

Script Excerpt

Charles Dickens'
OLIVER TWIST

a Comedy in thirteen scenes

Adapted by

Mickey Coburn



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CHARACTERS

Oliver Twist: Young orphan 10 years old
Mr. Bumble: The Workhouse Beadle (Double as street person)
Mrs. Bumble: His wife
Workhouse Boys: double as Fagin's boys
Mr. Sowerberry: The Undertaker/ Brownlow
Charlotte: Sowerberry's daughter/street person
Noah Claypole: Sowerberry's apprentice: Double as street person
The Artful Dodger: About 13 years old
Charley Bates: Artful's sidekick
Fagin: The entrepreneur scoundrel
Fagin's boys
Nancy: About 16 years old
Bet : Nancy's friend, about 13 years old
Bill Sikes: Villainous criminal Nancy's love
Mr. Brownlow: Elegant gentleman/Sowerberry
Mrs. Bedwin: Brownlow's housekeeper
Street people: One plus doubles
Bow Street runners--Two
Old Sally
Musician

SETTING

Victorian London—Street scene with inset of workhouse and two shops. Street can be played in front of curtain.

ACT I

Scene 1	London Street
Scene 2	Workhouse
Scene 3	London Street
Scene 4	Sowerberry's shop
Scene 5	Street scene
Scene 6	Fagin's den
Scene 7	Street scene

ACT II

Scene 1	Fagin's den
Scene 2	Street/Brownlow's parlour
Scene 3	London Street
Scene 4	Fagin's den
Scene 5	London Street
Scene 6	Street / London Bridge

ACT I Scene 1

*(MUSICIAN enters from house – accordion or concertina; In costume; strolls to stage; ascends. In front of act curtain. Spotlight on little boy, poorly dressed against the winter; holds a tin cup and sings a Christmas carol. Lights dim up as **Bumble** crosses with **Oliver** in tow)*

Oliver: Are we nearly there?

Bumble: What's that? What's that?

Oliver: Are we nearly there?

Bumble: *(stopping)* Sir – are we nearly there – Sir!

Oliver: Sir – are we....

Bumble: Hyumph! It is not fitting for a small boy to ask so many questions.

Oliver: But – I –

Bumble: *(swings his cane – **Oliver** ducks)* You must remember Oliver – that you are a pauper and an orphan –

Oliver: What's that, sir?

Bumble: What's what? What's what?

Oliver: What you said – an orphan – sir?

Bumble: *(swings his cane)* Don't you know anything? *(backing **Oliver** up intimidating)* You got no father or no mother – boy – and yer'll live at the workhouse with the other trash in yer similar condition – and be educated and taught a useful trade.

Oliver: But – sir –

Bumble: Not "But Sir" -- Thank you sir!!

Oliver: *(muttering)* Thank you, sir --

Bumble: *(jumping up and down angrily)* And do not speak again unless you are spoken to – *(dragging him along)* Come on now –

*(The **Caroler** comes up to **Bumble**, who threatens him with his cane and flings him out of the way.)*

Bumble: Hyumph!! Out a me way!!!

Act I Scene 2

(Music in. Curtain opens on the workhouse. There is a long table and bench, placed with wooden bowls. Also a soup table w/pot, etc. **Mr. Bumble** enters followed by **Mrs. Bumble**, the latter dragging **Oliver** behind her; she's followed by the workhouse boys who proceed to the table. **Bumble** takes up his station; **Mrs. B.** deposits **Oliver** next to **Bumble** and takes up her station at soup table)

Bumble: *(striking the floor with his mace)* Boys – This 'ere's Oliver Twist. Like the rest of you, he's come 'ere to be educated and taught a useful trade -- -- *(boys laugh sarcastically as **Bumble** strikes floor)* Enough! Or yer'll be whipped! Now – where's yer manners? Say – Good evening Oliver!!

