on the old Dover High Road, until he came to his roadside dwelling. His dogs barked when they heard his key in the wicket-gate, and his behaviour must have seemed madness to the ghost of Sir John Falstaff.¹³

The 'roadside dwelling' to which Hollingshead alludes is Gad's Hill Place, which stood opposite the Falstaff Inn, formerly a notorious haunt of robbers and highwaymen, on the old road from London to Dover. It is likely, then, that Dickens conducted his thirty-mile nightwalk to Kent on more than one occasion.

Mania; disease. According to this diagnosis, Dickens's celebrated feat on that night in October 1857 was less about overcoming his

physical afflictions than capitulating to his psychological ones. The proximate reasons for Dickens's compulsive walking in the 1850s were, first, the death of his father in 1851, and, second, the deterioration of his marriage to Catherine. But no doubt there were less immediate, more unfathomable, reasons. Dickens had been a manic – not just an energetic – walker for decades. 'If I couldn't walk fast and far, I should just explode and perish', he once told John Forster, his biographer and intimate friend.¹⁴ In some almost terminal sense, to put it in Pip's terms, he wanted to tire himself out.

Gone Astray

In a letter to his friend Lavinia Watson, written some two months after the event, Dickens offered a fairly cheerful sketch of the night he walked to Gad's Hill in the autumn of 1857:

Six or eight weeks ago, I performed my celebrated feat of getting out of bed at 2 in the morning, and walking down there from Tavistock House – over 30 miles – through the dead night. I had been very much put-out; and I thought, 'After all, it would be better to be up and doing something, than lying here.' So I got up, and did that.¹⁵

It is a no-nonsense account of his physical achievement – felt put-out; got up; did that. His businesslike use of these bi-syllabic phrases, which seem slightly self-satisfied in tone, creates the superficial impression that, presented with a nameless problem that had made him uncomfortable, he decided to solve it simply by taking a dose of stimulating exercise.

In Dickens's description of his 'celebrated feat', there is no reference to the tormented state of mind that inspired his desperate, solitary act of self-exhaustion. But in the hyphenated phrases of the first sentence – 'over 30 miles – through the dead night' – there is nonetheless a faint hint that the brisk rhythms of his prose cannot entirely conceal a sense of physical or psychological fragmentation. In the second of these clauses – 'through the dead night' – there

is a subtle deadening effect, as if it is missing a beat. The phrase 'through the dead of night' might have sustained the forceful, slightly triumphant rhythm of the phrase 'over 30 miles'. Instead, there is a faltering rhythm, as of someone suddenly running out of physical or spiritual energy.

In addition, the expressions 'the dead of night' and 'the dead night' signify subtly different things. The former, a temporal and social category, denotes the deepest, darkest hours of the night, the period between approximately 2 a.m. and 4 a.m. The latter – 'the dead night' – is more like an existential or spiritual category, which in addition connotes the night as a deadly or deathly condition. Shakespeare captures this association when Horatio informs Hamlet that, to the terror of those keeping watch, his father's ghost has been glimpsed on the ramparts 'in the dead vast and middle of the night'.¹⁶ In this line the word 'vast' – from the Latin *vastus*, which indicates a waste or void – lies somewhere between an adjective and a noun. It opens up an immense empty space into which time seems to collapse and disappear. It is a desolate state of being. The dead night, it might be said, like the dead vast of the night, is devastating.

If Dickens's nightwalk to Kent in 1857 was an attempt to preempt an explosion of the kind he alluded to in his comment to Forster, then it was also, like Pip's attempt to tire himself out, an act of self-obliteration. It is probably this nocturnal walk that Dickens described in detail in an article on 'Shy Neighbourhoods' (1860) published in *All the Year Round* some two and a half years later:

My last special feat was turning out of bed at two, after a hard day, pedestrian and otherwise, and walking thirty miles into the country to breakfast. The road was so lonely in the night, that I fell asleep to the monotonous sound of my own feet, doing their regular four miles an hour. Mile after mile I walked, without the slightest sense of exertion, dozing heavily and dreaming constantly. It was only when I made a stumble like a drunken man, or struck out into the road to avoid a horseman close upon me on the path – who had no existence – that I came to myself and looked about.¹⁷

The faintly jocular tone in which this anecdote starts, in an echo of the flirtatious letter to Lavinia Watson, darkens incrementally.

The first sentence briskly implies that the object of this thirty-mile walk was breakfast in the country, as if Dickens had simply been working up an appetite for it. But this impression is undermined by the second and third sentences, with their unsettling evocation of the somnambulist on the lonely nighttime road, 'dozing heavily and dreaming constantly'. Dickens's consciousness has become detached from his body, the relentless motions of which are mechanical. If this is the dead time of night, it is also the undead time of night.

In the fourth sentence, despite the residually comic image of him stumbling 'like a drunken man' and getting spooked by a spectral horseman – who recalls the 'hunted phantom' that rides into London at the beginning of *Barnaby Rudge* (1841) – Dickens communicates a sense of profound emptiness. It is as if, in lapsing into a state of semi-consciousness, he himself momentarily 'had no existence'. But, in coming to himself again, he does not fully regain his sense of self. Spiritually speaking, he is still adrift. In spite of the fact he has two homes, he resembles John Clare traipsing along the roads at night in a desperate, automatic motion. Dickens, too, felt homeless at home at this time.

