

HELEN You don't have to go on Thursday, you know. It's not compulsory.

KIPPS Don't worry. I'll go. I wouldn't want to let you down.

HELEN No, but –

MRS WALS. Helen!

(Music resumes. With a blushing smile, HELEN hurries after her mother.)

HELEN I hope you and James aren't plotting something.

MRS WALS. Of course not! But I would remind you that our place in the world is not what it has been, and *not what it should be.*

(HELEN and MRS WALSINGHAM exit.)

Music No. 8a: NEW ROMNEY

SCENE EIGHT

New Romney. Day.

KIPPS is with his uncle and aunt.

AUNT SUSAN Where are you living, Arthur? Are you still in that rented villa?

KIPPS Until I find the right place to buy. I wanted to stay in the part of Folkestone I know best.

UNCLE BERT That's not very adventurous.

KIPPS What about you? I was thinking you might like a cottage, with climbing roses round the door and the sun shinin' in, and a view of the sea.

AUNT SUSAN That does sound lovely, Arthur.

KIPPS What do you think, Uncle Bert?

UNCLE BERT It sounds cracking. O'course, I'd have to sell me stock . . .

- KIPPS No, I mean I'd *buy* one for you!
- UNCLE BERT (*Uncomfortable.*) Lemme think about it a bit fust.
- AUNT SUSAN That's right. After all, we don't want to leave in a hurry.
- KIPPS But you always said you hated your house.
- UNCLE BERT So we do, lad. So we do. But, like your aunt says, we couldn't leave it in a hurry.
- KIPPS How about some money, then? Let me do that for you at least.
- UNCLE BERT We couldn't take your money, Arthur.
- KIPPS I've got an idea. Do you still spend your spare time collecting rubbi— collecting interesting old things that are looking for a home?
- UNCLE BERT Funny you should say that. I've got a nice little tea chest . . .
- KIPPS There you are, then. Suppose I give you money to find knick knacks and such like for the villa . . .
- AUNT SUSAN You'd enjoy that, Bert. You know you would.
- KIPPS That's settled then. So here's twenty pounds to get started.
- (*There is a knock at the door. A young woman stands there.*)
- AUNT SUSAN Here's Ann. Arthur, you remember Ann, Sid Pornick's sister, don't you?
- KIPPS 'Course I do. (*He stands, but then he looks and is almost struck dumb.*) Ann? Blimey, you've changed.
- ANN It's been a long time, Arthur.
- AUNT SUSAN I told her you was coming down and she said she'd drop by.
- ANN I can't stay long. I haven't had a whole day off in ages, so I ought to be with me Mum.

AUNT SUSAN Why don't you two go for a walk?

KIPPS I will if you will.

(They stroll out together.)

ANN I couldn't miss the chance of seeing you again.

KIPPS I can't get over you, Ann. I mean, I always thought of you as a girl
and now you're a . . . well, a woman.

ANN Girls grow into women, Arthur.

KIPPS Even so . . . How long's it been? It must be years since I seen ya.

ANN I s'pose we was never down here on the same Sundays.

KIPPS I was hardly here at all. Working for Shalford's was like a chain
gang without the laughs.

ANN I 'eard you weren't there no more.

KIPPS Did you 'ear why?

ANN I did. I'm ever so pleased for you, Arthur. I am truly.

KIPPS It's quite a turn up. Everything's changed. It's a relief in a way to
come down here and find it's all the same.

ANN Is it, Arthur?

KIPPS And you here with me. Just like it used to be. D'you 'member how
we used to play down by the seashore, at the old wreck?

Music No. 9: HALF A SIXPENCE – Part 2

ANN A bottle of pop and a penn'orth of sweets.

KIPPS And you'd let me 'old your hand.

ANN
REMEMBER WHEN WE WERE CHILDREN
OF NINE OR TEN I'D GUESS
AND YOU WOULD PLAY THIS PIRATE KING