

TODD pulls violently away from MRS. LOVETT]

PIRELLI [With Italianate bow]: Good morning, Mr. TODD — and to you, bellissima signorina. [He kisses MRS. LOVETT 's hand]

MRS. LOVETT: Well, 'ow do you do, signer, I'm sure.

PIRELLI: A little business with Mr. TODD, signora. Perhaps if you will give the permission?

MRS. LOVETT: Oh yes, indeed, I'll just pop on down to my pies. [Surveying TOBIAS] Oh lawks, look at it now! Don't look like it's had a kind word since half past never! [Smiling at him] What would you say, son, to a nice juicy meat pie, eh? Your teeth is strong, I hope?

TOBIAS: Oh yes, ma'am.

MRS. LOVETT: Then come with me, love. [They start down the stairs to the shop]

PIRELLI: Mr. Todd.

TODD: Signor Pirelli.

PIRELLI [Reverting to Irish]: Ow, call me Danny, Daniel O'Higgins' the name when it's not professional. [Looks around the shop] Not much, but I imagine you'll pretty it up a bit. [Holds out his hand] I'd like me five quid back, ifn ya don't mind.

TODD: Why?

[In the shop, MRS. LOVETT pats a stool for TOBIAS to sit down and hands him a piece of pie. He starts to eat greedily]

MRS. LOVETT: That's my boy. Tuck in.

PIRELLI: It'll hold me over till your customers start coming. Then it's half your profits you'll hand over to me every week on a Friday, share and share alike. All right . . . Mr. Benjamin Barker?

TODD: Why do you call me that?

MRS. LOVETT [Stroking TOBIAS 's luxurious locks]: At least you've got a nice full head of hair on you.

TOBIAS: Well, ma'am, to tell the truth, ma'am — [He reaches up and pulls off the "locks" which are a wig, revealing his own short-cropped hair] — gets awful 'ot. [He continues to eat the pie. PIRELLI strolls over to the washstand, picks up the razor, flicks

it open]

PIRELLI: You don't remember me. Why should you? I was just a down and out Irish lad you hired for a couple of weeks — sweeping up hair and such like — [Holding up razor] but I remember these — and you. Benjamin Barker, later transported to Botany Bay for life. So, Mr. TODD — is it a deal or do I run down the street for me pal beadle Bamford? You t'ink-a you smart, You foolish-a boy. Tomorrow you start In my-a employ! You unner-a-stan'? You like-a my plan — ? [Once again he hits his high note, and once again he is interrupted —TODD knocks the razor out of his hand and starts, in a protracted struggle, to strangle him]

TOBIAS [Downstairs, unaware of this]: Oh gawd, he's got an appointment with his tailor. If he's late and it's my fault — you don't know him! [He jumps up and starts out]

MRS. LOVETT: I wouldn't want to, I'm sure, dear. [TODD violently continues with the strangling]

TOBIAS [Calling on the stairs]: Signer! It's late! The tailor, sir. [Remembering] Oh, me wig! [Runs back for it. Upstairs, TODD stops dead at the sound of the voice. He looks around wildly, sees the chest, runs to it, opens the lid and then drags Pirelli to it and tumbles him in, slamming the lid shut just as TOBIAS enters. It is at this moment that we realize that one of PIRELLI 's hands is dangling out of the chest] Signor, I did like you said. I reminded you . . . the tailor . . . Ow, he ain't here.

TODD: Signor PIRELLI has been called away.

TOBIAS: Where did he go?

TODD: He didn't say. You'd better run after him.

TOBIAS: Oh no, sir. Knowing him, sir, without orders to the contrary, I'd best wait for him here. [He crosses to the chest and sits down on it, perilously near PIRELLI 's hand, which he doesn't notice. TODD at this moment does, however. Suddenly he is all nervous smiles]

TODD: So MRS. LOVETT gave you a pie, did she, my lad?

TOBIAS: Oh yes, sir. She's a real kind lady. One whole pie. [As he speaks, his hand moves very close to PIRELLI 's hand]