As day breaks, its light penetrating the autumn mist, Dickens starts to hallucinate. His body is evidently famished and exhausted. But his imagination, too, is both exhausted and famished. It is as if his mind, on the obscure, rural roads at night, deprived of the visual material around which it would ordinarily have weaved its endless, restless novelistic fantasies, suddenly sets to work with redoubled feverishness on the inchoate physical forms illuminated by the mysterious early morning light. Dickens's imaginative response to the atmospheric effects of the dawn is comparable to the ecstatic reaction of a starving man for whom a humble crust of bread tastes like the richest, most delicate of dishes.

For in Dickens's somnambulant consciousness, the clouds and mist before him coalesce into a sublime landscape. 'I could not disembarass myself', he writes, 'of the idea that I had to climb those heights and banks of cloud, and that there was an Alpine Convent

somewhere behind the sun, where I was going to breakfast.' He is at the climactic point of a Grand Tour of his own troubled psyche. And he admits that, even once the sun is 'up and bright ... I still occasionally caught myself looking about for wooden arms to point the right track up the mountain, and wondering there was no snow yet'. It is as if Dickens is haunted by what Thomas De Quincey, in his description of encountering the Spectre of Brocken at first light in the mountains of North Germany, called his 'Dark Interpreter' – 'an intruder into my dreams'.¹⁸

Nightwalking was for Dickens a narcotic ('I could do nothing half so good for myself as tire myself out', as Pip puts it). Dickens adds that, in the semi-conscious, somnambulant state that he inhabited on this night, as on other occasions when he suffered from insomnia, his facility for language was strangely loosened:

It is a curiosity of broken sleep that I made immense quantities of verses on that pedestrian occasion (of course I never make any when I am in my right senses), and that I spoke a certain language once pretty familiar to me, but which I have nearly forgotten from disuse, with fluency. Of both these phenomena I have such frequent experience in the state between sleeping and waking, that I sometimes argue with myself that I know I cannot be awake, for, if I were, I should not be half so ready. The readiness is not imaginary, because I often recall long strings of the verses, and many turns of the fluent speech, after I am broad awake.¹⁹

The rhythm of his feet, as they pound the roads, provides the impetus needed spontaneously to shape his half-formed thoughts into poems. From a distance, the solitary figure of Dickens recalls that of William Wordsworth, who strode at night along the roads of the Lake District and, rolling fragments of blank verse around his tongue, muttered to himself like a madman. Up close, it becomes apparent that Dickens, speaking a forgotten language as well as making up 'immense quantities of verse' that, in an additional sense, will remain for ever blank, is completely delirious. Locked in 'the state between waking and sleeping', Dickens – unlike the Romantic poet – really is almost mad.

Dickens is, more precisely, a species of 'mad traveller'. Mad travelling is Ian Hacking's term for the 'compulsive aimless wandering' that French psychologists, including Jean-Martin Charcot, sought to diagnose at the end of the nineteenth century. Dickens's walk to Gad's Hill Place, though not aimless, is something like a psychogenic fugue. It is a flight both from his everyday life, including his wife, and from his self. And, like the cases of mad travelling or 'ambulatory automatism' examined by alienists in the 1890s, during what Hacking has characterized as a 'fugue epidemic', Dickens's hypnotic state induces a radical loss of identity.²⁰ At night, Dickens became a *fugueur*.

From an early age he had been running away from something, or walking 'fast and far' from something. Going astray, he called it. In an article entitled 'Gone Astray', printed in *Household Words* in 1853, he described how he had 'got lost one day in the City of London' as an eight- or nine-year-old child and roamed and strayed and strolled through its precincts all day and into the night, until he found a watchman. 'I have gone astray since, many times, and farther afield', Dickens concludes with a certain sad pride.²¹

Ancient Secrets

In his delightful and profoundly insightful monograph on Dickens, Chesterton argued that the novelist's originality and genius resided in the fact that he possessed, 'in the most sacred and serious sense of the term, the key of the street':

Few of us understand the street. Even when we step into it, as into a house or a room of strangers. Few of us see through the shining riddle of the street, the strange folk that belong to the street only – the street-walker or the street-Arab, the nomads who, generation after generation, have kept their ancient secrets in the full blaze of the sun. Of the street at night many of us know even less. The street at night is a great house locked up. But Dickens had, if ever man had, the key of the street; his stars were the lamps of the street; his hero was the man in the street. He could open

the inmost door of his house – the door that leads into that secret passage which is lined with houses and roofed with stars.²²

Chesterton's emphasis on the importance to Dickens of the street at night was perceptive. Dickens was quite as interested in the nomads that occupied the nocturnal city – the streetwalkers and the nightwalkers – as in those who occupied the diurnal one. He wanted to understand those who kept their ancient secrets beneath the cold light of the moon as well as the full blaze of the sun. Indeed, he was himself – in an 'amateur way', to use a characteristic formulation – one of these nomadic people. It was in the streets at night, and among its strange folk, that he sought the solution not only to the riddle of the modern city but to his own inscrutable, often secretive, existence.

It was probably in the late 1830s and early 1840s that Dickens first regularly walked at night in London. These were the years, so the historian Joachim Schlör claims, when night in the European metropolis first came to represent a distinctive challenge both for those who policed it and for the bourgeois imagination itself. From roughly 1840, faced with fears that emerged as a result of the rise of the so-called dangerous classes, 'the complete city-dweller [had] to learn to master the night'. Schlör's claim that, after this time, 'night is more than simply a darker version of the day', seems exaggerated.²³ In the city, night had for centuries been socially, psychologically and even ontologically different to the day, as the career of the common nightwalker and his or her descendants indicated. But he is nonetheless right to emphasize a shift at this time, on the grounds that the night became a pressing social problem in the increasingly conflicted and contradictory centres of industrial capitalism.

