**Steven Riggs**

Steven Riggs didn’t know who’d named him. It wasn’t his father, who had never even clapped eyes on him and it wasn’t his mother, who died giving birth to him. It was probably someone in the cold, dank workhouse where he lived with a gaggle of other homeless orphan boys. The workhouse was a cruel, hard place to grow up. Hungry and drained, depressed and downbeat, Steven despised queuing every night for grey, watery gruel. The more he had that grey, watery gruel, the more depressed and downbeat he became. But he was so hungry…

One fateful day, Steven dared to ask, “Please sir, can I have some more?” The master went red, then crimson and then almost purple with rage!
“MORE!” he shouted. “Be off with you to Mr Dongle.” Terrified, Steven ran away and faced the dark and dangerous streets of Victorian Britain alone.

After the longest seven days of his life, he met a smartly dressed boy called ‘The Artful Dodger’. He introduced him to a gang of pickpockets and Steven soon became an expert at slyly picking pockets. Eventually, however, his life caught up with him and he was caught. He was convicted by a jury and only saved by the kindness of the very man whom he’d robbed. He lived in an idyllic countryside cottage and came to be great friends with the elderly gentleman who’d rescued him, Mr Rochdale.

Several weeks later, the gang caught him and menacingly thrust him back into a life of crime. Forced to participate during a robbery, he was injured when hit by a bullet. As his chest exploded, his short, unhappy life flashed before him. The rest of the gang fled and Steven was cared for by the very people who he’d tried to rob. Steven’s friend Nancy told Mr Rochdale where Steven was and even found out that he had wealthy relatives.

Finally, the gang were arrested and thrown into the deepest jails in London, Mr Rochdale was forced to work in the very workhouse that he’d created and Steven was given a vast inheritance. Steven’s life might have been a terrifying journey, but as he and Mr Rochdale left Fagin in prison, they left the past behind them and looked forward to a peaceful future, filled with opportunities.