

Chapter 4 Working in the Warehouse

➤ Discuss the Question

1. Have you ever had a part-time job during the summer vacation?
2. What would you do if you meet a demanding boss in the workplace?

➤ Read by Yourself

I howled¹ the cry of an orphan. It felt as if my whole world had just been shattered². But Mrs Creakle was very kind to me that day. She let me stay in the office. I cried and slept and cried and slept. When I finally went out into the playground, I felt the eyes of the other boys on me. I felt different, strange.

I left Salem House the following afternoon, never to return.

As soon as I got home, I was in Peggotty's arms, the two of us sobbing together. My baby brother was dead too. He had only lived a day longer than my mother.

That night Peggotty told me about my mother's last days. "She got more and more terrified," Peggotty told me. "Living with the cruel Murdstones used up every bit of her strength."

The morning after my mother's funeral, Mr Murdstone sacked³ Peggotty. I was horrified. She left with many tears and promised to help me whenever she could. But I was now entirely alone. What were the Murdstones going to do with me?

I wasn't prepared for what did happen. The Murdstones simply behaved as if I wasn't there.

It seemed that no one cared whether I was alive or dead.

Then one day, some weeks later, Mr Murdstone called for me. "You are a difficult boy," he said coldly, "and you need a good deal of correcting."

"He needs to be crushed," shouted in Miss Murdstone.

"I am sending you to London to work for Mr Quinion," Mr Murdstone continued. "He manages a wine warehouse belonging to my company—Murdstone and Grinby."

The following day, I set off for the warehouse, which was by the River Thames in Blackfriars.

The whole place stank⁴ of dirt and smoke. Its floors and staircases were in ruins and there were swarms⁵ of rats in the cellar. There were four of us boys, working in the warehouse. My jobs were to wash empty wine bottles, paste labels on full ones, put corks⁶ in bottles, place seals on the corks and pack the finished bottles into boxes.

¹howl /haʊl/ v.

长嚎; (因疼痛、愤怒、开心等) 大声叫喊

²shatter /'ʃætə(r)/ v.
(使) 破碎, 碎裂

³sack /sæk/ v.
解雇; 炒鱿鱼

⁴stink /stɪŋk/ v.
有臭味; 有难闻的气味

⁵swarm /swɔ:m/ n.
大群(蜜蜂等昆虫)

⁶cork /kɔ:k/ n.
(尤指酒瓶的) 软木塞

The days were very long and the work was mind-numbing. As I worked in my corner of the warehouse, I often thought of Traddles and Steerforth, and longed to be with them. Salem House, with its friends and its books seemed a happy place compared to where I was now.

I was paid seven shillings a week. I had a penny loaf⁸ and a pennyworth of milk for breakfast, and another loaf and a tiny bit of cheese for supper. We were only allowed half an hour for a break and I often used to walk over to Covent Garden where I could stare hungrily at the pineapples and other delicious fruit for sale. Sometimes I was so hungry that I spent my money on a piece of bread during the day and had to go without supper. My stomach constantly ached with hunger.

On my first day, Mr Quinion had introduced me to a man with a large face and a head as bald as an egg. He wore shabby clothes, and his name was Mr Micawber.

“Mr Murdstone has arranged for you to stay with Mr Micawber,” Mr Quinion explained. “He has a small room at the back of his house.”

This house on Windsor Terrace was as shabby as Mr Micawber, but he and his wife were very welcoming.

“We’re glad we’ve found a lodger⁹,” Mrs Micawber told me. “Mr Micawber is in a lot of debt, and people keep asking for their money back. They won’t wait much longer.”

Mr Micawber was good-hearted and kind. But he was hopeless with money. His favourite saying was: “Yearly income twenty pounds, yearly spend one penny less than twenty pounds — result happiness; yearly income twenty pounds, yearly spend one penny more than twenty pounds—result misery.” But he didn’t live by this saying at all!

One night soon after I moved in, there was a heavy banging on the front door. “Open up, Micawber!” a gruff¹⁰ voice shouted. “I want my money!”

Mr Micawber put a finger to his lips and silently disappeared upstairs.

“I know you’re in there!” bellowed the voice. “Your time’s up. You’d better pay me!”

Mr Micawber stayed upstairs and out of sight for hours, until the banging and the shouting finally stopped.