As a young man, Dickens regularly strolled in the streets at night for purely companionable or sociable purposes. In his biography of Dickens, Fred Kaplan observes that in the late 1830s Dickens often socialized with Forster and their friend Daniel Maclise, and that together they frequently amused themselves with 'dinners and drinks in city and county inns, rapid overnight trips to Kent, late-night walks through London streets, cigars, brandy, and conversation'. In this guise, exchanging 'elaborate badinage, jokes about

women, about eccentricities, about escapades', they are not unlike Tom, Jerry and Logic in Pierce Egan's *Life in London* (1821).²⁴ This is Dickens the genial roisterer, who inhabited the populous, glittering streets of central London – illuminated in the hours after dusk by the innumerable gaslights that flared from shop windows – as if they were a comfortable, albeit brilliant, interior.

But Dickens was also beginning to roam at night with a darker, more solipsistic sense of purpose at this point – or, with a compulsive sense of purposelessness. It appears likely, for example, that at the start of the 1840s he first returned at night to the site of Warren's, the blacking factory where he had laboured as a twelve-year-old child, labelling bottles, while his father served his prison sentence for debt. In the autobiographical fragment that Dickens wrote for Forster in 1847, he confirmed that, 'in my walks at night I have walked there often, since then, and by degrees I have come to write this'. As in his subsequent recollections of loitering outside Maria Winter's house, the activities of nightwalking and reconstructing decisive or even traumatic events from his past were curiously, elaborately intertwined (in this respect, as in others, he was like De Quincey). 'I often forget in my dreams that I have a dear wife and children; even that I am a man', Dickens wrote of the inexorable pull of the blacking factory, 'and wander desolately back to that time of my life'.²⁵ Both dreaming and nightwalking involved 'wandering desolately back' into the past.

Black Streets

Increasingly, too, nightwalking seems to have become instrumental to the business of writing, itself a compulsive activity for Dickens. It provided release – sometimes instantaneous, sometimes not – from the uncontainable sense of excitement or frustration he often felt during the composition of his fiction, the serial production of which exerted peculiarly intense demands on his psyche.

On 2 January 1844, for example, Dickens wrote to his friend Cornelius Felton, Professor of Greek at Harvard University, informing him that he had sent a package to him by steamship containing

a copy of *A Christmas Carol* (1843): 'Over which Christmas Carol', the novelist writes in the third person, 'Charles Dickens wept and laughed, and wept again, and excited himself in a most extraordinary manner, in the composition; and thinking whereof, he walked about the black streets of London, fifteen and twenty miles, many a night when all the sober folks had gone to bed.'²⁶ It is as if, but for the freedom to roam through the 'black streets of London', the back streets of the city at night, he might have burst – like the boiler of the steamship that throbbed across the Atlantic with the book he had sent to Felton.

On the occasions when for one reason or another, during the composition of a book, Dickens could not pace freely about the metropolis at night, the absence of the 'black streets' crippled him. 'Put me down on Waterloo-bridge at eight o'clock in the evening, with leave to roam about as long as I like, and I would come home, as you know, panting to go on', he wrote to his confidant Forster from Genoa in 1844, when he was labouring on *The Chimes* (1844); 'I am sadly strange as it is, and can't settle.' 'He so missed his long night-walks before beginning anything', commented Forster, 'that he seemed, as he said, dumbfounded without them.'²⁷

Two years later, on the continent once again, Dickens's 'craving for streets' became even more acute. At the end of August 1846, living with his family in Lausanne, where he was writing *Dombey and Son* (1848), he complained to Forster of 'the absence of streets and numbers of figures':

I can't express how much I want these. It seems as if they supplied something to my brain, which it cannot bear, when busy, to lose. For a week or a fortnight I can write prodigiously in a retired place (as at Broadstairs), and a day in London sets me up again and starts me. But the toil and labour of writing, day after day, without that magic lantern, is IMMENSE!! ... I only mention it as a curious fact, which I have never had an opportunity of finding out before. My figures seem disposed to stagnate without crowds about them. I wrote very little in Genoa (only the *Chimes*), and fancied myself conscious of some such influence there – but Lord! I had two miles of streets at least, lighted at night, to walk about in; and a great theatre to repair to, every night.²⁸

No one in the nineteenth century can have needed London quite as much as Dickens did. It was an addiction.

Dickens sickened when he did not have access to the phantasmagoric effects of the city – especially at night, when it was most like a magic lantern. In October 1846 he informed Forster of his delight at moving from Lausanne to Geneva, though he admitted that in the latter too he suffered from ‘occasional giddiness and headache’, which he confidently attributed ‘to the absence of streets’.²⁹ Dickens subsisted on the lifeblood of the metropolitan city like a vampire, thriving on its streets and ‘figures’ as their energies ebbed after nightfall. Even in substantial, sociable urban centres such as Geneva and Genoa, which were extensively lighted at night, he felt claustrophobic because he did not have the same freedom to roam across considerable distances.

