

SCENE VIII

A Quartet of young men, including Drummle, dressed in evening clothes with matching bright yellow waistcoats at a billiards table.

SONG: THE FINCHES OF THE GROVE

QUARTET:

WE'RE ONE FINE FAMILIAL FRATERNITY
THE FINCHES OF THE GROVE

VOICE #1: WE CONVERSE WITH DIGNITY

VOICE #2: IDLE THOUGH THE CONTENT BE

DRUMMLE: WE DISCUSS OUR PEDIGREE
THE FINCHES OF THE GROVE

WE'RE ONE FINE FAMILIAL FRATERNITY
THE FINCHES OF THE GROVE

VOICE #1: WE'VE A PREJUDICIAL CREED

VOICE #2: WHICH EDUCATION MIGHT IMPEDE

As the second verse proceeds, Drummle drunkenly staggers across stage as the lights rise on Matthew Pocket's classroom where Pip, Herbert and Startop are assembled. Drummle, still dressed as a FINCH with yellow vest, arrives at a desk.

DRUMMLE: A SCHOLARLY PURSUIT, INDEED

Then Drummle passes out, sprawled out on the desk. As lights fade on the Finches...

FINCHES: THE FINCHES OF THE GROVE

Drummle is eyed with amusement by Startop, but the others don't see the humor. Pip is seated, nervously buried in his books. Herbert glowers as DRUMMLE snores fitfully. STARTOP who has been standing looks up at Matthew Pocket.

MATTHEW

There lays the future the
aristocracy. You may continue Mr.
Startop.

STARTOP

Moneo. Monere. Monui.

MATTHEW

Very good Mr. Startop. (shouting)
Mr. Drummle, could you conjugate
the next verb? (Drummle snorts).
Ah. Well gentlemen, it appears Mr.
Drummle is conjugating in his
dreams.

The boys laugh; Drummle stirs.

MATTHEW

Mr. Pip . . .

Pip stands.

PIP

(haltingly)
Amo, Amas, Amat. Amabam. Amabas.
Amabat. Amabamus. Amabatis.

Pip hesitates and Herbert mouths the correct word to Pip.

PIP

Amabant.

Herbert and Startop applaud Pip. Drummle awakens and jumps to his feet looking startled.

MATTHEW

Well done, Mr. Pip. My dear Mr.
Drummle. If you spent your nights
studying like Mr. Pip,...ah, but
why do I waste my breath.

DRUMMLE

The blacksmith? And what good will
an education do him?

MATTHEW

Not all men are to the manor born,
but education can be great
equalizer.

Drummle glowers at Pip.

Lights lower on the classroom and rise on The Finches all in the "yellow-breasted" attire singing and drinking, as the lights transition. Startop is now sporting a yellow vest and is part of the club.

QUARTET:
 WE'RE ONE FINE FAMILIAL FRATERNITY
 THE FINCHES OF THE GROVE
 Startop: WE TAKE FROM LIFE WHAT IT AFFORDS
 Voice #2: ENTITLED TO OUR JUST REWARDS
 DRUMMLE: AND END UP IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS
 THE FINCHES OF THE GROVE

The lights dim on the Finches and rise at a dining room where Mr. Jagers, Pip, and Herbert are speaking. Jagers checks his pocket watch as Drummle and Startop arrive. Most signs of Pip's country origins are gone. He speaks with an upper-class accent.

JAGGERS
 You are fashionably late,
 gentlemen.

STARTOP
 I am terribly sorry, sir, you
 see...

JAGGERS
 Enough said. You are forgiven.
 Please join us.

PIP
 Mr. Jagers this is Mr. Startop and
 Mr. Drummle.

Drummle does not respond but pours himself a glass of wine and upends it. Startop smiles and reaches out his hand to Jagers, who shakes it.

HERBERT
 Startop. Is that a Finch waistcoat?

STARTOP
 Why yes it is. Drummle sponsored
 me as I will do for you and Mr.
 Pip.

DRUMMLE
 Oh, really, Startop, what an
 appalling thought.

STARTOP
 ...so let us drink to us! And you
 as well Mr. Jagers.

JAGGERS
 I am honored, Mr. Startop. Pip, a
 word.

Jaggers pulls Pip aside.

JAGGERS

The Startop fellow is quite benign, but Drummle, keep your eye on that one. You could learn a lot from him...too much, perhaps.

PIP

He is a bore.

JAGGERS

Quite. But always remember he has connections in the best social circles, which can only be of benefit to you and your expectations.

Jaggers crosses to Drummle and begins chatting with him as Pip turns and accidentally runs into MOLLY, Jaggers' maid, who is preparing the dinner table.

PIP

Excuse, me.

MOLLY

It was all my fault, sir.

Molly, a dark, once beautiful middle-aged woman, momentarily looks at Pip. Pip stares at Molly who meekly continues about her work.

HERBERT

My dear Pip, is anything the matter?

PIP

There's just something so strangely familiar about Jaggers' maid.

HERBERT

Ahh, you mean Molly. What you see is a wild beast tamed.

PIP

Molly was once a wild beast?

HERBERT

Well, so is the talk of her. About twenty years ago, the woman was tried for murder and acquitted.

(MORE)

HERBERT (cont'd)

It was a jealousy case involving another woman and her designs on Molly's husband.

PIP

Where is he now?

HERBERT

No one knows. The incident also involved a child, whom it was rumored that she had done away with as well. Jaggars handled the counsel, she was found innocent, then went into his service immediately after.