I soon realized that this happened rather often, and so I tried to help by selling things for them at the pawnshop¹¹. But Mr Micawber was as hopeless as ever. I’d pawn some plates and give him the money, and then a few hours later, I’d find the family tucking into a fine feast!

⁷mind-numbing
/ˈmaɪnd nʌmɪŋ/ *adj.*
非常乏味的; 令人厌烦的

⁸loaf /ləʊf/ *n.*
一条(面包)

⁹lodger /ˈlɒdʒə(r)/ *n.*
租房人; 房客

¹⁰gruff /grʌf/ *adj.*
低沉粗哑的; 生硬的

¹¹pawnshop /ˈpɔːnʃɒp/
n. 当铺

As one dreary¹² day in the warehouse blended¹³ into the next, the Micawber's money situation got worse, and one morning Mr Micawber was arrested and taken away to the King's Bench Prison. Mrs Micawber and the children moved into the prison with him, and I was left completely alone in the house. When Mr Micawber was finally let out of prison, he and his wife came to see me.

"We're moving to Plymouth," Mr Micawber told me. "Something will turn up for us there."

I felt very low. The Micawbers were the only kind people I'd met in London and now they were abandoning¹⁴ me.

When the Micawbers had gone, I realised I'd reached a major crossroads in my life. I could either stay in London, working at the filthy warehouse and spending my days alone, or I could run away in search of a better life.

So I made a plan. And that plan centred on my only living relative, Great-Aunt Betsey Trotwood.

I knew that she'd stormed out when she discovered I was a boy not a girl. But I also knew that she was my only hope. Maybe if I told her about everything, she'd feel sorry for me and take me in?

I wrote to Peggotty asking for Aunt Betsey's address and for half a guinea¹⁵ to set me on my way. Peggotty replied quickly, enclosing the money and telling me Aunt Betsey lived near Dover. She had good news of her own to tell me too, for she had married soon after leaving the Murdstones.

I packed my things into a heavy box and clasped the shiny half guinea coin in my hand. All I needed was some way of getting to Dover, and soon enough, I spotted a man with a horse and cart.

"Excuse me!" I called out, putting the coin in my mouth and putting the heavy box down. "Can you help me? I want to get to Dover."

The man walked over and in a flash, he leaped at me and grabbed my throat. The coin flew out of my mouth and landed in his hand. Then he snatched¹⁶ my box off the ground and jumped onto his cart with it.

"Give me my things, you thief!" I yelled, running after the cart and choking back sobs of fury¹⁷ and desperation.

I chased him for several minutes but I was no match for his horse. I fell further and further behind, until the cart completely disappeared from view. I slumped¹⁸ down at the side of the road. The half guinea and all my belongings were gone. I was now in a pit of total despair.

¹²dreary /'driəri/ *adj.*
令人沮丧的; 沉闷的

¹³blend /blend/ *v.*
使混合; 掺和

¹⁴abandon /ə'bændən/
v. (不顾责任、义务等)
离弃, 遗弃

¹⁵guinea /'gmi/ *n.*
几尼(英国旧时金币或
货币单位, 价值 21 先
令, 现值 1.05 镑)

¹⁶snatch /snætʃ/ *v.*
一把抓起; 一下夺过

¹⁷fury /'fjʊəri/ *v.*
狂怒; 暴怒

¹⁸slump /slʌmp/ *v.*
重重地坐下(或倒下)

➤ **Check Your Understanding**

1. Why did I grieve over my mom's death?

2. How did Mr. Myrdstone and Miss Murdstone treat me and Peggotty?

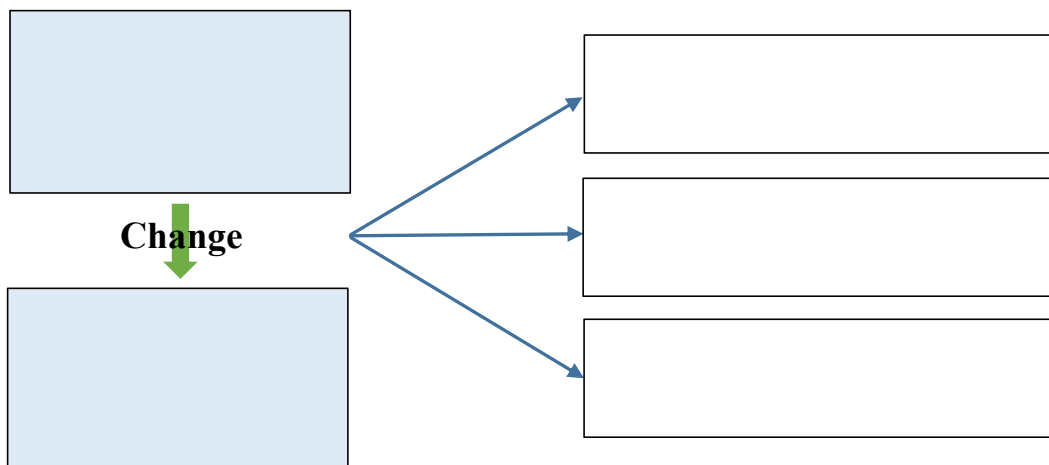
3. How was the workplace and my work?