Paris, like London, offered Dickens relief from this sense of inhibition that seemed to paralyse both him and his characters. In another slightly desperate letter sent to Forster from Lausanne, this time in September 1846, at a time when he was deeply, painfully embroiled in the composition of *Dombey and Son*, he consoled himself with thoughts of the Parisian streets at night:

The absence of any accessible streets continues to worry me, now that I have so much to do, in a most singular manner. It is quite a little mental phenomenon. I should not walk in them in the day time, if they were here, I dare say: but at night I want them beyond description. I don’t seem to be able to get rid of my spectres unless I can lose them in crowds. However, as you say, there are streets in Paris, and good suggestive streets too; and trips to London will be nothing then.³⁰

On the night of his arrival in Paris, shortly after he sent this letter, Dickens escaped from the rest of the family, which had decamped to a small house in the Rue de Courcelles. As Forster reports, invoking Dickens’s adjective, he proceeded to take a “colossal” walk about the city, of which the brilliancy and brightness almost frightened him’.³¹

Nightwalking was a territorial habit, one that enabled Dickens to orientate himself in the city, to realign the relationship between

the metropolis and mental life. But it also offered a release from uncontainable emotions. In January 1847, he ‘slaughtered’ Paul Dombey, to use his term. ‘Then he walked through the streets of Paris until dawn’, as Peter Ackroyd reports.³² Thus he attempted to rid himself of one of his spectres. No doubt his nightwalk conjured up other ghosts – in the form of memories or fantasies – which he could not so easily escape or suppress.

Disagreeable Intrusions

The year after his father’s death, when Dickens’s nightwalking became particularly manic, he openly discussed the conditions that rendered it a kind of psychological necessity to him. ‘Lying Awake’ (1852) is an autobiographical article about insomnia published in *Household Words*. It is a remarkable rhetorical performance that dramatizes this indeterminate state between waking and sleeping by miming the intermittent and sporadic rhythms with which, in the form of a free association of ideas, phantasmagoric images infiltrate his consciousness. At this time Dickens was writing *Bleak House* (1853), in which Lady Dedlock obsessively ‘walks by night’ because she is so troubled by her guilty conscience.³³

At the beginning of ‘Lying Awake’, Dickens languishes ‘glaringly, persistently, and obstinately, broad awake’ in bed. As so often in his prose, the comic tone conceals a profound sense of existential apprehension, only thinly encasing it. The philosopher Emmanuel Levinas captures something of this dimension of the Dickensian self when he characterizes insomnia in terms of ‘the extinction of the subject’ – a state of abstract, anonymous being. Dickens decides, on the night he describes, that he will confront sleep as an intellectual problem rather than a physiological condition, in order to distract his ceaselessly active consciousness from what Levinas, in a scintillating formulation, calls ‘the indefectibility of being, where the work of being never lets up’.³⁴ Throughout his adult life, Dickens was locked into a sense or state of being – in all its indefectibility, its relentless infallibility – that seemed inescapable. The incessant, restless susurrations of consciousness ...

'I will think about Sleep', Dickens writes.³⁵ But his attempt to discipline his attention is rapidly derailed, and his 'train of thoughts' instead pursues a meandering path through random memories, through mysterious residues of the ancient and recent past. For example, 'for no reason on earth that I can find out, and drawn by no links that are visible to me', he suddenly finds himself, when he should be pondering sleep, climbing a mountain in Switzerland, the Great Saint Bernard, and spending the night in a convent at its summit. Presumably this is the same alpine convent as the one he thinks he is ascending when, some five years later, he has a hallucination in the early morning mist on the nightwalk to Gad's Hill Place. But, no sooner has he reconstructed his memories of this mountain, which he visited in 1846, than a caricature he once saw chalked on a church door as a child, of a terrifying man with 'goggle eyes, and hands like two bunches of carrots', stalks into his consciousness.³⁶

In an effort to escape the horror of the scene in the churchyard, which has often haunted him as an adult, Dickens self-consciously resolves instead to reconstruct 'the balloon ascents of this last season'. But this innocent tableau almost instantly slips its moorings. It is replaced, or displaced, by the 'dismal spectacle' of two murderers, George and Maria Manning, 'hanging on the top of Horsemonger Lane Jail' – as if the image of hot-air balloons tugging upwards on their ropes has irresistibly evoked the image of inert bodies tugging down on theirs.³⁷

Along with 30,000 other people, Dickens had attended the execution of the Mannings, convicted for killing their lodger with a 'ripping chisel', in 1849. It was an event so unedifying that it shocked him into writing two letters to *The Times* denouncing public executions. In 'Lying Awake', he admits that for weeks afterwards the sight of 'these two forms dangling on the top of the entrance gateway' had made it impossible to imagine the prison 'without presenting it with the two figures still hanging in the morning air'. 'Until, strolling past the gloomy place one night, when the street was deserted and quiet', he adds, 'and actually seeing that the bodies were not there, my fancy was persuaded, as it were, to take them down and bury them within the precincts of the jail, where they have lain ever since.'³⁸

Dickens's mental associations, in this restless state between sleeping and waking, dreaming and thinking, have thus led him to recall a recent nightwalk. For Dickens, as an insomniac, nightwalking is the alternative to lying awake. It is the physically active as opposed to passive attempt to circumvent the effects of insomnia. And so it is that, at the end of 'Lying Awake', after repeatedly failing to 'return to the balloons', the recollection of which is interrupted again and again by the most 'disagreeable intrusion[s]' – of 'a man with his throat cut, dashing towards me as I lie awake', for example, and of corpses in the Paris Morgue deposited 'like a heap of crushed over-ripe figs' – he decides to search for relief from his sleepless, almost compulsively dystopian imagination in the darkened streets of the metropolis.³⁹

After reflecting on the barbarity and inefficacy of flogging as a punishment for 'the late brutal assaults' in London, Dickens offers this explanation:

I had proceeded thus far, when I found I had been lying awake so long that the very dead began to wake too, and to crowd into my thoughts most sorrowfully. Therefore, I resolved to lie awake no more, but to get up and go out for a night walk – which resolution was an acceptable relief to me, as I dare say it may prove now to a great many more.⁴⁰

Dickens thus resolves to be the protagonist – the 'hero', as David Copperfield might have put it – of his own gothic fiction.

