

Scene 5

Setting: Fagin's house

CURTAIN OPENS: A large room with a small table and a few mismatched chairs, old curtains about to fall down, old cushions, etc. Charley Bates and 5 other boys and girls are sitting around the table and floor eating with no table manners. They all wear dirty, old cheap clothes. Fagin is centerstage talking to Nancy, Bill Sikes and Toby Crackit.

Fagin: So Nancy, you're still with this good-for-nothing burglar, huh? Are you getting any richer?

Nancy: I can't help it, Fagin, I love the guy, even if he is a little rough. But we get by with my tips from the bar and whatever Bill can steal.

Bill Sikes: Me and Toby are planning a big job soon, and we want to know if you want in on it, Fagin. We aren't just going to rob graves and small houses anymore; we're moving up to big estates.

Fagin: Well, this certainly is a step up from the days you used to work as a pickpocket for me! What do I need to do, and what is my share?

Bill Sikes: We may need to use one or two of your boys, and you will get a third of the take. I will tell you more when we finish the plan.

The Artful Dodger enters stage right with Oliver. Fagin looks over at them and moves to greet Oliver.

Fagin: Well, well, what have we here?

The Artful Dodger: This here is Oliver. He's new in London and needs a place to stay and some work, so I brought him to you. Oliver, this is Fagin.

Oliver: How do you do, Mr. Fagin.

Fagin: Just Fagin will do, my boy. Come in, come in. And have some supper. You are welcome here.

Oliver: Thank you, sir, and I will work very hard, too.

Oliver takes a plate of food and sits on the floor with the other children. Fagin turns to The Artful Dodger.

Fagin: Kind of weak, isn't he?

The Artful Dodger: He's small, but tough. He ran away from his apprenticeship and walked 70 miles to London!

Fagin: Hmm...That innocent look might be useful in the pickpocketing business.

Bill Sikes: That little kid might be perfect for our new "business," too. Train him well, Fagin.

Fagin: Oliver, come here a minute, boy. I want to show you a trick.

Oliver moves to Fagin, who hands him a handkerchief.

Fagin: Here, put this handkerchief in your pocket, as deep as you can. Then turn your back to me and talk to The Artful Dodger.

Oliver: Thanks so much for helping me, Mr. Dodger.

Fagin: Now show me the handkerchief, Oliver.

Oliver checks his pocket, then the other pocket several times, looking confused. Fagin waves the handkerchief several times.

Fagin: Here it is!

Oliver: How did you do that? I didn't feel a thing.

Fagin: It takes practice. Now you try.

Fagin puts the handkerchief in his pocket with a small piece obviously sticking out. Oliver tries clumsily to grab it.

Fagin: Oh, I felt that. Try again.

They repeat the process and Oliver does better the second time.

Fagin: Much better. Let's try one more time.

They repeat the process, and Oliver removes the handkerchief without Fagin noticing.

Fagin: Go on, try.

Oliver: I'm done!

Fagin: Boy, you are fantastic! We'll have you working in no time!

Everyone applauds for Oliver.

CURTAIN CLOSES.