



## **The Adventures of Dick Whittington**

A Traditional Family Pantomime by Brian Luff

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## **The Adventures of Dick Whittington**

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### LIST OF CHARACTERS

Dick Whittington .....	Principal Boy, the hero of our story
Thelma Pudding .....	The Dame, Fitzwarren's cook
King Rat .....	The Villain - Vermin-in-Chief
Idle Jack .....	Thelma's son.
Smudge .....	Dick's rather stropy cat
Fairy Jinglebells.....	A kindly spirit.
Councilor Fitzwarren .....	Dick Whittington's boss
Lady Absinthe .....	Fitzwarren's wife
Alice .....	Fitzwarren's adopted daughter
Captain Patch .....	Captain of The Good Ship Endeavour
Windy Gale .....	First mate of The Good Ship Endeavour
Beardy Pete .....	A hairy old pirate.
King Bono .....	King of the Island of Utoovia

Plus, a cheery chorus of villagers, servants, pirates, cats and rats.

### SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

#### ACT 1

Scene 1.....	The town square
Scene 2.....	The harbour.
Scene 3.....	The town square.
Scene 4 .....	A dark alleyway
Scene 5.....	Thelma Pudding's kitchen.
Scene 6.....	A dimly lit street.

#### ACT 2

Scene 1 .....	The town square
Scene 2 .....	Highgate Hill
Scene 3 .....	Deck of the Good Ship Endeavour
Scene 4 .....	Below decks on the ship
Scene 5 .....	The court of King Bono of Utoovia

## ACT I

### Scene One

*Menacing music. A green, sinister light fades up on tabs. Enter our villain King Rat, downstage.*

**King Rat** Ah ha ha ha! I am the loathsome, troublesome and most powerful being in all of London Town! Bow down before the greatest panto villain of them all... The Mighty King Rat! Ah ha ha ha! *(Aside)* That's my very best evil laugh, by the way. How dare you boo me, you sniveling little urchins! If you boo me I will send my rats to wriggle and squiggle and creep under your seats and scratch and claw at your feet! *(Aside)* Which is every bit as nasty as it sounds. Remember that in this fair city you are never more than six feet from a rat, which is only one point eight three metres, so watch out! As Old Father Thames winds his way through the city, his murky, muddy banks are inhabited by a million crawling, brawling, appalling rats, all waiting to steal your food and sour your mood.

*We hear the sound of a cat.*

What's that? A cat? I *hate* cats, with their scratchy little claws and their pointy, sharp teeth. *(Aside)* I also have an allergy to cat hair, which is *very* inconvenient. Time for me to go now, but I'll be seeing you all later you horrible lot. Au revoir!

*He exits, then quickly pops his head out from the wings.*

**King Rat** That's French, by the way.

*He exits again. Tabs open on a town square in Old London Town. The square is filled with jolly Londoners going about their work.*

### Song 1

*The comedy sing a song to welcome everyone to the show. At the end of the routine, enter Dame Thelma Pudding. She carries a broom and immediately starts sweeping the street.*

**Thelma** Hello everyone! Hello boys and girls! Londoners are such a lovely bunch, aren't they? But they do leave such a mess behind! *(Sweeping)* Look at this mess. Crisp packets, lolly sticks and drinks cans. But I do love London, with its tall church spires, its beautiful cathedral dome... its overcrowded and overpriced public transport system. I love them all! Oh, I'm Thelma Pudding, by the way. Do you like my outfit? I had it specially designed by the architect who designed the Shard. It comes with a tall, pointy hat, but I only wear that for special occasions. Shall I do a quick twirl? *(She twirls)* Ooooh dear, I'm not doing that again, I've made myself quite dizzy. I've gone all unnecessary. Where was I? Oh yes, I work as cook and housekeeper for Councilor Fitzwarren, in that great big house over there. It's the biggest house in London. He calls it "affordable housing", but he's a multi-millionaire so everything's affordable for him. His house is so big you have to jump on a bus to get from the living room to the dining room. And if you want to go to the garden you have to get *two* buses and change at the kitchen. Now, I could stand around chatting all day but there's work to be done. Where's that lazy son of mine?