Besieged in his consciousness by an army of the dead, led no doubt by his deceased father, he will try to outflank it by stealing into the nocturnal city and recruiting himself to the scattered army of the undead that, in the form of the homeless, patrol its dirty, shadowy precincts.

Miles upon Miles of Streets

'Night Walks', first published in *All the Year Round* in 1860, then reprinted in *The Uncommercial Traveller* in 1861, was a belated sequel to 'Lying Awake'. It is perhaps Dickens's finest,

most haunting piece of non-fictional prose. At once impressionistic and replete with intensely realized detail – like a dream, in fact – it relates his experiences on the streets of the capital between roughly half past midnight and the moment when ‘the conscious gas [begins] to grow pale with the knowledge that daylight [is] coming’.⁴¹

‘Some years ago’, Dickens’s article begins, ‘a temporary inability to sleep, referable to a distressing impression, caused me to walk about the streets all night, for a series of several nights.’ The ‘distressing impression’ referred to here, in spite of the interval of almost ten years, appears once again to have been Dickens’s grief at his father’s death, compounded by surfacing anxieties about his finances as well as by a deepening sense of filial guilt. But if this particular ‘series of several nights’ in the early 1850s – the most concentrated and intense period of Dickens’s career as a nightwalker – provided the inspiration for ‘Night Walks’, then the oneiric prose of the piece is steeped in a lifetime’s experience of the dreamscapes of nocturnal London. Nightwalking was a chronic and at times also an acute condition for Dickens.

Reflecting on his insomnia in the opening paragraph of ‘Night Walks’, Dickens remarks that this ‘disorder might have taken a long time to conquer, if it had been faintly experimented on in bed; but, it was soon defeated by the brisk treatment of getting up directly after lying down, and going out, and coming home tired at sunrise’. In this sentence, Dickens gently mocks the bracing regime of exercise he has prescribed himself. He hints that, in an ironic inversion, his nighttimes acquired the routine character of life in the city in the daytime. Getting up from bed, going out, coming home. It is a comically abbreviated description of a day’s commute – one that is roughly contemporaneous with Dickens’s portrait of Mr Wemmick in *Great Expectations*, whom Rachel Bowlby has identified as ‘the first commuter in literature’.⁴²

Except that it doesn’t simply invert the logic of the diurnal routine (‘getting up directly after lying down, and going out, and coming home tired at sunrise’) – it redoubles it, making it seem even more desperate, in spite of the light tone, because it leaves no room at all for sleep, for the restorative pleasures of home so

cherished by Wemmick. The image of Dickens getting up directly after lying down at night evokes a daily existence of unsustainable alienation, its comedy darkened by the relentless grind of labour in an industrial society.

Dickens’s nightwalking after his father’s death is both a prescription and a neurotic compulsion. Cure and poison. For, if it is therapeutic, it also reinforces an almost psychotic sense of solitude. Nightwalking is a ghastly, sometimes horrifying, parody of the comforting, regular life that, in the opening paragraph of ‘Night Walks’, he pretends it simply mimics. In the somnambulant conditions of the nightwalk, the city cannot be dissociated from the individual’s imagination. The metropolis and mental life collapse in on one another. In the couple of hours after midnight, Dickens’s own restlessness is mirrored by what he calls ‘the restlessness of a great city, and the way in which it tumbles and tosses before it can get to sleep’. This restlessness, a collective restlessness, eventually fades, and London does indeed ‘sink to rest’, as he puts it.⁴³

But Dickens remains terminally restless. ‘Walking the streets under the pattering rain’, he reports, he ‘would walk and walk and walk, seeing nothing but the interminable tangle of streets’. In this state of confused, repetitive solitude, which has the logic of a nightmare, everything is tainted, everything becomes part of some gigantic pathetic fallacy – or neurotic fallacy. The world is restless even when it is at rest. ‘The wild moon and clouds were as restless as an evil conscience in a tumbled bed.’ Despite his respectability in the early 1850s – which is all the more precious to him because he cannot escape the memories of his father’s lack of respectability – Dickens is the archetypal nightwalker. Condemning himself to the emptied city at night, he has ‘many miles upon miles of streets’ in which he can have his ‘own solitary way’.⁴⁴

Dickens’s prose evokes a sense of solitude that echoes through his sentences as if they are as empty and hollow as the midnight streets through which he walks. ‘When a church clock strikes, on houseless ears in the dead of the night, it may be at first mistaken for company’, he explains at one point; but, as ‘the spreading circles of vibration’ echo out into ‘eternal space, the mistake is rectified and the sense of loneliness is profounder’.⁴⁵

But Dickens confesses to having discovered a lonely sense of community in the cold depths of the London night, among men defined by 'a tendency to lurk and lounge; to be at street-corners without intelligible reason' – that is, by what he identifies, in saddened tones imbued with the memory of his father's failure, as 'the Dry Rot in men'. In spite of its oddly indistinct quality, Dry Rot can be unmistakably discerned. In its initial phase, it provokes in the observer no more than an indefinable suspicion that 'the patient [has been] living a little too hard' – like a faintly sour smell clinging to someone's clothes. It soon comes to seem less elusive, for it is indelibly present in 'a certain slovenliness and deterioration, which is not poverty, nor dirt, nor intoxication, nor ill-health, but simply Dry Rot'. In its advanced state, it assumes the form of 'a trembling of the limbs, somnolency, misery, and crumbling to pieces'. As in a wooden plank, 'Dry Rot advances at a compound usury quite incalculable'.⁴⁶ So with what Kant called the crooked timber of humanity.

