

Music No. 20a: NEVER KNOW A GOOD DAY AGAINSCENE TWENTY*The Walsingham House. Day.*

MRS WALSINGHAM *is in a state of weeping collapse. HELEN, dressed in black, is more reserved.*

MRS WALS. I keep hoping it's a dream! That we'll wake any moment and the nightmare will be over!

HELEN Well, it won't.

MRS WALS. If it were your late father, then I could believe it! But not James! Not willingly! He may have made a mistake –

HELEN What is the point of this, Mama? James is a thief. Papa was a fool but James is worse. He'll go to prison for a long time and we're ruined. Let's face it!

(This reduces MRS WALSINGHAM to more sobbing as the bell goes.)

MRS WALS. Why doesn't the girl answer the door?

HELEN Because she's gone . . .

(She opens the door. KIPPS is standing there.)

Hello, Arthur. Come in.

(He walks into the room and sees MRS WALSINGHAM.)

KIPPS Good day, Mrs Walsingham.

MRS WALS. I shall never know a good day again!

HELEN I'm glad you're here because I can say how sorry I am. It's my fault. I led you into the whole thing.

KIPPS I'm a grown man. And you tried to stop me signing the papers. So it's my fault, not yours.

- HELEN I knew it wasn't quite right. I never thought it would be as bad as this but I knew it wasn't right. You must get a solicitor to see if anything can be saved.
- KIPPS I will but it's not why I've come.
(He hesitates slightly, which she observes.)
- HELEN You don't need to tell me we're not getting married.
- KIPPS It's got nothing to do with the money. I've met someone – well, I've met her again. It's the maid I knew when I was a boy.
- HELEN I said there was something between you.
- KIPPS Yes, but there wasn't. Then. It's jest that she knows me and I know her and we're . . . comfortable together. I s'pose that's it.
- HELEN And you weren't comfortable with me.
- KIPPS I adored you, Helen. Truly. And I admired you. I still do. I should thank you, really.
- HELEN Whatever for?
- KIPPS Because you were the one who made me believe in myself again, and I need that, 'specially after losing the money.
- HELEN If it's true, then I'm glad.
- KIPPS What's next for you?
- HELEN We'll stay here for the trial and then it might be best to move away. I could be a governess, perhaps. Or a teacher, anyway.
- KIPPS You're a good teacher.

Music No. 20b: BELIEVE IN YOURSELF – Reprise

- MRS WALS. I want to lie down, Helen. My head is beating like a drum.
- HELEN I'll take you, Mama.

KIPPS Is there anything I can do?

HELEN No. We'll manage. You must go.

(KIPPS starts for the door.)

And Arthur, I wish you such happiness in the future, both of you, from the bottom of my heart.

KIPPS You, too. And remember what you told me once . . .

THERE'S SO MUCH YOU'LL ACHIEVE
WHEN YOU START TO BELIEVE
IN YOU

Goodbye, Helen.

(He is gone. HELEN turns wearily back to her ailing parent.)

HELEN Come on, Mama. Up you get.

MRS WALS. At least one thing's come out of all this horror. You are rid of that frightful little man.

HELEN Yes, I'm rid of him. And I can't tell you how sad that makes me.

SCENE TWENTY-ONE

The street outside. Day.

KIPPS is walking away when he sees LADY PUNNET.

KIPPS Hello, Lady Punnet.

(She peers at him for a moment.)

It's Mr Kipps.

LADY PUNNET Oh. Yes. Mr Kipps. Of course! Do I understand you are to marry my parlour maid?

KIPPS I sincerely hope so.