



Side 8 Davey, Les, (Jack & Katherine)

DAVEY

How 'bout lettin' a pal know you're alive? Where'd you go? We couldn't find you.

JACK

Ever think I didn't wanna be found?

DAVEY

(indicating the backdrop)

Is that a real place? That Santa Fe?

(suddenly remembering, holds out the newspaper)

Hey! You see the pape? We're front page news, above the fold. Oh, yes. Above the fold.

JACK

Good for you.

DAVEY

Everyone wants to meet the famous Jack Kelly. Even Spot Conlon sent a kid just to say: next event you can count on Brooklyn. How about that?

JACK

We got stomped into the ground.

DAVEY

They got us this time. I'll grant you that. But we took round one. And with press like this our fight is far from over.

JACK

Every newsie who could walk showed up this morning to sell papes like the strike never happened.

DAVEY

And I was there with them. If I don't sell papes, my folks don't eat.

JACK

Save your breath. I get it. It's hopeless.

DAVEY

But then I saw this look on Weasel's face; he was actually nervous. And I realized this isn't over. We got them worried. Really worried. And I walked away. Lots of other kids did, too. And that is what you call a beginning.

(LES enters, calling to KATHERINE behind him.)

LES

There he is, just like I said.

JACK

For cryin' out loud ... Where's a fella gotta go to get away from you people?

DAVEY

There's no escapin' us, pal. We're inevitable.

LES

(to DAVEY)

So, what's the story? Can we have the theater?

DAVEY

Pipe down. I didn't ask yet.

LES

What's the hold up? I need to let my girl know we've got a date.

DAVEY

Your girl?

LES

You heard me. I've been swattin' skirts away all morning. Fame is one intoxicatin' potion. And this here girl, Sally, she's a plum.

(studying the painting)

Hey, Jack. Where's that supposed to be?

DAVEY

It's Santa Fe.

KATHERINE

I've got to tell you, Jack, this "Go west, young man" routine is getting tired. Even Horace Greeley moved back to New York.

LES

Yes, he did. And then he died.

JACK

Ain't reporters supposed to be non-partisan?

KATHERINE

Ask a reporter. Pulitzer's had me blacklisted from every news desk in town –

LES

Can we table the palaver and get back to business? Will Medda let us have the theater?

DAVEY

(to JACK)

It's what I been trying to tell you: we want to hold a rally - citywide meeting where every newsie gets a say and a vote. And we do it after working hours so no one loses a day's pay. Smart?

JACK

Smart enough to get you committed to a padded room!

KATHERINE

The guy who paints places he's never seen is calling us crazy?

JACK

Want to see a place I seen? How about this?

(JACK turns the backdrop around and reveals a large, passionately executed political cartoon of the newsies being crushed by Pulitzer in Newsie Square. DAVEY, LES, and KATHERINE stare in awe.)

JACK

Newsie Square, thanks to my big mouth, filled to overflowing with failure. Kids hurt, others arrested –

DAVEY

Lighten up. No one died.

JACK

Is that what you're aiming for? Go on and call me a quitter, call me a coward. No way I'm puttin' them kids back in danger.

DAVEY

We're doing something that has never been done before. How could that not be dangerous?

JACK

Specs brung me a note from Crutchie at The Refuge. I tried to see him. Climbed the fire escape. But they busted him up so bad he couldn't even come to the window. What if he don't make it? You willing to shoulder that for a tenth of a penny a pape?

DAVEY

It's not about pennies. You said it yourself: my family wouldn't be in the mess we're in if my father had a union. This is a fight we have to win.

JACK

If I wanted a sermon, I'd show up for church.

DAVEY

Tell me how quitting does Crutchie any good?