A Tale Of Two Cities : The Haneious Deeds Of Madame Defarge Essay, Research Paper

In the novel A Tale of Two Cities, by Charles Dickens, the characters created contribute to the plot revolving around the French Revolution. Each character portrays a role that ultimately intertwines with the plot. Dickens does a very good job in creating a habit, trait or turn of phrase for the characters. These roles vary from inner struggles between themselves, their family, and the country in which they live. Madame Defarge is a prime example of a character who portrays all of these roles. She is definitely a person who is justly driven by horrible life experiences that commit to her heinous deeds. These deeds come to effect both the countries of England and France, and the lives of many of the other characters created in the novel.

Madame Defarge is described as a stout woman with a watchful eye that seldomly seemed to look at anything. She had a large heavily ringed hand, a steady face, strong features and was very well composed. She has a look, which informs much self-confidence in herself. She also has an extensive habit of knitting, which will become a significant theme in the novel.

Madame Defarge spends most of her days, weeks, and years before the revolution sitting in her wine shop, knitting a list of names. This list of names is a register of those she’s marked for death, come the revolution. This hobby links her closely with the reoccurring theme of fate, while all she knits is death into her list. These names are mainly the ones of the French aristocracy who she plans to kill. The reason behind her vulgar temptations is not only the growing poverty, and extremely poor living and working conditions in France. The actual reason for her vicious dreams date back to the fate of her own family. Madame Defarge s sister was raped and killed along with her brother who was murdered by members of the French aristocracy. This is the main reason behind her temptations that she wishes and demands revenge for.

As her siblings were involved in these tortuous deeds by the aristocracy, a young doctor was called upon to try and help them. This person was Doctor Minette, father of Lucie. When he arrived to this horrific scene, it was too late for him to help either of them. This is where Madame Defarges grudge toward the Minette family ties into the novel. Her grudge towards the Minette family grows to even higher levels when Lucie marries Charles Darnay who is part of the French Aristocracy. This is one of the many points where the clash between England and France intertwine with the plot.

Madame Defarge was also a very good strategist. She brainwashed the people who were revolting with her. An example of this is when Madame Defarge went to Versailles with the mender of roads. She used this visit to teach him to recognize his future prey . She described the aristocracy to him as dolls and birds.

Madame Defarge is justly driven, by her horrible life experiences that lead to her heinous deeds. Her malignant sense of being wronged by the St. Evremondes turns her practically into a machine of vengeance. Madame Defarge fulfills most of her dreams by killing off many of the people on her knitted register. Before she can get to the Minettes to kill them, Miss Pross takes her life. Her character personifies revolution. She patiently awaits the beginning of the French Revolution, violence and hatred boiling within her.