*Enter Idle Jack.*

**Jack** Coming mother! Hello everyone, hello boys and girls! I'm Jack, very pleased to meet you all.

**Thelma** Everyone calls him Idle Jack, but he not a bad boy really. He just doesn't like getting up in the morning.

**Jack** Now, that's not fair, mother. I was up at the crack of noon today.

**Thelma** Have you made the beds?

**Jack** No.

**Thelma** Have you lit the fires?

**Jack** No.

**Thelma** Have you polished the silver?

**Jack** No.

**Thelma** Well what have you done?

**Jack** Well, after I got out of bed and had a wash, and cleaned my teeth, and got dressed, and had breakfast...

**Thelma** Yes?

**Jack** I felt exhausted...

**Thelma** Oh.

**Jack** So I went back to bed.

**Thelma** Jack, you really are the laziest boy in London!

*Thelma prods Jack off stage with her broom.*

**Jack** Ow! Ow! Ow!

**Thelma** Now, get in that house and get on with your chores right now!

*Thelma and Jack exit. Spotlight downstage. Enter Fairy Jinglebells.*

**Fairy** I am Fairy Jinglebells,  
A kind and caring spirit.  
Soon we'll meet our hero,  
He'll be here at any minute.

He's out to make his fortune,  
But his journey will be fraught,  
Because a happy ever after  
Will be harder than he thought.

*The fairy disappears with a flash and a bang. At the exact same moment, enter Dick Whittington.*

**Dick** Come on cat, keep up! We've arrived! We're *finally* in London! Look, there's Big Ben, and the Millennium Dome, and Tower Bridge.

*Smudge the cat trudges on.*

**Dick** Oh, you poor old cat. You look absolutely exhausted! Well, I suppose we have walked for about a hundred miles. I think you'd better sit down and take the weight off your paws.

*Smudge falls flat on his face with a thud.*

**Dick** Hello everyone! Hiya boys and girls! My name's Dick. You're a very friendly looking bunch I must say. I hope we're going to get on. I tell you what, whenever I come on stage I want to hear you all shout, "Hello Dick!" Shall we try that? Hiya boys and girls!

**Audience** Hello Dick!

*Dick rehearses with audience, ad lib.*

**Dick** That dog-tired cat over there is my faithful old friend Smudge. Say hello Smudge.

*Smudge sits up, waves, and falls back down.*

**Dick** He's a very cordial cat, aren't you Smudge?

*Smudge doesn't move.*

**Dick** Sometimes I almost wish he could speak.

**Smudge** *(Still lying down)* I can speak.

**Dick** Oh Smudge, you *promised* you'd never talk if anyone's about. If people knew you were a talking cat we'd get into all kinds of trouble.