Boys: Good evening, Oliver –

Bumble: That's better. There now – you've been made truly welcome –

*(He shoves **Oliver** toward the boys; **Oliver** takes an empty place at table; **Bumble** strikes floor; **Mrs. B.** removes her mop cap and puts on a chef's hat; **Boys** line up for food carrying their bowls. **Mrs. B.** Lifts large ladle – **Mr. B.** shakes his head and makes clucking sound. **Mrs. B.** picks up smaller ladle; **Mr. B.** – exasperated – strikes floor; makes roaring sound. **Mrs. B.** picks up tiny ladle. **Mr. B.** Nods approvingly. The **Boys** are served and file back to table where the food is consumed instantly. **Mrs. B.** changes hats again and stands near **Mr. B.**)*

Boy 1: *(stage whisper)* We got to do something about this yer know –

Boy 2: This ain't enough to feed a flea – *(Boy 4 begins to eat his bowl)*

Boy 3: Blimey! 'es eating his bowl. Someone's got to ask for more!

Boy 2: Let the new boy do it –

All: *(each in turn)* Ay! Ay! Ay! Ay!

*(They huddle around **Oliver** and whisper in his ear. **Oliver** takes his bowl and approaches the **Bumbles**; the whispers stop; the **Boys** hold their breath)*

Oliver: Please, Sir, I want some more.

Bumble: What?

Oliver: Please, Sir, I want some more ---

Bumble: More?

Mrs. Bumble: *(shrieks and begins to faint) Moorrrrrreeee.....(She falls on **Bumble** who is trying to get to **Oliver** who begins to back away)*

Bumble: *(pushing Mrs. B. to her feet) He asked for more!! (He stalks **Oliver** who takes off over/under table, etc.)*

Bumble: Stop him!

Mrs. Bumble: Catch him!

*(**Boys** join the chase trying to grab **Oliver**)*

Bumble: Whip him!

Mrs. Bumble: Snatch him!

Bumble: *(screeching) He asked for more.....! (grabs **Oliver**)*
Gotcha!!

Mrs. Bumble: He's a bad lot! He's got to be gotten rid of immediately.

Bumble: We'll hang him!!

*(The **Boys** gasp)*

Mrs. Bumble: No, no Mr. Bumble – we'll sell him. Drag him off to the undertakers. He's been needing a boy -- *(to the **Boys**)* What are you gaping at? Out of here all of yer – go to bed –

*(**Boys** begin to run dodging **Mrs. B.** in attempts to exit while...)*

Bumble: (shrieking) He asked for more!!!

BLACKOUT

Act I Scene 3

(*IN-ONE; **Caroler** at opposite side of stage; **Bumble** enters dragging **Oliver** behind him*)

Bumble: A trouble-maker – that’s what you are. Never has a boy asked for more. (*stopping*) Fix your hat! Stand up straight – or he won’t give me tuppence fer yer.

(***Oliver** begins to cry*)

Bumble: Well, of all the ungrateful and worst behaved boys I’ve ever seen (*threatens with his cane*)

Oliver: No—no – Sir – I’ll be good. I will, sir. It’s just that I’m a very little boy and it’s so – so

Bumble: So – what?

Oliver: So – lonely, sir – so very lonely. Everyone hates me. Please – don’t hit me again – sir.

Bumble: (*angered*) Hyumph!! Come along. The coffin maker’s waiting. (*Drags **Oliver** off; the **Caroler** sees him coming and takes off*)

Act I Scene 4

(*curtain opens on undertakers shop. **Sowerberry** is pacing; **Bumble** enters with **Oliver***)

Sowerberry: Ah – here you are Bumble – and that’s the boy.

Bumble: Liberal terms, Mr. Sowerberry – liberal terms. Five pounds even.

Sowerberry: What’s his name?

Bumble: Oliver Twist.

Sowerberry: Twist, eh? Dear me – he’s very small. (*pulls out a measuring tape and measures him*) ‘Ardly five pounds worth.

Bumble: Why, he is rather small – but he’ll grow, Mr. Sowerberry – he’ll grow.

Sowerberry: I daresay he will grow – eating my food and drink.

