

SCENE FOUR

*Miss Walsingham's Woodcarving Class. Evening.*

*There are not many pupils but they look rather highbrow and smartly dressed. HELEN claps her hands.*

HELEN I am so pleased to see you all again! Those who are new to the class, we have no rules when it comes to the subjects you choose. But I do like to see you express yourselves.

*(She starts to examine the work of the different students. A woman, MISS ROSS, is carving an apple while a rather fierce young man, HAYES, is carving a dog.)*

HAYES Is this your first time?

KIPPS Yes. But I'm ever so interested. In art. And sculpture. And everythink.

HAYES Really? I suppose you like Bernini?

KIPPS I don't drink much, as it happens.

MISS ROSS I went to a wonderful concert of the Ring Cycle last night.

HELEN Ah, Mr Kipps. How are we doing?

*(She glides across the room towards him.)*

KIPPS Well, I've got me wood and I've got me chisel, but I ain't sure what comes next.

HAYES Not a lot, I suspect.

HELEN I don't agree, Mr Hayes. Mr Kipps strikes me as the possessor of a lively mind.

*(HAYES is duly overcome and he returns to his dog.)*

KIPPS Did you mean that, Miss? About my lively mind?

HELEN Certainly.

KIPPS I don't see much sign of it.

HELEN Mr Kipps, you're here. I cannot believe Mr Shalford is an easy taskmaster, nor that you have much free time to spare, but you choose to spend it in the study of art.

KIPPS I thought it sounded int'resting. With you teaching an' all.

HELEN That's flattering but you know what it tells me? That you think there's something more in you than just a shop assistant selling haberdashery.

KIPPS Do I?

HELEN Absolutely. And shall I tell you something else? I believe there's more in me than just a young woman following her mother around buying curtain material.

KIPPS Oh, I'm sure of that, Miss.

**Music No. 5: BELIEVE IN YOURSELF**

HELEN There you are, you see. We have a great deal in common, you and I.

KIPPS Really?

*(The others have stopped to listen. Now she claps her hands.)*

HELEN

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

YOU MAY BE SURPRISED

WHEN A TALENT YOU HIDE

BECOMES RECOGNISED

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

WHY NOT GIVE IT A TRY

THERE'S SOMETIMES MORE TO SOMEONE THAN MEETS THE EYE

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

THERE'S STRENGTH TO BE TAPPED

AS YOU FLEE FROM A WORLD

IN WHICH YOU FEEL TRAPPED

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

AND YOU'LL FIND IF YOU DO  
THAT THOSE AROUND YOU START TO BELIEVE IT TOO  
THERE'S SO MUCH YOU'LL ACHIEVE  
WHEN YOU START TO BELIEVE IN YOU

*(During this, HELEN has been inspecting the others' work.)*

KIPPS                   And did it work? For your Dad?

HELEN                  Not really. Not at all by the end, I'm afraid.

KIPPS                   What about you?

HELEN                  I want to.

KIPPS                   I tell you what: I'll believe in you, Miss, if you'll believe in me.

HELEN                  Mr Kipps, we have a deal.

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF  
TRY SAYING "I CAN"  
IT'S NOT WINNING THE RACE  
IT'S SAYING "I RAN"  
BELIEVE IN YOURSELF  
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE  
IT'S NOT THE STEPS YOU TAKE IT'S THE PATH YOU CHOOSE

HELEN                  I've always noticed you, you know. There was something about you.

KIPPS                   Really? *(He is getting flustered. He fingers his collar.)* It's a bit hot in 'ere, Miss.

HELEN                  So it is, Mr Kipps. I'll open a window . . . Oh dear.

*(The window is stuck. She wrestles with it.)*

KIPPS                   Let me!

*(He runs over and pushes at the glass with such eagerness that his hand goes through it.)*

HELEN                  Oh, no! You've cut yourself!

KIPPS Nah. It's nothing.

HELEN But it's bleeding.

KIPPS I don't think so . . . *Oh, my gawd!*

*(He has just looked at the wound and almost faints.)*

HELEN Let me tie it up for you.

*(She takes a handkerchief from her pocket and bandages him.)*

I'm not hurting you, am I?

KIPPS You couldn't hurt me, Miss.

MISS ROSS It isn't so much the cut at the time as the poisoning afterwards.

HELEN How helpful, Miss Ross. There. That's done it. *(She claps her hands.)* I think that's enough, everyone. Let's call it a night. And don't forget to take your carvings.

*(KIPPS has been hovering. He shows her his bandaged hand.)*

KIPPS Thanks ever so, Miss. I'll wash it out and bring it back next week.

HELEN I'm afraid not. This is the final class of the term. We won't start again 'til the end of the summer.

KIPPS But how will I get it back to you?

HELEN Don't worry. Keep it. Give it to your best girl.

KIPPS But you're – that is, you'll miss it . . . Miss.

HELEN Don't be silly. It's a present.

*(She puts on her hat.)*

HELEN And now, good night, Mr Kipps. See you next term!