They call me Defarge."

"Of what trade?"

"Monsieur the Marquis, vendor of wine."

"Pick up that, philosopher and vendor of wine," said the Marquis, throwing him another gold coin, "and spend it as you will. The horses there; are they right?"

Without deigning to look at the assemblage a second time, Monsieur the Marquis leaned back in his seat, and was just being driven away with the air of a gentleman who had accidentally broken some common thing, and had paid for it, and could afford to pay for it; when his ease was suddenly disturbed by a coin flying into his carriage, and ringing on its floor.

"Hold!" said Monsieur the Marquis. "Hold the horses! Who threw that?"

He looked to the spot where Defarge the vendor of wine had stood, a moment before; but the wretched father was grovelling on his face on the pavement in that spot, and the figure that stood beside him was the figure of a dark stout woman, knitting.

"You dogs!" said the Marquis. "I would ride over any of you very willingly, and exterminate you from the earth. If I knew which rascal threw at the carriage, and if that brigand were sufficiently near it, he should be crushed under the wheels."

So cowed was their condition, and so long and hard their experience of what such a man could do to them, within the law and beyond it, that not a voice, or a hand, or even an eye was raised. Among the men, not one. But the woman who stood knitting looked up steadily, and looked the Marquis in the face. It was not for his dignity to notice it; his contemptuous eyes passed over her, and over all the other rats; and he leaned back in his seat again, and gave the word "Go on!"

He was driven on, and other carriages came whirling by in quick succession... the whole Fancy Ball in a bright continuous flow, came whirling by.

The rats had crept out of their holes to look on, and they remained looking on for hours; soldiers and police often passing between them and the spectacle, and making a barrier behind which they slunk, and through which they peeped. The father had long ago taken up his bundle and hidden himself away with it, when the women who had tended the bundle while it lay on the base of the fountain, sat there watching the running of the water and the rolling of the Fancy Ball—when the one woman who had stood conspicuous, knitting, still knitted on with the steadfastness of Fate. The water of the fountain ran, the swift river ran, the day ran into evening, so much life in the city ran into death according to rule, time and tide waited for no man, the rats were sleeping close together in their dark holes again, the Fancy Ball was lighted up at supper, all things ran their course.

**Activity Options**

1. **Contrasting** Use a two-column chart to contrast the nobles at the reception with the common people in the street. Look for clues that show Dickens's attitude toward those two groups.

2. **Writing Narrative Paragraphs** Write a diary entry in which you summarize the events after the reception from the point of view of either the Marquis, Defarge, or one of the "cowed" persons in the crowd.

3. **Writing for a Specific Purpose** Create a sympathy card for the child's family. Include appropriate visual images and a suitable message.

4. **Clarifying** With a group of classmates, perform a dramatic scene based on this excerpt. Then discuss how Dickens shows the attitude of Monseigneur toward his guests or of the Marquis toward the common people of the Third Estate.
In 1781, Marie Antoinette, queen of France, gave birth to a son. The king, Louis XVI, now had a male heir. The French people celebrated, as the line of succession to the throne was now secure. A group of poor working women—called market-women—came to the palace to congratulate the queen.

Eight years later, another group of market-women came to the palace. But on this 1789 visit, the crowd was larger and angrier. Instead of celebrating joyful news, it woke the queen with such shouted threats as “We’ll wring her neck!” and “We’ll tear her heart out!”

Actually, the 1781 visit marked one of the few times that Queen Marie Antoinette enjoyed any popularity in France. Born in 1755, she was the fifteenth child of Francis I and Maria Theresa, rulers of the Holy Roman Empire. The French and the Austrians ended their long hostility by agreeing to a marriage that united the two royal families. Marie married Louis, heir to the French throne, in 1770. She was only 14 years old, and he only 15 years old. Just four years later, the young couple became king and queen of France.

It wasn’t long before Marie Antoinette became the focus of nasty gossip and rumors. People saw her as a spendthrift who meddled in politics. Pamphlets portrayed a queen who lived a life of immorality and luxury.

At the same time, the queen was having difficulty adjusting to her new home. Although she and Louis grew to love each other, their early years included many strains. In addition, the queen found French customs confusing. The court had elaborate rules of etiquette for everything from dressing to eating. She had little patience for these formalities, which won her few friends at court.

Marie Antoinette’s spending habits didn’t earn her much admiration, either. She bought three or four new dresses every week. However, even when she did not spend, she was criticized. In a complicated plot, some members of the court pretended to buy a diamond necklace worth a fortune. When the scandal erupted, the queen—who was entirely innocent—was nevertheless blamed for it.

The people’s anger at the queen boiled over during the French Revolution. The crowd often focused its rage on her. In 1789, when the market-women marched on the palace crying for bread, they were calm at first. The next morning, though, they stormed the queen’s bedroom, shouting their bloody threats. Later that day Marie Antoinette faced the mob. She stood on a balcony before the crowd, with muskets aimed at her. She bravely remained still until the muskets were lowered. Then she entered the palace.

After the royal family was taken to Paris, the king and queen feared for their safety. Austria and Spain refused to do anything to help. Marie Antoinette urged that the family try to escape. On June 20, 1791, the family attempted to leave but were captured and returned to Paris. An eyewitness wrote that in the city, the queen “was greeted with violent expressions of disapproval.”

The next year, the monarchy was formally overthrown and the king and queen were put in prison. A year later, Marie Antoinette’s children were taken from her, and she was placed in a separate cell. She was moved again in September 1793 to a small room lit only by a lantern outside.

The queen was taken to trial the following month. She was accused of conspiring to aid her brother—now the Holy Roman Emperor—to defeat France. She was also accused of immorality. She gave a brief, forceful defense that won sympathy. But the officer presiding over the trial warned the crowd to be quiet and then quickly led the panel to declare her guilty. On October 16, 1793, Marie Antoinette was beheaded.

Questions
1. Clarifying What factors cost the queen support?
2. Recognizing Effects Do you think the attacks on the queen contributed to the Revolution? Explain.
3. Drawing Conclusions Would you say that the queen was a strong or a weak person? Explain.