Well, he'll have to do, I suppose. (*calling*) Charlotte, fetch this boy some of the cold bits that were saved for the dog. It hasn't been around since this morning so we might as well not waste them. (*to **Bumble***) Here's your five pounds, Mr. Bumble, and goodnight to yer.

Bumble: Goodnight, Mr. Sowerberry. (*to **Oliver***) You behave now Oliver – yer hear?

*(**Bumble** exits as **Charlotte** enters with plate of scraps which **Oliver** gobbles up while she looks on with curiosity; **Sowerberry** chains door for the night)*

Charlotte: Are yer finished?

Oliver: Yes, m'am.

Charlotte: Yer bed's under the counter. You don't mind sleeping among coffins, I suppose? It don't matter whefer yer do or don't, there's no where else fer yer to sleep.

Sowerberry: (*exiting*) C'mon, Charlotte.

*(They exit. Lights dim. **Oliver** can be heard weeping softly under the counter. morning light washes in; a loud kicking is heard at the outside door. **Oliver** crawls out from under the counter and begins to unchain the door. A voice is heard.)*

Noah: Open the door, will yer?

Oliver: I will right away, sir.

Noah: Yer the new boy, ain't yer?

Oliver: Yes, sir.

Noah: How old are yer?

Oliver: Ten, sir.

Noah: Then I'll whop yer when I get in, you just see if I don't, workhouse brat. (***Noah** begins whistling; **Oliver** opens the door. **Noah** enters eating a large slice of bread and butter*)

Oliver: You knocked, sir?

Noah: (*eating*) I kicked.

Oliver: Did you want a coffin, sir?

Noah: You'll be wanting one pretty soon if you joke with yer boss that way. Yer don't know who I am, do yer, work'us?

Oliver: No, sir.

Noah: I'm Mister Noah Claypole and yer under me. Open the shutters yer lazy ruffian. *(he kicks **Oliver**)*

Charlotte: *(entering with a tray of food)* 'Morning, Noah. I saved a nice bit o f bacon fer yer from the Master's breakfast. Oliver, shut that door and take them bits and this 'ere tea and drink it there. *(points to a corner)* An' 'urry up 'cuz yer gonna have ta mind the hop, yer hear?

Noah: D'ya hear? Work'us?

Charlotte: Lor Noah – why don't yer let the boy alone?

Noah: Let him alone? Why, everybody lets him alone. Both his father and his mother left him alone. I'm just givin' 'im a change, eh Charlotte – hee! Hee! Hee! *(**Charlotte** laughs with him)*

Noah: *(with a wink at **Charlotte**)* Work'us!! How's yer mother?

Oliver: Don't you say anything about my mother. She's dead.

Noah: What did she die of, work'us?

Oliver: Don't say anything more about her – you'd better not!

Noah: Better not!! Well – better not! Yer mother was a nice 'un, she was – oh, lor! Yer know, work'us – it can't be helped now and of course yer couldn't help it then, and I'm very sorry fer it and pity yer very much. But yer must know, work'us, yer mother was a regular right-down bad'un.

Oliver: What did you say?

Noah: A regular, right-down bad'un, work'us. It's a blessing she died when she did or she would have gone to prison or been hung – yes she would – *(**Oliver** jumps up and throws **Noah** down; they fight)*

Noah: He'll murder me! Charlotte! Help – the new boy's a'murderin' of me! Help! Help! Oliver's gone mad – Charlotte!

*(**Charlotte** screams. **Sowerberry** enters; **Charlotte** grabs **Oliver** off of **Noah**; they battle. **Sowerberry** and **Charlotte** put **Oliver**, kicking, in a coffin; **Sowerberry** sits on it; **Noah** sputters and chokes)*

Sowerberry: Quick Charlotte – water for Noah -- *(She runs off; **Oliver** kicks inside the box; **Noah** groans; she runs in and pours the water on **Noah** who shrieks)* Yikes!! He wanted a drink – a drink!

*(**Noah** pulls himself together with nasty looks at **Charlotte**)*

Sowerberry: What are we gonna do, Charlotte, this Oliver's a dangerous character – he might murder us in our beds –
*(**Bumble** enters)*

Noah: The Beadle!

