

SCENE THREE: A Street Corner

(JACK leans against a building as DAVEY attempts to peddle papers to PASSERSBY.)

DAVEY

Paper. Paper. Evenin' pape here.

JACK

Sing 'em to sleep why dontcha?

(snatches a paper from DAVEY and hawks it)

Extra! Extra! Terrified flight from burnin' inferno. You heard the story right here!

(A MAN snatches the paper from JACK, hands him a coin, and exits.)

Thanks, mister.

DAVEY

You just made that up.

JACK

Did not. I said he heard it right here, and he did.

DAVEY

My father taught us not to lie.

JACK

And mine taught me not to starve.

(LES comes up empty-handed.)

LES

Hey! Just sold my last paper.

DAVEY

I got one more.

JACK

Sell it or pay for it.

LES

Give it here.

(takes the paper, sidles up to a WOMAN passing by, and puts the saddest look on his face)

Buy a pape from a poor orphan boy?

(LES coughs gently.)

WOMAN

Oh, you dear thing. Of course I'll take a newspaper. Here's a dime.

(The WOMAN exits with her paper.)

JACK

Born to the breed.

LES

This is so much better than school!

DAVEY

Don't even think it. When Pop goes back to work, we go back to school.

(While the boys talk, SNYDER, a sinister looking man, sees JACK and steps back against a building. He seems excited to have spotted the boy. Cautiously, he flags down a POLICEMAN and whispers to him.)

JACK

So's how about we divvy up the money, grab some chow, then find yis somewheres safe to spend the night?

DAVEY

We gotta get home. Our folks will be waitin' dinner.

JACK

Ya got folks, huh?

LES

Doesn't everyone?

DAVEY

(elbows his brother)

Our dad tangled with a delivery truck on the job. Messed his leg up bad, so they laid him off. That's how come we had to find work.

JACK

Yeah, sure, that makes sense. Too bad about your dad.

DAVEY

Why don't you come home with us for dinner? Our folks would be happy to have you.

LES

Mom's a great cook.

JACK

Thanks for the invite, but I just remembered I got plans with a fella. He's probably waiting on me right now.