'My principal object being to get through the night', Dickens writes, 'the pursuit of it brought me into sympathetic relations with people who have no other object every night of the year.'⁴⁷ These are the everyday casualties of life in the capitalist metropolis – the victims of unemployment, alcoholism and other symptoms of social and spiritual alienation. Sala, a descendant of the eighteenth-century authors of the nocturnal picaresque, sketches this nocturnal species in *Twice Round the Clock* (1859). There he reports that, in London after midnight, 'strange shapes appear of men and women who have lain a-bed all the day and evening, or have remained torpid in holes and corners' (he adds that, at this time, 'the street corners are beset by night prowlers').⁴⁸ These are people who, because they are more or less homeless, must conquer time, or defend themselves against its blank emptiness, from minute to minute, moment by moment.

They are the opposite of Wemmick, whose sense of home is excessively pronounced, and who protects himself from the alienation of the day's labour by dividing the evening against it. If Wemmick daily builds a defensive wall around his home, and the promise of recreation it circumscribes in the evening, in order

to defend himself against the political economy of the metropolis, then the people inhabiting the streets, for whom time and space are almost completely unbounded, are anti-Wemmicks.

Houseless Creatures

Dickens's nightwalks are partly an experiment in what – once more in deceptively light tones – he calls an 'amateur experience of houselessness'. Homelessness was a pressing problem in nineteenth-century London, especially in the late 1840s and 1850s, when thousands of Irish people, escaping the famine and its effects, fled to the city.

In 1859, when the population of the capital was approximately 3 million, Sala noted that 'it is commonly asserted, and as commonly believed, that there are seventy thousand persons in London who rise every morning without the slightest knowledge as to where they shall lay their heads at night'. Even if this number is overstated, he added, 'a vast quantity of people are daily in the above-mentioned uncertainty regarding sleeping accommodation', and 'a great majority solve the problem in a somewhat (to themselves) disagreeable manner, by not going to bed at all'.⁴⁹ Here, in the city at nighttime, was an immense, atomized community.

In 'Night Walks' and other journalistic pieces Dickens depicted the depredations experienced by London's homeless population at night with anger as well as pity. In 'On Duty with Inspector Field' (1851), for example, he records the nocturnal tour of St Giles he took with this charismatic detective, the prototype of Inspector Bucket in *Bleak House*. Field, in Dickens's account, expresses both outrage and disgust at the squalid conditions of a room in a 'tramps' lodging-house': 'Ten, twenty, thirty – who can count them! Men, women, children, for the most part naked, heaped upon the floor like maggots in a cheese!'⁵⁰

In 'A Sleep to Startle Us' (1852), Dickens details a visit to the 'Ragged School Dormitory' at the upper end of Farringdon Street, which offered basic shelter to 'houseless creatures', including

'thieves, cadgers, trampers, vagrants, common outcasts of all sorts', who would otherwise be forced 'to hide where they could in heaps of moral and physical pollution'.⁵¹ And in 'A Nightly Scene in London' (1856), printed like the previous articles in *Household Words*, he conducts an interview with five homeless women – 'five dead bodies taken out of graves, tied neck and heels, and covered with rags' – who lie on the muddy pavement beside the wall of the Workhouse in Whitechapel one wet night. He concludes by abominating the 'demented disciples' of political economy.⁵²

Dickens revisited the terrain of houselessness in *Little Dorrit* (1857), a novel that betrays an especially intimate relationship with the more polemical pieces he was publishing in periodicals in the early and mid 1850s. One night, along with her idiot friend Maggy, Little Dorrit returns from Covent Garden to the Marshalsea Prison in Southwark, where her father – like Dickens's – has been incarcerated for debt. Forster recounts that Dickens told him of the nights that he and his sister Fanny used to walk back from the Marshalsea Prison to the Royal Academy of Music, where she studied, when he was a child.⁵³

Little Dorrit seems 'fragile and defenceless against the bleak damp weather', so the quietly heroic Arthur Clennam follows her at a distance through the streets, from a desire to protect her. Out of delicacy, though, Clennam drifts off when they reach the prison, and he therefore fails to realize that it is locked for the night – 'He had no suspicion that they ran any risk of being houseless until morning.' Little Dorrit, who is fully conscious of this prospect, stops outside a 'poor dwelling all in darkness', in the hope that it might provide them with temporary lodging; but she knocks at its door so tentatively that she fails to rouse its inhabitants. 'If we cannot wake them so', she resolves, 'we must walk about till day.'⁵⁴

And so they do. It is half past one on 'a chill dark night'. They therefore have five and a half hours to kill before the prison reopens in the morning. While the street is 'empty and silent', they perch on Maggy's basket and huddle together beside the prison gate for comfort. When Little Dorrit hears a footstep, however, or sees 'a moving shadow among the street lamps', she panics, and they

scramble to their feet and 'wander about a little' before coming back to the gate again. The hulking, uncouth form of Maggy finally falls asleep against Little Dorrit's chest 'in the dead of the night, when the street [is] very still indeed'.⁵⁵

But she soon awakes, 'querulous again', and expresses a desire 'to get up and walk'. It is after 3 a.m. Approximately half an hour later they cross London Bridge:

They had heard the rush of the tide against obstacles; had looked down, awed, through the dark vapor on the river; had seen little spots of lighted water where the bridge lamps were reflected, shining like demon eyes, with a terrible fascination in them for guilt and misery. They had shrunk past homeless people, lying coiled up in nooks. They had run from drunkards. They had started from slinking men, whistling and signing to one another at bye corners, or running away at full speed.⁵⁶

At one point, a female passerby mistakes Maggy's large form for a mother pimping her daughter as a prostitute.