Charlotte: Mister Bumble....

Sowerberry: Ahhh Mister Bumble....

Noah: Oliver's gone mad!

Bumble: Oliver?

Oliver: Let me out of here –

Bumble: I'll take care of this – Do you know this voice, Oliver?

Oliver: Yes.

Bumble: And aren't you afraid of it, Oliver?

Oliver: No!

Sowerberry: He's gone mad, Mr. Bumble

Bumble: It's not madness – it's meat! He's been overfed. That's what comes of being generous. The only thing to do is to starve him for a day or two until his wicked spirit calms down. *(He opens the coffin and takes **Oliver** out)*

Bumble: Now, yer a nice fella, ain't yer.....

Oliver: He called my mother names.

Sowerberry: What if he did? No doubt she deserved what he said and worse –

Oliver: She didn't!

Charlotte: She did!

Oliver: You're lying you wicked girl! *(**Charlotte** wails and cries; all surround her; **Oliver** escapes)*

Noah: Where is he?

Sowerberry: Who?

Noah: He's gone –

Bumble: Who's gone?

Charlotte: Oliver – he's run away –

Sowerberry: Five pounds worth run away? Five pounds of my money run away? After him (*Chaos as they clamber for the door*)

BLACKOUT

ACT I scene 5

IN-ONE

(*A week later; outside London. early morning; **Oliver** enters tiredly; crouches on a rock or step & huddles against the cold. **Dodger** saunters in whistling; sees **Oliver**. He studies **Oliver**; **Oliver** looks up; returns the steady look*)

Dodger: (*crossing over*) Hullo my covey! What's the row?

Oliver: What? Oh – I'm very hungry and tired; I've been walking for seven days.

Dodger: Seven days? Oh, I see – escaping from the Beak.

Oliver: Beak? A bird's got a beak –

Dodger: My eyes – how green! A beak's a magistrate – the law – yer know. Ungry? (**Oliver** nods) 'Ere – (*He unrolls a newspaper and gives **Oliver** bread and cheese which **Oliver** eats*) Where's yer mother?

Oliver: Dead.

Dodger: No father eifer? (**Oliver** shakes his head) Money?

Oliver: No.

Dodger: Got any lodgings?

Oliver: No. Do you live in London?

Dodger: Yes. Mos' a the time. I suppose you want some place to sleep in tonight, don't yer? (**Oliver** shakes his head still eating)

Dodger: I know a 'spectable old genelman as lives there wot'll give you lodgings for nofink and never ask for the change. That is – if any genelman he knows interduces yer. And don't he know me? Certainly do! Now – What's yer name?

Oliver: Oliver Twist.

Dodger: Twist? Twist, yer say? How'd ya come by that?

Oliver: No one knew my name at the workhouse and "T" was next in alphabet order. They made it up.

Dodger: A proper name it is, too. My name's Jack Dawkins. But me friends know me as the Artful Dodger. *(offers his hand)*

Oliver: Mr. Dodger.

Dodger: Mr. Twist. Come along now – as soon as its dark we're off to London –

Oliver: Are you sure the 'spectable genelman won't mnd?

Dodger: Fagin? Any friend o'mine is a friend o' 'is an' vicey versy – com'on then –

(Exit as CURTAIN OPENS)

ACT I scene 6

*(Fagin's kitchen. A basement room, old & dirty; a table on which are a loaf of bread, bottle, several pewter pots, a candle in a bottle; and around which sit five boys the same age as **Dodger**, smoking clay pipes and drinking from tankards. A clothes line with numerous silk handkerchiefs; a hob fire with a frying pan in which sausages are cooking; several rough beds made of old sacks are huddled side-by-side on the floor; a bird in a standing cage.*

***Fagin**, with his back to the scene is turning the sausages with a toasting fork. We hear a whistle.)*

Boy 1: *(going to stairs and calling)* Now then –

Dodger: *(off)* Plummy and slam!