*Smudge springs up. Dick has got his attention.*

**Smudge** Trouble? What kind of trouble?

**Dick** We've talked about this. Cats are not supposed to be able to talk, are they? You'd be famous!

**Smudge** I wouldn't mind being famous. I'd be on the news, and in the newspapers...

**Dick** Yes, and you'd probably have to go on the One Show and meet Gyles Brandreth.

**Smudge** Mmm. I really don't want to meet Gyles Brandreth.

**Dick** Well zip it.

**Smudge** *(Aside)* I'd rather stick a pencil in my eye.

*Alice enters.*

**Dick** *(To cat)* Zip it.

**Alice** Oh, what a lovely old cat. Can I stroke it?

**Dick** You can try.

*Alice tries several times to stroke the cat, but he cleverly avoids her touch.*

**Smudge** Whooooaaa...

**Alice** Oh dear.

**Dick** Smudge doesn't *like* to be touched. He's quite an unusual cat.

**Alice** I'm sure he'd be fine if he got to know me.

**Dick** I wouldn't be too sure.

**Alice** I'm Alice, by the way.

**Dick** Pleased to meet you. I'm Dick. Dick Whittington.

**Alice** I haven't seen you around here before, Dick Whittington.

**Dick** We've only just arrived. We're just a couple of tired and hungry strangers.

**Smudge** Very hungry.

**Dick** Sssshhhh.

**Alice** What was that?

**Dick** Nothing.

**Alice** Did that cat speak?

**Dick** No.

**Alice** I'm sure it did.

**Dick** Like I said, we are just a couple of tired and *very* hungry strangers.

**Alice** Well I'm sure I could find a little something for you to eat.

**Smudge** Bingo.

**Dick** Sssshhhhhh!

**Alice** I'll ask my father.

**Dick** That's very kind of you.

*Alice shouts into the wings.*

**Alice** Father! Father!! Could you come out here a moment, I have something to ask you.

*Fitzwarren and Lady Absinthe enter.*

**Fitzwarren** What is it my darling little girl?

**Alice** Father, this is my new friend Dick Whittington.

**Fitzwarren** Dick? What sort of a name is that?

**Dick** Pleased to meet you, sir.

**Alice** Dick, this is my father Councilor Fitzwarren and my mother Lady Absinthe.

**Fitzwarren** He's a scruffy looking urchin if you ask me.

**Alice** Don't be rude, father. He is a visitor to our fair city.

**Absinthe** And what on earth is *that*?

**Dick** That's my cat.

**Absinthe** Cat? But's it's huge!

**Dick** It's a large breed. A cross between a Burmese, a Siamese and...

**Fitzwarren** (*Turning away*) And an elephant by the size of it.

**Smudge** He's asking for a punch on the nose.

**Dick** Sssshhhhhh!

**Fitzwarren** (*Turning around*) A punch in the nose?

**Dick** A nice bunch of clothes... those are... that you're wearing... sir.

**Alice** Father, they're tired and hungry. I thought we might give them a little something to eat.

**Fitzwarren** Where have you come from, lad?

**Dick** We ran away from a workhouse, sir. We've been on the road for weeks.

**Absinthe** Where are your mother and father, boy?

**Dick** I'm an orphan. My only friend in the world is this old cat.

**Smudge** Ere, not so much of the old.

**Dick** Sssssshhhhhh.

**Absinthe** And, may I ask, what are you doing here in London?

**Dick** I came to London because the streets are paved with gold.

**Fitzwarren** Paved with gold? What idiot said that?

**Dick** Sadiq Khan.

**Fitzwarren** Never heard of him.

**Dick** I *will* make my fortune in London. I'm certain of it!

*Musical intro starts.*

**Fitzwarren** Where's that music coming from?

**Alice** Be quiet, father. Dick is going to sing a song.

*Dick sings about getting rich and fulfilling all his dreams.*

## **Song 2**

**Alice** Father, can you find a job for Dick?

**Dick** I'd really appreciate it, sir.

**Absinthe** What can you do, boy?

**Dick** I can read and write. I'm quite good on a skateboard, and I got to level seven on Super Mario 3.

**Fitzwarren** Mmm, that's a tricky level.

**Alice** *Please* father.

**Fitzwarren** Oh, very well. I need someone to help me plan my next sea voyage. You can start right away.

**Dick** Thank you sir. I won't let you down!

**Smudge** What about me?

**Dick** Sssshhhh.

**Alice** *(To audience)* I'm *sure* I heard that animal speak.

**Dick** Do you have somewhere for my cat to sleep?

**Absinthe** What use is that ridiculously oversized feline to us?

**Dick** He's very good at catching mice.

**Absinthe** Really?

**Dick** And rats.

**Absinthe** Mmm. Just what we need to catch all the rats that keep stealing food from the kitchen. I shall inform the cook.