4. How was the Micawber? What kind of trouble were they in?

5. What decision did I make in face of the crossroads?

➤ **Share Your Opinion**

David experienced great changes after Mr. Murdstone joined his family. What kind of change did he experience? What led to such change?



Chapter 5 It's Me, Aunt Betsey!

➤ Discuss the Question

1. Who would you turn to for help if your parents passed away?
2. What kind of role do relatives play in our lives?

➤ Read by Yourself

It took me ages to get back to my feet and start walking out of London on the Dover road. I was tired and penniless.

The next few days and nights were a blur¹. I slept on haystacks², lived on scraps, and sold my jacket to earn a little money. I was constantly freezing and hungry and my feet were covered in blisters³.

Finally, I made it to Dover. I soon discovered that nearly everyone knew my Aunt Betsey, and one kind young woman showed me to her neat little cottage. A few moments later, an older woman marched⁴ out of the house. She had grey hair and quick, bright eyes and had a handkerchief tied over her head. She was wearing gardening gloves and held a knife. This must be Aunt Betsey!

“Go away!” she shouted firmly at me, making a chop⁵ in the air with her knife. “We don’t want any boys round here!”

I knew I looked terrible—my shoes were full of holes, and my shirt and trousers were filthy and ragged—but I had to speak to her. I followed her across the garden.

“You’re my...my...aunt,” I said in a quivering⁶ voice.

“What did you say?” she demanded, spinning⁷ round.

“It’s me, Aunt Betsey, David Copperfield,” I whispered. “I’m your great nephew.”

At this, she cried, “Oh my goodness!” and sat flat down on the garden path.

“I’ve been unhappy and neglected⁸ since my mother died,” I told her. “I’ve walked all the way here from London. I haven’t slept in a bed for days.”

Pulling herself together, she rose to her feet and led me straight into the house. She poured all kinds of medicines down me—and I’m sure I tasted salad dressing and anchovy sauce in the mixtures! Then she made me have a long hot bath and gave me a hot meal. Finally, she said sternly, “Tell me everything, David!”

So I told her.

When I’d finished, she looked at me with disbelief. “Why on earth did your mother and Peggotty let all this happen?” she demanded.

¹blur /blɜː(r)/ *n.*
模糊的记忆

²haystack /ˈheɪstæk/ *n.*
干草堆; 干草垛

³blister /ˈblɪstə(r)/ *n.*
(皮肤上摩擦或烫起等的) 水泡; 水泡

⁴march /mɑːtʃ/ *v.*
齐步走; 行进

⁵chop /tʃɒp/ *n.*
砍; 劈; 剁

⁶quiver /ˈkwɪvə(r)/ *v.*
轻微颤动; 抖动

⁷spin /spɪn/ *v.*
(使) 快速旋转; (使) 急转身

⁸neglect /nrˈglekt/ *v.*
疏于照顾; 忽略

⁹anchovy /ˈæntʃəvi/ *v.*
鲱(咸水小鱼)

“The Murdstones were too powerful,” I explained. “They ruled our house with an iron grip.”

At that moment, a man with a cheery face bounded into the room, laughing.

“This is Mr Dick,” Aunt Betsey explained. “He lives here.”

I could see that Mr Dick wasn't like other men. Even though he was about fifty years old, there was something childlike about him. But dearly this didn't worry Aunt Betsey. She'd given him a home and looked after him, and this gave me a glimmer of hope that she might do the same for me.

“I trust Mr Dick's opinion on all matters,” Aunt Betsey said gravely, before explaining to him all about me.