(Boy 1 lets them in)

Boy 1: There's two o' them –

Fagin: Who you got there, Dodger?

Dodger: Fagin, this 'eres my new friend – Oliver Twist.

Fagin: *(bowing)* I am very pleased to meet you, Oliver. It is an h'exceptional honor – *(The boys circle around **Oliver** removing his cap, trying to pickpocket him, etc.)*

Fagin: *(sternly; bopping the boys with his toasting fork)* That's enough of that, gentlemen. We are very glad to see Oliver – very! Dodger, fetch a tub near the fire for Oliver. Charley – take off the sausages – Eat up Oliver, eat up! *(As they all eat, seeing **Oliver** looking at the handkerchiefs)* I see you've noticed the pocket handkerchiefs. There's quite a lot of them, eh my dear! We've

Fagin (contd): just put ‘em up, waiting for the wash – the wash – eh, m’lads? That’s all, Oliver.

(Boys laugh. improvise jollity; MUSICIAN plays. Oliver’s head falls to his arms & he drops off. Fagin lifts him up & puts him on one of the sacks as the lights dim & the boys clear the table. Several boys lay down as well. Dodger & Charley exit. Lights change to early morning light. Fagin is stirring coffee in a saucepan, humming to himself; he pours a cup at the table; looks to see if Oliver’s asleep; checks the door; takes a small box from hiding place near the fireplace. He sits at table, takes out a gold watch from the box, and then another. Oliver lifts his head and watches.)

Fagin; *(to bird)* Let folks call me a miser – It’s all I have to live on in my old age. Is that a pretty thing, my dear? Is that – *(He sees Oliver sitting up; slams box closed; grabs the toasting fork from the table & darts toward Oliver)* Why are you watching me, boy – what have you see? Speak up boy – speak –

Oliver: I didn’t mean to disturb you, sir. I couldn’t sleep any longer, sir –

Fagin: Were you awake ten minutes ago?

Oliver: No sir –

Fagin: Five minutes ago?

Oliver: Oh, no sir –

Fagin: Two minutes ago?

Oliver: Oh, no indeed, sir –

Fagin: Are you sure?

Oliver: Yes, indeed sir – I mean – no sir – I mean – no, I wasn’t awake, sir.

Fagin: Good boy, Oliver. You’re a good brave boy. I was only teasing you. *(picking up the box)* Did you see any of my pretty things, Oliver?

Oliver: Yes, sir –

Fagin: *(clutching box)* They’re my pretty things, my dear. All I have to live on in my old age.

Oliver: Yes, sir. May I get up now, sir?

Fagin: Of course, my dear. There's a basin of water near the fire for you to wash in. (**Oliver** goes to the basin; as he washes his face **Fagin** stashes the box)

Dodger: (voice off) Plummy and slam!! (**Fagin** lets him in. the other boys awaken & get up)

Dodger: (entering) Look what I found! (**Nancy** & **Bet** enter along with **Charley**)

Fagin: Nancy, my dear! And little Bet. Up – up – boys – Where's your manners – we have company!

Nancy: (seeing **Oliver**) Who's this tyke?

Fagin: Forgive my poor manners – ladies, this is our new and good friend, Oliver Twist. Oliver – Nancy and Bet. (They curtsy. **Oliver** bows; boys catcall and whistle)

Nancy: Enough o' that. Look wha' I gotcha Fagin. Just sittin' by the road asking to be breakfast – She produces a sack of apples. Boys cheer. She & bet toss them to the boys who juggle, play catch, and eat them

Fagin: Good show, Nancy. Good girl, Bet. (to **Dodger** & **Charley**) I hope you've been at work this morning as well, my dears –

Dodger: 'Til we're ready to drop –

(**Charley** pretends to collapse; **Dodger** catches him)

Fagin: Up – up – Charley. What have you got?

Charley: (producing several handkerchiefs) Wipes!

Fagin: Very good ones, very good. And what have you got Dodger?

