

Chapter 1

My name is David Copperfield. I was named after my father. Six months before I was born, my father died. His aunt was called Miss Betsey Trotwood and she was **in charge of** our family. My mother was always very afraid of her – even the mention of her name was enough to scare her. My father was Miss Betsey’s favourite nephew and she didn’t like my father marrying a woman half his age.

After my father died but before I was born, Miss Betsey came to see my mother. Mother was so scared when Miss Betsey arrived that she started crying. Miss Betsey was sure that I was going to be a girl. She insisted that I be called Betsy Trotwood Copperfield and she was going to be my godmother.

My mother was very ill and Aunt Betsey sent our maid, Peggotty, to get the doctor. I was born a few hours later and the doctor told my aunt I was a boy. When she heard the news, she left my mother’s house without saying anything and never came back. If my aunt hadn’t come to visit, I would never have been born.

The first things I can remember are the shape of my mother’s face and the rough feeling of Peggotty’s finger. When I was old enough to read, a man walked mother and me home from church. He was nice to me and mother seemed to be very happy with him but I didn’t like him. His name was Mr. Murdstone. Peggotty didn’t like him and she argued with mother about him.

in charge of (idiom) responsible for something or somebody

The argument didn't end well and Peggotty stopped spending as much time with mother and me in the evenings.

One day, Mr. Murdstone took me riding on his horse to a hotel by the sea. There were two gentlemen in the hotel smoking cigars. The two men made some jokes about Mr. Murdstone and my mother and a man who they called Brooks of Sheffield. After they had finished their cigars and jokes, we went for a walk on the **cliffs**. I had a lot of fun with the three gentlemen. We sat in the grass on the cliffs and looked through a telescope.

After the walk, we went on a boat. The three men looked at papers in the cabin while I waited on **deck** with the captain of the boat. Mr. Murdstone seemed to be in charge of the other two men. They kept looking at him when they were telling jokes to make sure they weren't upsetting him.

Mr. Murdstone took me home after his meeting on the boat. It was early evening when we got there and Mr. Murdstone took mother for a walk. I had tea while they went for a walk. When mother got home, she asked me all about my day out. I told her about the jokes they had made and then I went to bed. Something I said bothered my mother. She didn't say anything to me about it but I could tell. She came up to say goodnight and told me, "Don't tell Peggotty what the men said, it will make her angry." I could tell that she was angry too but I promised not to say anything and then I fell asleep.

cliff (n) a high and steep surface of rock, often on a coast

deck (n) the flat area outside of a ship or boat

Mother went on seeing Mr. Murdstone for two months. When Peggotty asked if I wanted to go to visit her brother in Yarmouth, she told me that it was a treat.

“What about mother?” I asked.

“She’s going to stay at Mrs. Grayper’s house with a lot of other people,” Peggotty told me. As mother was going to stay with lots of other people, I was happy to go away with Peggotty to Yarmouth.

The morning we were due to leave arrived and I was very excited about going away. If I had known then what I know now, I wouldn’t have been so excited to leave the house. As we left, mother came running out of the gate and yelled at the cart driver to stop. She was very **eager** to kiss me goodbye a second time.

The cart **set off** for a second time and I looked back at mother as she stood in the road. Mr. Murdstone came to stand next to her and try to take her inside. Mother was not happy at him trying to move her and I wondered what business it was of his to try to take mother inside. I looked at Peggotty’s face and she looked very angry at how Mr. Murdstone had acted.

eager (adj) very excited; wanting very much to do something
set off (phrasal verb) to begin a journey



The cart set off for a second time and I looked back at mother as she stood in the road.

Chapter 2

Mr. Barkis was driving the cart to Yarmouth. It took a long time and both Peggotty and I were very tired by the time we arrived. Peggotty loved Yarmouth. She told me, “This is the finest place in the universe.”

Peggotty’s nephew, Ham, had been visiting Peggotty at my house the night I was born. It was a long time since Peggotty had seen him and he was now all grown-up. I was so tired that Ham had to carry me into the house. The Peggotty house wasn’t an **ordinary** house. In fact, it was an old boat. The whole place smelled of fish because Peggotty’s family sold fish for a living, which were kept in an old shed outside the house.