“Well, Mr Dick,” she demanded when he'd heard it all, “what shall I do with this boy?”

Mr Dick paused for a second. I felt like my entire future rested on his reply.

“You should... you should put him to bed!” said Mr Dick, smiling warmly.

A wave of relief flooded over me.

Aunt Betsey showed me up to an airy bedroom with a great view of the sea. I fell into the bed and instantly sank into the world of dreams.

The next morning, Aunt Betsey was downstairs waiting for me. “I have written to Mr Murdstone to let him know where you are,” she said.

“Will I have to go back?” I asked in dread.

“We shall see,” she answered.

My spirits sank. Maybe Aunt Betsey hadn't believed my story? What if Mr Murdstone convinced¹¹ her to let me go? I would rather die than go back to the warehouse. Every day I waited unhappily for Mr Murdstone's reply.

And finally it came.

“Mr Murdstone will be visiting us tomorrow,” Aunt Betsey told me one morning.

My whole body shook with anxiety. Would she hand me back to the Murdstones?

As soon as they arrived, I whispered, “Shall I go away?”

“Certainly not,” Aunt Betsey replied, showing them into her house, where Mr Dick and I were waiting. The second I saw them, I felt all of the fear and fury returning.

¹⁰bound /baʊnd/ v.
跳跃着跑

¹¹convince /kən'vins/ v.
使确信；使相信

Mr Murdstone got straight down to business. “This boy,” he began, pointing a finger at me, “gave his mother terrible trouble. My sister and I did our best to correct him, but he is stubborn and disobedient¹².”

¹²disobedient
/ˌdɪsəˈbiːdiənt/ *adj.*
不服从的；违抗的

“He is the worst behaved boy in the whole world,” cut in Miss Murdstone viciously.

“That’s a bit strong!” declared my aunt in amazement.

“It is the truth,” replied Mr Murdstone, “and he still needs correcting, especially as his mother is dead.”

I stared at the Murdstones with hatred¹³.

¹³hatred /ˈheɪtrɪd/ *n.*
仇恨；憎恨；厌恶

“You say David’s mother is dead,” said Mr Dick suddenly. “Did she leave him any money?”

A flush of anger and embarrassment spread across Mr Murdstone’s cheeks. “Absolutely nothing,” he replied.

“Well, what do you want to do with David?” demanded Aunt Betsey.

Mr Murdstone’s expression hardened. “I am here to take the boy back and dispose¹⁴ of him as I think best.”

¹⁴dispose /dɪˈspəʊz/ *v.*
布置；安排；

“Dispose of him!” Aunt Betsey cried with a horrified expression. “Do you mean you’re going to send him back to work in that terrible warehouse of yours?”

Mr Murdstone eyed her coldly but said nothing.

Aunt Betsey turned to me. “What about you, David?” she asked. “Would you like to go with the Murdstones?”

“No!” I blurted¹⁵ out, my fists clenched¹⁶ with rage. “They’ve always hated me. And they destroyed my mother!”

¹⁵blurt /blɜːt/ *v.*
脱口而出

The Murdstones stared at me with their hard eyes.

¹⁶clench /klenʃ/ *v.*
(通常表示愤怒、决心或不安时)捏紧，攥紧(拳头等)

“Mr Dick,” said Aunt Betsey, “what are your thoughts on this matter?”

“I’ll tell you what I’d do,” said Mr Dick thoughtfully. “I’d have him measured up for a suit of new clothes.”

I could have hugged him! But I knew the final decision rested with Aunt Betsey. I held my breath anxiously as she thought everything through.

“This is what I think,” she announced, looking sternly at the Murdstones. I don’t believe a word of what you’ve said about David. It is clear to me that the two of you trapped his mother like a caged bird. Then you bullied and broke her, and you bullied David too. You will play no further part in his life.’

¹⁷utter /ˈʌtə(r)/ *v.*
出声；说；讲

“B...but,” uttered¹⁷ Mr Murdstone.

The Murdstones stood up in shock, unsure what to do.

“Now, look here,” said Mr Murdstone.

“No, you look here!” Aunt Betsey cried, her eyes shining like balls of fire. “You and your sister will leave my house immediately, and you will never come back.”

“I...I,” Mr Murdstone tried to protest¹⁸.