Dodger: Pocket books!! Two o' 'em! (**Boys** cheer)

Fagin: (taking them) Ahhh! (looks inside) Not as heavy as they might be – but a good start to the day. Good work, my dears. (He hands them each a coin from one of the pocket books) (To **Oliver**) Now wouldn't you like to be as industrious as these fine gentlemen?

(**Dodger** & **Charley** bow)

Oliver: Oh, yes sir. ; But I don't know how to sew a pocketbook.

(All laugh. **Charley** rolls on the floor with laughter)

Bet: *(pulling **Charley** up to his feet)* Cut it out, **Charley**. ‘E don’t know about this monkey business if ‘e ain’t taught.

Dodger: Well, let’s teach ‘im. *(**Boys** cheer)*

Fagin: All right, Oliver. School’s in. Watch closely now.

*(**Fagin** puts snuff box in one pocket, wipe in another, wallet in another, spectacle case, stick pin; buttons coat around him; trots around the room like an elegant gentleman pretending to look into shop windows. boys take turns robbing him; when he feels the thief’s hand he cries out. one of the others drags the thief off & fagin resumes trotting with great exaggeration while the next team tries. **Oliver** enjoys himself immensely – laughing, etc. all improvise cheers, boos, etc. **Dodger** & **Charley** swipe everything by bumping into Fagin. many apologies, etc. All cheer.)*

Nancy: Good show – Dodger – **Charley** –

Bet: Now it’s Oliver’s turn. *(All shout agreement, etc.)*

Fagin: *(indicating **Dodger** & **Charley**)* These two are great men, Oliver – make ‘em your models; follow their every move and you’ll be a great man, too, one day. Now – *(puts handkerchief in pocket)* Is my handkerchief hanging out of my pocket, Oliver?

Oliver: Yes, sir.

Fagin: See if you can take it out without my feeling it as you saw the others do. *(He waits. **Oliver** holds up bottom of pocket and pulls hanky out)*

Fagin: Is it gone?

Oliver: Here it is, sir.

Fagin: You’re a clever boy, my dear. *(All cheer. **Dodger** tussles **Oliver**’s hair)*

Nancy: ‘As Bill been around, Fagin? I ain’t seen ‘im fer days.

Fagin: Forgive me, my dear, but you’re better off without. I’ve never understood what you see in Mr. Sikes.

Charley: It’s love! *(faint)*

Nancy: Aw – cut it out, **Charley** – ‘ow about a bit of a party before we go back to work?

Fagin: Get the jug, Dodger!

(Music in. They pass the jug & do a musical number. At end of song....)

Fagin: All play and no work makes Jack a poor boy!! Off with you, my dears, and don't come home empty handed.

(Boys put on scarves, etc. & begin to exit)

Nancy/Bet: Ta – everyone –

Fagin: Oliver – go along with Dodger. Do what ever he does and you'll make a fine beginning.

Dodger: 'E's a bit green, Fagin –

Fagin: That's why he's going with you, my dear. He has to start somewhere.

(Dodger ties Oliver's scarf around his neck; Fagin waves them off as the curtain closes. All cross in-one immediately. Dodger & Charley with Oliver)

Dodger: Now, yer just stay close to us, Oliver, watch what we do.

Charley: After a few time, you'll get the 'ang of it.

Oliver: The hang of what?

Charley: D'yer think this is such a good idea, Dodger?

Dodger: Aw, 'e'll be all right, won't yer, Oliver? 'E can just watch today. C'mon now –

(They exit)

ACT I scene 7

(Curtain opens on street scene; three vendors – Bookseller, ribbon or lace merchant, chestnut man. Nancy & Bet pretend to be buying. Two Shoppers stop at stalls. The four Boys sing the xmas carol holding hats out for coins. Two BOW STREET RUNNERS stroll the scene. An ambiance of xmas. An elderly gent, Mr. Brownlow, stands looking at a book. Dodger, Charley, Oliver enter and meander about looking over the scene. Dodger sees Brownlow & stops his companions.)

Dodger: There.

Oliver: What's the matter?

Dodger: That old cove at the book sellers?

Charley: He'll do.

Oliver: He'll do what?

