

hey enter ... ?? Through audience?? They are having a conversation as they walk in

Miss M: Are you saying, Cook, that that wretched scullery maid, Becky, is actually stealing food?

Cook: Well Mum. There is no doubt in my mind that someone stole part of a meat pie. An' there warn't anyone else who could've done that without my seein' them. And that's not the only time, mum.

Miss M: Is Becky on her own in the kitchen then?

Cook: While she's scrubbing floors Mum, we all gets out of 'er way see. So it must've been 'er.

Miss M: Well she will regret this. It's time we showed her a bit more discipline. Beating her clearly isn't working.

They are now standing in the attic and they gasp at the sight of the four girls talking and laughing and eating!!

Miss M: Sara Crewe!

All the girls get up, terrified. Ermengarde grabs Sara's hand, and Lottie starts to cry.

Cook: Well I never! 'ere's yer food!

Miss M: I have been suspecting something of this sort. I didn't dream of such audacity. It seems that Lavinia was telling the truth.

Cook: Well Becky! What 'ave yer got ter say fer yerself? Stealin' food eh?

Becky: I – I – never I ...

Miss M: Cook tells me she has missed things repeatedly.

Becky: 'Twarn't me, mum. *(she begins to sob)* I could 'ave; I'm 'ungry enough, but 'twarn't me mum, never.

Miss M: You deserve to be sent to prison. Picking and stealing! Half a meat pie amongst other things.

Becky: 'Twarn't me *(she is really sobbing)*

Sara goes to her to comfort her.

Miss Minchin moves towards Becky, pulls Sara out of the way, making her fall, and hits Becky repeatedly.

Becky: *(desperately trying to defend herself)* I never took no food, mum. 'Twas Cook give it to 'er policeman.

Cook: Lies as well, eh, young whipper – snapper! I'll teach you. *(she starts towards Becky to join in the beating)*

Sara goes over and pulls Miss Minchin away and stops Cook from beating Becky.

Sara: STOP! Stop it!

Miss M: *(turning on Sara)* You impudent creature. *(turning to Ermengarde)* Ermengarde, I will write to your papa. I wonder what *he* would say if he knew what you had been up to. Fraternising with the scullery maids. Go back to your room. Lottie, leave this instant. You will both be severely punished.
Becky, go with Cook. She will find suitable punishments for you.

Cook grabs Becky and drags her off

Ermengarde tries to say something, but finds she can't. Lottie bursts into tears again, and runs off, followed by Ermengarde.

Miss M: Well Sara Crewe. What have *you* to say for yourself ?

Sara: I was wondering what my papa would say if he knew where I am tonight.

Miss Minchin is furious, and grabs Sara and shakes her violently, then starts to beat her violently.

Miss M: You insolent, unmanageable child! How dare you! HOW DARE YOU!

She pushes Sara on to her bed and sweeps her hand across the table sending everything flying. She then leaves the room