Tale Of Two Cities 2 Essay, Research Paper

In Charles Dickens A Tale of Two Cities, the character of Sydney Carton was presented as an alcoholic lawyer with very low self-esteem. He progressed as a character and changed slightly in appearance mainly in Chapter 20 of Book the Second.

In the preceding chapters, Carton is merely described as a drunkard, frequenting tavern and downing copious amounts of wine. Charles Darnay used a sarcastic understatement, I think you have been drinking, Mr. Carton (71) to highlight this ludicrous point. In his ranting, however, he makes his true feelings clear. Carton

refers to himself as a disappointed drudge who no one on earth cares for (71).

He tends to be a follower, especially of Stryver, which takes full advantage of

this simple man s efforts. On the contrary, Carton does show tendencies to do very studious and good work as a lawyer, described as an amazingly good jackal (72). The only problem he had with that good trait is that he had no confidence or self-esteem to back up his aptitude for law; hence he would never be a lion (72).

Further, he was always considered an outsider. Carton appeared to be a vile, morose man, when in actuality it was the alcohol speaking. He never really expressed

his true self until that soft side emerged in the closing action of the book. The fact

that Carton never found companionship in upright man and that he binged frequently caused people to look upon Carton distastefully, causing his outcast status.

After Darnay s marriage to Lucie, however, Carton made an appearance and showed genuine emotion toward Darnay. He apologized for his drunkenness, and

made a plea to be friends (172). Darnay was patronizing to Carton, not giving him much respect, yet Carton seemed to be earnest nevertheless. This showed how Carton was actually an admirable man on the inside, but still had a problem with alcoholism. This showed an honorable trait within the man who was an outcast, and it causes the reader to look at Carton a bit differently from that point forward.

In conclusion, Carton was a drunkard lawyer with low self-esteem that was lacking in many ways, but had positive traits on the inside. He chose not to allow those traits to show very often, but they were still apparent. Sydney Carton is a very integral character to this book, showing a very dynamic personal change.