Chapter 23: “Fire Rises”

1. Be sure to understand the connection between the titles of Chapters 22 and 23.
2. On page 229, “Monseigneur as a class” is personification of the Second Estate; therefore, these paragraphs in the middle and bottom of the page deal with the Second Estate attempting to get out of France.
3. Page 230 and 231 may be a bit confusing, but keep in mind that some of the most important revolutionaries were arsonists who traveled from town to town, burning down the homes of the Second Estate.
4. Page 233 takes us to the burning of the chateau of the Marquis St. Evremonde. At the bottom of the page, note how high the flames are. This number should be familiar—especially with the remembrance of Gaspard’s gallows.
5. Deeper symbolism of the forty-feet high flames of the Evremonde chateau is intended here: In the book of Exodus, chapter 13, a pillar of fire that is forty-feet high leads the people out of Egypt and slavery. Dickens is telling us symbolically that these flames will also lead people out of repression and into liberation.
6. On page 235, we see Gabelle taken prisoner by the revolutionaries. Remember that Gabelle is the former servant to the Evremonde’s. He’s taken prisoner because he’s accused of running the Evremonde estate in the absence of any aristocrat (because, of course, Charles is in England).