Dodger: Stay back, Oliver.

*(They slink to **Brownlow**, pick his pocket, & take off to above the vendors; **Oliver** gasps as **Brownlow** puts his hand in pocket noticing his handkerchief missing. He sees **Oliver** who backs away and runs)*

Brownlow: Stop!! Thief!! *(he runs after **Oliver**. All on stage begin to shout 'stop thief' including **Dodger** & **Charley**. **Oliver** takes off into the audience with **Brownlow** chasing him, **Bow St. Runners**, **Vendors**, **Shoppers**, **Dodger**, **Charley**; **Nancy** & **Bet** swipe things from unattended carts. **Dodger** steals purse from lady in audience. **Boys** return to stage. **Bow St. Runners** chase **Oliver** onto stage & catch him. **Mr.Brownlow** is there to shout)*

Brownlow: That's him! He's the thief!

CURTAIN ACT I

ACT II scene 1

(Fagin's den; Fagin, Nancy, Bet are playing cards & drinking from tankards. the 4 boys are asleep)

Bet: But they're terribly long about it – somefin' mun' of 'appened.

Fagin: Cease your fretting, Bet, my dear. They can't have got into trouble. Dodger's in charge –

Nancy: The young 'uns awful green. There – I win again. Fill 'er up, Fagin.

Fagin: *(getting up & pouring from the pitcher)* You're wonderful lucky tonight, Nancy. *(hearing footsteps)* Why, how's this? Only two of 'em? Where's the third? They can't have got into trouble –
(Dodger & Charley enter, pale & breathless) Where's Oliver?
Where's the boy?

(They don't answer; Fagin grabs Dodger & shakes him)

Fagin: Will you speak? What's become of Oliver?

Dodger: 'E got took away –

Fagin: Took where?

Dodger: The traps got 'im and this ole gent we robbed – 'e took 'im off to 'is 'ome.

Charley: It weren't are fault, Fagin –

Dodger: Come – le' go o'me, will yer?

(Bill Sikes enters during scene; he stands ominously back, listening)

Sikes: What are yer up to? Ill-treating' the boys – what's the game?

Fagin: Hush – hush – Mr. Sikes – don't speak so loud.

Sikes: Don't call me Mister – yer always after somethin' when you do – you know my name – out with it –

Fagin: Well, then – Bill Sikes – we had us a new boy caught on his first job today. I'm afraid he may say something to get us in trouble.

Sikes: Very likely! You're in for it, Fagin.

Fagin: I'm afraid – you see – that if the game was up with us – that it would come out rather worse for you than it would for me, my dear. (*A murmur from the group*)

Sikes: Somebody must find out what's 'appening and wot 'es said. If 'e hasn't blabbed yet, we gotta get 'im back. Who's gonner go fer 'im? (*They look around & stop at the girls*)

Fagin: The very thing – Bet will go, won't you, my dear?

Bet: Who? Me? No, I won't go.

Fagin: Nancy, my dear – what do you say?

Nancy: That it won't do so it's no use a tryin' it on, Fagin.

Sikes: What d'yer mean by that?

Nancy: I mean what I say, Bill.

Sikes: Yer the very person for it – nobody about 'ere knows anyfing of yer

Nancy: And I don't want 'em to neither. No, Bill –

Sikes: Are yer my girl or not Nancy –

Nancy: I'm yer girl all right, but I won't go, Bill

Sikes: She'll go, Fagin –

Nancy: No she won't Fagin –

Sikes: Yes, she will Fagin –

(He raises his hand to strike her; all gasp – he hits her)

Sikes: Yes, she will!

BLACKOUT

ACT II scene 2

IN-ONE

(**Mr. Brownlow** enters; **Mrs. Bedwin** in shawl enters from other direction)

Mrs. Bedwin: Oh, there you are, Mr. Brownlow. I was just coming to look for you. Oliver's feeling ever so much better. What a nice lad he is, Mr. Brownlow –

Brownlow: Ah, Mrs. Bedwin – here's the tonic from the chemist.

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