*Lady Absinthe calls into the wings.*

**Absinthe** Thelma! Come out here at once!

*Thelma enters with Jack.*

**Thelma** You called, M'lady?

**Absinthe** This is my cook, Thelma Pudding.

**Dick** What a delicious name.

**Thelma** Hello!

**Fitzwarren** And her useless lump of a son.

**Jack** Charming.

**Absinthe** Thelma, I want you to look after this cat.

**Jack** Cat? That's not a cat.

**Dick** It *is* a cat.

**Jack** But it's *enormous!* What's its name?

**Dick** Smudge.

**Jack** Fudge?

**Dick** No, Smudge.

**Jack** *(Aside)* Tatty looking thing.

**Smudge** I heard that.

*Smudge goes nose to nose with Jack and grabs his collar.*

**Smudge** Who you calling tatty, mate? I'll give you a slap if you're not careful.

**Jack** I didn't say tatty, I said "natty".

**Smudge** Natty?

**Jack** Natty. Around these parts it means "smart".

**Smudge** Smart?

**Jack** Well turned out. Dapper.

*Smudge pushes Jack away, and points at him*

**Smudge** I'm watching you.

**Dick** Smudge is very good at catching mice.

**Thelma** Can he catch a rat?

**Dick** Smudge can catch a rat blindfolded.

**Thelma** Is the cat blindfolded, or is the rat blindfolded?

**Dick** Either way.

**Thelma** Then we'll take him. We've got some very nasty rats around here.

**Fitzwarren** And we also have a terrible rat problem on my ship. We've got more rats than crew.

**Smudge** (*whispers to Dick*) Uggghhh! I hate ships. I get seasick.

**Dick** Sssshhhhh!

**Thelma** Come on you.

*Thelma leads a reluctant Smudge off stage, followed by Lady Absinthe.*

**Fitzwarren** Right, time to prepare to set sail. I'll call my captain and first mate. Captain Patch! First mate Windy! Where the devil are you?

*Enter Captain Patch and first mate Windy Gale.*

**Windy** Reporting for duty, sir!

**Patch** Sorry we're late, we've been scraping barnacles.

**Windy** Nothing worse than barnacles on the bottom. What are your orders, sir?

**Fitzwarren** I need you to start loading the ship. You can take Jack with you.

**Patch** Right you are, sir. (*To Jack*) Get over here boy.

**Jack** (*Reluctant*) Coming.

**Fitzwarren** We need to load the cargo on this list. Dick, read this.

*Dick reads the list quietly to himself.*

**Fitzwarren** Read it out loud!

**Dick** (*Reads*) A hundredweight of skate,  
A quart of ruby port,  
Twenty gallons of Scottish salmon,  
and two tons of ox tails from Wales.

**Patch** Righto, I'll shall go and fetch....

**Fitzwarren** He hasn't finished yet.

**Dick** (*Reads*) Thirty eight pails of quails,  
A cubic yard of lard,  
A ream of shaving cream,  
A sheaf of gold leaf,  
and a hundred yards of ale.

**Windy** Is that the lot?

**Fitzwarren** Repeat it back to us.

**Jack** Er... A hundredweight of skate,  
A quart of ruby port,  
Twenty gallons of Scottish salmon,  
Two tons of ox tails from Wales.

**Fitzwarren** And the rest, and the rest.

**Windy** Thirty eight pails of quails,  
A cubic yard of lard,  
A ream of shaving cream,  
A sheaf of gold leaf.

**Jack** And a hundred yards of ale.

**Dick** Correct.

**Jack** That's my favourite bit.

**Patch** Right, let's go before we forget...

*Patch, Windy and Jack exit.*

**Fitzwarren** So, master Dick Whittington, are you ready for some hard work?

**Dick** Ready as I'll ever be.

**Fitzwarren** Then follow me...

*Fitzwarren exits leaving Dick and Alice on stage,*

**Dick** Thank you so much for helping me, Alice.

**Alice** Don't mention it.

**Dick** I didn't know what I was going to do. I thought we'd starve. What can I ever do to repay you?

**Alice** You don't have to do anything. I like you, and I could do with a friend right now.

**Dick** But you must have everything you need. Your father is a very rich man!

**Alice** Councilor Fitzwarren is not my father. I'm an orphan as well.

**Dick** Then we have something in common.

**Alice** But my step mother treats me like a servant. At least now I've got someone who understands how I feel.

**Dick** Come on, we'd better follow the others before we're missed!

*They run off together. Curtain.*

## Scene Two

*On tabs. Enter Fairy Jinglebells.*

**Fairy** Dick Whittington has found his love,  
But he doesn't know it yet,  
And now poor Dick must undergo  
Much danger, doubt and threat.

A fearful sea voyage lies ahead,  
Where our hero will be tested,  
The preparations are under way,  
But the harbour is infested.