“GET OUT!” commanded Aunt Betsey, bustling towards the door. My heart leaped with joy as she shoved¹⁹ the confused and defeated Murdstones outside. Suddenly they didn't look frightening or powerful.

I ran to her and gave her an enormous²⁰ hug.

“From this moment,” she said, “your name will be Trotwood Copperfield. My house is now your home!”

¹⁸protest /'prəʊtest/ v.
(公开) 反对; 抗议

¹⁹shove /ʃʌv/ v.
猛推; 乱挤; 推撞

²⁰enormous /ɪ'nɔ:məs/
v. 巨大的; 庞大的

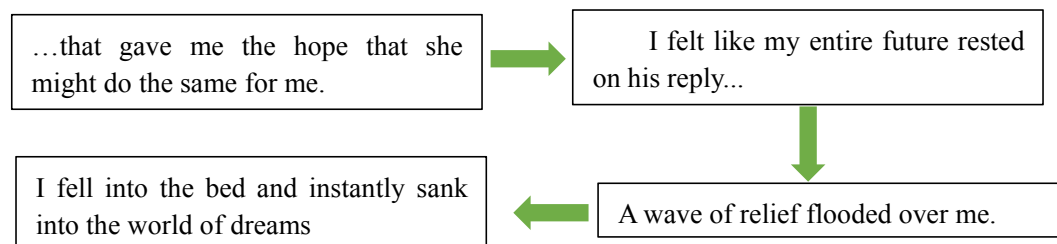
➤ Check Your Understanding

1. What can you infer about David's trip to Dover?

2. What was Aunt Betsey's initial (first) reaction on seeing me?

3. What was Aunt Betsey's reaction after recognizing me?

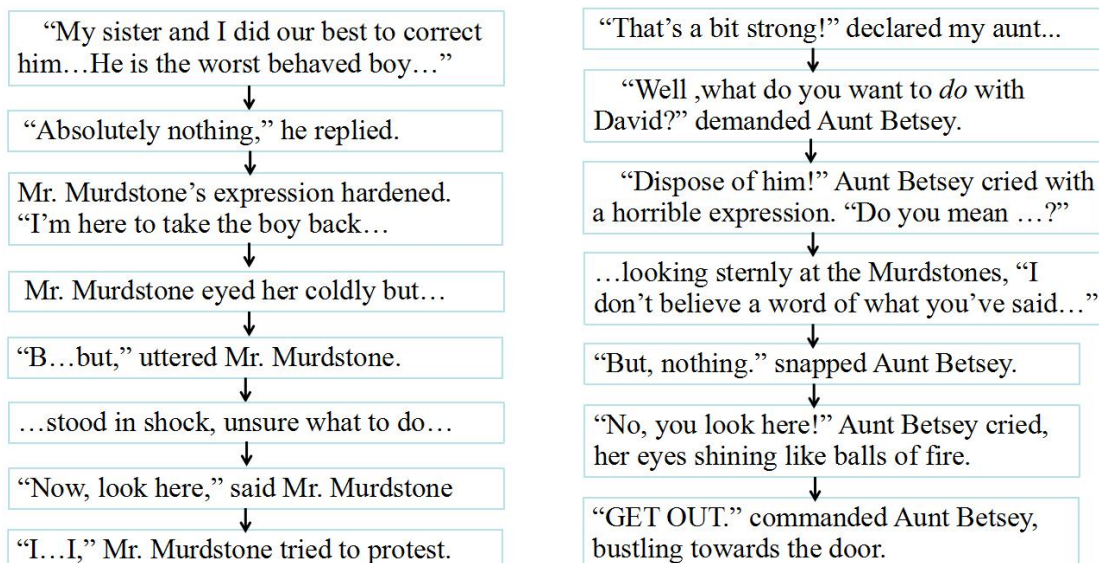
4. How did my feelings change from Para. 14~22?



★ _____ → _____ → _____ → _____

5. Who played a key role in Aunt Betsey allowing me to stay?

5. How was the talk between the Murdstones and Aunt Betsey? Try to figure out the feelings behind the following sentences.



6. Try to find the sentence describing the following feelings: "surprised", "hopeful", "relieved", "frightened", "anxious", and "serious".

➤ Share Your Opinion

In this chapter, Aunt Betsey said: "Go away!" she shouted firmly at me, making a chop in the air with her knife. "We don't wan any boys round here!" Why do you think she behaved that way.