Peggotty’s family were really lovely. There were Mr. Dan Peggotty, who was Peggotty’s brother, and a little girl called Emily. I liked her straight away. Ham’s father was called Joe but he had drowned a few years ago. Emily’s father was called Tom. He was Dan’s brother-in-law but he had drowned as well. Dan had adopted Ham and Emily because they were **orphans** and he didn’t have a wife.

ordinary (adj) normal and usual; not different or special

orphan (n) a child whose parents are dead

There was another person who lived in the Peggotty house. Her name was Mrs. Gummidge. She was the wife of Dan's business partner but he had died as well, leaving his wife without any money or anywhere to live so Dan had told her to come and live with him. I thought that Dan Peggotty was the nicest man I had ever met. He didn't have very much money but he was there for other people in need. I went to bed feeling very happy to be in Yarmouth and very safe in the Peggotty house.

The next day, Emily took me to the beach. I had never been to a beach before. As we walked on the sand, Emily told me that she was afraid of the sea.

“Why?” I asked.

“Because it takes so many fishermen,” Emily told me. “I wish I was a rich lady then I could make sure that Dan and Ham would be safe from the sea. They would never have to go fishing again.”

I watched her run along the dock and thought that she was going to fall in. As I watched her, I thought of how lovely she was – just like an angel. Then we sat on the **dock**.

I knew that I was in love with Emily so I told her, “I love you and if you don't say you love me back, I will kill myself!”

dock (n) a platform in a port for loading or unloading ships

Test 2

Who said this in the story? *Peggotty, David, Betsey, Miss Dartle, Uriah, Steerforth*

- 1. "She's going to stay at Mrs. Grayper's house with a lot of other people."
.....
- 2. "Are you planning to get married to Mr. Barkis?"
.....
- 3. "Go away! Boys are not welcome here!"
.....
- 4. "I will not let anyone get in my way."
.....
- 5. "What on earth is she doing here?"
.....
- 6. "This is the finest place in the universe."
.....
- 7. "You shouldn't have brought him here."
.....
- 8. "I don't want to go back there so soon."
.....
- 9. "You've told her how you feel?"
.....
- 10. "Is it because he is so young and innocent?"
.....

GRAMMAR CHECK

Test 1

Choose the correct answer.

I sent Martha to go and get Dan. I listened to all the horrible things that Miss Dartle¹ to Emily. Dan came to the house and Miss Dartle² before he found her. We took Emily to Dan's house. The next day, Dan came to talk to Betsey and me. He told us³ happened to Emily. He⁴ a plan to leave England. He was going to take Emily to Australia but Peggotty and Ham⁵ to stay in Yarmouth with Mrs. Gummidge.

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|------------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. a) was saying | b) is saying | c) has said |
| 2. a) has left | b) was left | c) left |
| 3. a) how | b) what | c) where |
| 4. a) had made | b) makes | c) has made |
| 5. a) have gone | b) go | c) were going |

The next day, I was very⁶ by how I acted the night before. I couldn't remember most of what⁷ and I felt very ill. I was better the next day when a letter came from Agnes. She didn't say anything about the theatre but⁸ me to dinner with her friends, the Waterbrooks.

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|--------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 6. a) embarrassing | b) embarrassed | c) embarrass |
| 7. a) had happened | b) has happened | c) happens |
| 8. a) invites | b) was invited | c) invited |

Test 2

Choose the correct answer.

1. She was quite by the poor customer service of the store she visited yesterday.
a) grateful b) encouraged c) annoyed
2. He was with his servants but he always treated them fairly.
a) unjust b) firm c) kind
3. Police are warning home owners to of burglars as the nights are getting darker in winter months.
a) beware b) scare c) secure
4. I was happy to teach the students today as they were really to learn.
a) reluctant b) eager c) exhausted
5. She was seriously upset that she had with her boyfriend.
a) made up b) got on c) fallen out
6. The flights are to be cancelled today due to the harsh weather conditions.
a) likely c) barely b) never
7. I was surprised that the ambulance was the spot within a few minutes.
a) in b) on c) for
8. The power outage all the meat and vegetables we had stored in our freezer.
a) ruined b) saved c) protected
9. Although my mother left me the house in her, I decided to let my brother have it.
a) purse b) account c) will