Eventually, to 'the ghastly dying of the night', the city begins to surface again, as if it were suffering from a fever, or a gin-soaked, guilt-soaked hangover. The flare of gas lamps becomes sickly and feeble in the early morning light; and carts, coaches, wagons and workers gradually stir into life. This is the moment described by James Ewing Ritchie, in *The Night Side of London* (1857), in terms of 'the lamps being extinguished, and the milk carts going round, and the red newspaper expresses tearing along to catch the early train'. It is the moment when, 'in the sober light of day', the experiences of the night 'seem unreal'.⁵⁷

Maggy and Little Dorrit return to the Marshalsea 'in the first grey mist of a rainy morning'. It is the first time in her life that the latter has spent a night outside the precincts of the prison. It has been a shock: 'The shame, desertion, wretchedness, and exposure, of the great capital; the wet, the cold, the slow hours, and the swift clouds, of the dismal night.'⁵⁸

Loose Bundle of Rags

For the police, as Schlör has argued, 'the proof of a home, a legal nocturnal place to stay, is the precondition for the recognition of existence'. So, he continues, 'the situation of *homelessness*, or roaming the night without aim and without rest, represents exclusion from bourgeois society'.⁵⁹ It is a form of non-existence, non-being. In his nightwalks, Dickens deliberately patrolled the outer limits of bourgeois society, loitering in its psychological and sociological borderland.

In 'Night Walks', Dickens figures himself in the allegorical guise of 'Houselessness'. Like King Lear on the heath, Dickens on the streets exposes himself to feel what wretches feel. He is an uncommon nightwalker who identifies closely with the condition of the common nightwalker. Dickens's itinerant and vagrant condition is thus an existential rather than a social form of homelessness. It is a state of anomie. He refers at one point to 'the houseless mind', a phrase that, building on Shakespeare's image of 'houseless heads' in *King Lear*, signifies both the mentality of a homeless person and his own homeless state of mind: his anchorless state of consciousness; his displaced or exiled sense of self. But, if he underlines his sense of solidarity with those whom circumstances have rendered materially destitute – especially the children whose naked feet 'are perpetually making a blunt pattering on the pavement' of the piazza at Covent Garden – he is nevertheless not ashamed to admit that, at times, the houseless seem frighteningly foreign or other to him.⁶⁰ If he understands their alienation, he also finds them, simply, alien.

This ambivalent attitude is dramatized most sharply in his encounter with an ungendered homeless person on the steps of St Martin-in-the-Fields in Trafalgar Square in the dead of night:

Once – it was after leaving the Abbey and turning my face north – I came to the great steps of St Martin's Church as the clock was striking three. Suddenly, a thing that in a moment more I should have trodden upon without seeing, rose up at my feet with a cry of loneliness and houselessness, struck out of it by the bell, the like of which I never heard. We then

stood face to face looking at one another, frightened by one another. The creature was like a beetle-browed hare-lipped youth of twenty, and it had a loose bundle of rags on, which it held together with one of its hands. It shivered from head to foot, and its teeth chattered, and as it stared at me – persecutor, devil, ghost, whatever it thought me – it made with its whining mouth as if it were snapping at me, like a worried dog. Intending to give this ugly object money, I put out my hand to stay it – for it recoiled as it whined and snapped – and laid my hand upon its shoulder. Instantly, it twisted out of its garment, like the young man in the New Testament, and left me standing alone with its rags in my hands.⁶¹

Here, in Lear's language, is 'unaccommodated man', 'a poor, bare, forked animal'.⁶²

In encountering this creature, Dickens confronts the limits of humanity. It is as if he has come face to face with the Night, 'the interior of [human] nature', which Hegel discerned in what he called 'phantasmagorical conceptions', where horrifying forms suddenly appear, 'only to disappear as suddenly'. 'We see this Night', the German philosopher continued, 'when we look a human being in the eye, looking into a Night which turns terrifying.' For, from his eyes, he concluded in an unforgettable image, 'the night of the world hangs out towards us'.⁶³ The night of the world hangs out towards Dickens from this homeless youth's face.

If in this incident Dickens confronts the limits of humanity, then he also confronts the limits of his own capacity for identifying with the poor; that is, he confronts the limits of his own humanity. A creature, he calls it, and an object. An abject, ugly object. It appears that, once he has laid a patrician, if kindly, hand on its shoulder, the youth is left to run off into the night clothed in nothing at all. 'Poor naked wretches', Lear cries, 'How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides, / Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you / From seasons such as these?'⁶⁴ Dickens is evidently moved by this individual's 'cry of loneliness and houselessness', which gives voice to his own inarticulate pain. But, in his description of this incident, there is nonetheless an uncomfortable sense in which he does after all resemble the 'persecutor' that, he assumes, this nameless, homeless person sees in him. So if the homeless youth seems

inhuman – that is, ‘marked by a terrifying excess which, although negating what we understand as “humanity”, is inherent to being human’ – then Dickens does too.⁶⁵

This intuition, implicit though it remains, is not one that Dickens’s contemporaries, above all the Christian philanthropists who attempted to save fallen women on the streets at night, can countenance. It is alien, for example, to John Blackmore, author and architect of *The London by Moonlight Mission* (1860), an account of his ‘midnight cruises’ among prostitutes in central London in the 1850s. This book contains the testament of one of Blackmore’s confederates, who describes distributing Christian tracts to the women who solicit him in the Haymarket (‘at night prostitutes crowd several streets in this quarter by the thousands’, Fyodor Dostoevsky wrote of this nightspot on his visit to the English capital in 1862).⁶⁶ There he finds himself ‘completely possessed by an intense desire to benefit these unhappy creatures’.⁶⁷

Blackmore’s colleague thus sublimates his erotic desire into an all-consuming moral desire. Here is a graphic instance of what Jacques Lacan once characterized as ‘the aggressivity that underlies the activity of the philanthropist’.⁶⁸ Dickens, by comparison, is less philanthropic, less aggressive, far more conflicted and self-divided.