PIP

And the child?

HERBERT

Ah, there again, a sordid mystery. I would lay wager that Jaggars knows more. But as you know, he is a veritable sphinx.

The two move to the table where dinner is about to be served.

JAGGERS

Gentlemen, please be seated.

STARTOP

Pip is quite good at rowing, Mr. Jaggars.

DRUMMLE

Well, he does have the arm of a blacksmith.

JAGGERS

Well, Mr. Drummle, as the obvious gentleman at the table, let us drink to you. Gentlemen, to Mr. Drummle.

The Finches reappear singing drunkenly and toasting each other as the set transitions.

QUARTET:

IT TOOK YEARS OF WEEDING
TO CULTIVATE THIS KIND OF FLAIR
LOTS OF INTERBREEDING
TO RISE ABOVE THE PROLETAIRE

The lights rise on Pip and Herbert's apartment, now richly appointed. Pip and Herbert are dressed in expensive smoking jackets. The table is elegantly set. Pip seems agitated.

HERBERT

I'm looking very forward to meeting him.

PIP

Try and remember that Joe is a simple man.

HERBERT

Please don't fear that I will judge him harshly, Pip. Any friend of yours is an immediate friend of mine.

There is a knock at the door. Herbert opens it and we see Joe dressed in a new garish and ill-fitted suit with a top hat. A duck out of water.

HERBERT

Mr. Gargery, Herbert Pocket. What a pleasure to meet you.

JOE

The pleasure is all mine, sir.

HERBERT

Please come in.

Joe wipes his feet repeatedly.

PIP

Oh for God sakes, come in Joe.

Joe enters, removing his hat.

HERBERT

May I take your hat?

JOE

It's no trouble to keep hold of it, sir. (Happily to Pip) Mr. Pip, look how you've growed.

PIP

Yes, well, how is Mrs. Joe?

JOE

She's no worse than she were.

PIP
And Biddy?

JOE
She's ever right and ready. We
talk of you every night and wonder
what you are saying and doing.

HERBERT
Won't you please be seated, Mr
Gargery?

The three sit, Joe awkwardly holding his hat. He finally
puts it in the middle of the table. Pip laughs nervously and
removes it. There is an uncomfortable pause.

HERBERT
Do you take tea or coffee Mr.
Gargery?

JOE
I'll take whichever is most
agreeable to yourself.

Pip serves soup to all at the table while Herbert pours tea.
When all are seated, Pip and Herbert put their napkins in
their laps. Joe carefully tucks his in his collar. Pip and
Herbert raise their spoons to their mouths as Joe leans over
slurps his soup, just as Pip did not so long ago. Pip sits,
soup spoon in air, mouth open in embarrassment.

HERBERT
(breaking the ice)
Have you seen anything of London
yet, Mr. Gargery?

JOE
Why yes sir, I went straight round
to the Blackin' Ware'us.

PIP
In all of London you go to a
Blacking Warehouse?

JOE
It's of great interest, me bein' a
blacksmith, eh, Pip?

PIP
Eat your soup, Joe, before it gets
cold.

JOE
And very good soup it is, sir.

PIP
(angered)
Please don't call me sir!

There is an awkward pause.

HERBERT
(rising from the table)
Well, the time flies and so must I.
It was a great pleasure to meet you
Mr. Gargery. Please come visit as
often as you are able.

JOE
The pleasure were all mine, Mr.
Herbert.

Herbert shakes Joe's hand and exits the front door.

PIP
I'm sorry, Joe. I'm just not
myself today.

JOE
(rising)
I think I must be getting back to
Mrs. Joe. You remembered her when
she was a fine figure of a woman.

PIP
(rising)
You just got here, Joe. Please
stay.

JOE
Dear old, Pip. Life is made of
ever so many parts, welded
together. One man's a blacksmith
and one's a goldsmith. Divisions
among such must come. And so God
Bless Pip - a gentleman now.

Joe takes his hat, pats Pip's shoulder and exits. Pip stands
for a moment, then he bolts for the door.

PIP
Joe!...

He is too late and returns to the apartment. He removes his
smoking jacket and we see he is wearing a bright yellow vest.

He puts on an evening jacket and joins the Quartet with Drummle, Startop, and Herbert.

QUARTET:

WE'RE ONE FINE FAMILIAL FRATERNITY OF
THE FINCHES OF THE GROVE

Drummle: THERE ARE MANY WE SHOULD SNUB

STARTOP: AND NEVER LET THEM IN OUR CLUB

ALL: NO ONE'S GOOD ENOUGH, (they pause to scrutinize each other)THERE'S THE RUB

THE FINCHES OF THE GROVE

WE'RE ONE FINE FAMILIAL

ONE FINE FAMILIAL

ONE FINE FAMILIAL

FRATERNITYEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

THE FINCHES OF

THE FINCHES LOVE

THE FINCHES OF THE GROVE

They all raise their glasses high on the final chorus.

DRUMMLE

I'll drink to that!

HERBERT

Indeed Drummle.

STARTOP

What won't we drink to?!

All take a moment to think.

ALL

Sobriety!

They all laugh. A servant enters with a note for Pip on his tray. Pip takes it and reads. He looks stricken.

DRUMMLE

Well, well, welldoes Mr. Pip
have an admirer?

HERBERT

Pip, what is it?

Pip

It's Mrs. Joe.