Sanctuaries and Stews

Houselessness has no history. This is an overstatement, of course. For, in the course of centuries, the complicated legal, moral and social superstructure on which the lives of homeless people have depended, shaped above all by economic and political imperatives, has been in a constant state of development; and the balance between their persecution or prosecution and their protection has in consequence shifted ceaselessly. But, in spite of this, and in spite of important material changes to the city, including the introduction of paving and public lighting, the basic homeless experience, which entails searching for shelter and sleeping on the streets, warmed by narcotics and threadbare clothes and blankets, has altered little since the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries.

In a late essay, ‘On an Amateur Beat’ (1869) – prior to a description of a ‘street expedition’ in which he accidentally overturned ‘a wretched little creature’ who ‘clutch[ed] at the rags of a pair of trousers with one of its claws, and at its ragged hair with another’ – Dickens makes a more general, polemical observation to this effect. At the present time, he states, ‘a costly police-system such as was never heard of, has left in London, in the days of steam and gas and photographs of thieves and electric telegraphs, the sanctuaries and stews of the Stuarts’.⁶⁹ History moves at a far slower pace for the indigent, especially at night, than it does for the affluent.

When Pip returns in the middle of the night to his lodgings in Whitefriars, the site of the most notorious and anarchic of London’s slums in the seventeenth century, at the end of his thirty-mile walk from Miss Havisham’s house, the reader is expected to recall these horrifying continuities. Dickens’s nighttime street expeditions are an excavation of the past, both a private and a public one, which reveals that it lives, in a state of putrefaction that continues to breed life, just beneath the surface of the present.

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 46. Quoted in Roe, *John Keats*, p. 200.
 47. *Ibid.*, p. xx.
 48. Novalis, *Christianity or Europe: A Fragment*, in Frederick C. Beiser, ed., *The Early Political Writings of the German Romantics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 70; and *Hymns to Night*, trans. James Thomson, in Simon Reynolds, ed., *Novalis and the Poets of Pessimism* (Norwich: Michael Russell, 1995), p. 33.
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Chapter 12: The Dead Night

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3. Charles Dickens, 'The Streets – Night', in *Dickens' Journalism: Sketches by Boz and Other Early Papers, 1833–39*, ed. Michael Slater (London: Phoenix, 1996), p. 54.
4. Lynda Nead, *Victorian Babylon: People, Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 103.
5. George Augustus Sala, *Gaslight and Daylight, with Some London Scenes They Shine Upon* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1859), p. 159. For an excellent discussion of Sala and what Nead calls the poetics of gas, see Nead, *Victorian Babylon*, pp. 101–8.
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16. Shakespeare, *Complete Works*, I. ii. 198.
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28. *Ibid.*, pp. 612–13.
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30. *Ibid.*, p. 622.
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34. Emmanuel Levinas, *Existence and Existents*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2001), pp. 64, 62.

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36. *Ibid.*, pp. 25–6.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 26, 27.
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39. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
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58. Dickens, *Little Dorrit*, p. 150.
59. Schlör, *Nights in the Big City*, pp. 51–2.
60. Dickens, 'Night Walks', pp. 72, 78.
61. *Ibid.*, pp. 77–8. The reference to the New Testament is to Mark 14: 51–2.
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66. Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Winter Notes on Summer Impressions*, trans. David Patterson (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1997), p. 39.
67. Lieut. John Blackmore, *The London by Moonlight Mission: Being an Account of Midnight Cruises on the Streets of London during the Last Thirteen Years* (London: Robson and Avery, 1860), p. 94. On the 'midnight missions' of the mid nineteenth century, see Schlör, *Nights in the Big City*, pp. 217–24.
68. Jacques Lacan, 'The Mirror Stage as Formative of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience', in *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Routledge, 1977), p. 7.
69. Charles Dickens, 'On an Amateur Beat', in *Selected Journalism*, pp. 386–7.

Chapter 13: A Darkened Walk

1. Charles Dickens, 'Night Walks', in *On London* (London: Hesperus, 2010), pp. 71, 80.
2. In the previous chapter, Eliot informs the reader that Tito Melema, the novel's villain, 'came as a wanderer to Florence' in 1492. George Eliot, *Romola*, ed. Andrew Brown (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 202–3, 198.
3. Walter Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism*, trans. Harry Zohn (London: Verso, 1983), p. 54.
4. Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, ed. Edwin Cannan (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1976), pp. 12–13.
5. Cited in Norman Feltes, 'To Saunter, to Hurry: Dickens, Time, and Industrial Capitalism', *Victorian Studies* 20 (1977), pp. 251–2. I have relied extensively on pp. 150–2 of Feltes's excellent article in this paragraph, though it should be pointed out that he is interested in time-discipline as opposed to walking per se.
6. Theodor W. Adorno, 'Trying to Understand *Endgame*', in *Notes to Literature*, vol. 2, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Shierry Weber Nicholzen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), p. 255.
7. Quoted in Joseph A. Amato, *On Foot: A History of Walking* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), p. 1.
8. See E. P. Thompson, 'Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism', *Past and Present* 38 (1967), pp. 56–97.