*Exit Fairy. Enter Patch, Windy and Jack downstage, struggling under the weight of various boxes, sacks and crates. They put them down on the stage.*

**Patch** Blow me down, this cargo weighs a ton.

**Jack** What we need is a fork lift truck and some wooden pallets.

**Patch** Jack, fork lift trucks haven't been invented yet.

**Jack** Well, then let's sit here and wait until they are invented.

*King Rat and two other rats creep across the stage behind them.*

**Patch** What's that funny scratching noise?

**Windy** I can't hear anything.

**Jack** Can you see where that scratching noise is coming from, boys and girls?

**Audience** Behind you!

**Jack** What's that? Behind us?

*Jack spins around. The rats are gone.*

**Jack** Well, I can't see anything behind us?

*King Rat and the other rats creep across the stage again.*

**Audience** Behind you!

**Patch** What's that? What's behind us?

**Windy** I can't see anything.

*Ad lib until they all turn around together and spy the rats, who quickly surround them in a menacing fashion.*

**King Rat** Good day to you, Captain Patch.

*Patch, Windy and Jack grab each other in fear. The rats sniff at the boxes and crates.*

**King Rat** I smell fish.

**1st Rat** And meat.

**2nd Rat** And ruby port.

**Patch** Get away from here! That cargo's not for you!

**Windy** It's cargo for our sea voyage.

**King Rat** A voyage? How exciting. Tell you what, why don't you let *us* do the heavy lifting for you.

**1st Rat** Save your poor, sore backs.

**2nd Rat** Put your feet up for a while.

**Jack** That sounds like a great idea.

**Patch** No! Our boss will skin us alive if we lose his cargo.

**King Rat** And we'll skin you if you try and stop us.

**Jack** Uggghhh. I don't want to be skinned. I like my skin.

**King Rat** Then get out of my sight!

*Patch, Windy and Jack run off.*

**King Rat** That's right, scuttle away like the cowardly chickens that you are.

*The rats all cluck around like chickens.*

**King Rat** *(To audience)* Aha ha ha! I do so like to be nasty.

**1st Rat** There's no point booing, boys and girls.

**2nd Rat** If you boo King Rat...

**1st Rat** Or hiss at him...

**2nd Rat** It only makes him nastier!

### Song 3

*King Rat sings a song about being bad. The other rats sing backing. At the end of the song...*

**King Rat** *(To audience)* Aha ha ha! I am such a dirty, vile, noxious, loathsome rat. And you will never, ever catch me.

**1st Rat** Or me!

**2nd Rat** Or me!

*The rats cluster around one of the boxes upstage and peer greedily inside. Dick and Smudge creep on, downstage.*

**Dick** *(Whisper)* Do you think you can take 'em Smudge?

**Smudge** But there's *three* of them.

**Dick** Smudge, listen to me. Don't over think it. Just stick out your claws, say meow, and let nature take its course.

**Smudge** OK. Wish me luck.

**All** (*Saluting*) Good luck, Smudge.

*Smudge screams a terrifying meow and runs headlong at the rats.*

**King Rat** Aaahhhh! It's a cat!

**1st Rat** Where did he come from?

**Smudge** Meow! Meow!!!

**King Rat** Run for it, boys! Run for it!

**1st Rat** I'm scared!

**Smudge** Meow! MEOW!!!

**2nd Rat** I'm too young to die!

**1st Rat** I don't have life insurance!

*The rats scatter and run off in different directions.*

**Smudge** Job done.

*King Rat pokes his head out from the wings and whispers to the audience.*

**King Rat** Don't worry, boys and girls, you haven't seen the last of us. We will wait until after dark, and ambush them on the way to their ship. Au revoir.

*He exits. Dick tries to put his arm around the cat.*

**Dick** Well done Smudge. Let me give you a manly hug...

**Smudge** (*slipping away from him*) Whoops! No need for that.

**Dick** (*To audience*) He really does hate to be touched. Right, let's get this cargo to the ship.

**Smudge** What, *carry* it?

**Dick** Yes.

**Smudge** Using our arms?

**Dick** Yes.

**Smudge** Sorry, I've got a bad back.

*Dick sighs, picks up a box and exits.*

### Scene 3

*Tabs open on the town square. Enter Alice and Lady Absinthe.*

**Absinthe** Then when you've finished doing the laundry, I need you to paint the ceiling in the dining room and trim the hedges in the formal garden.

**Alice** But I'm exhausted! I still haven't finished polishing the floor in the kitchen. Can't I have the afternoon off?

**Absinthe** You had an afternoon off in June.

**Alice** But it's December!

**Absinthe** My mistake. You're not due any more time off until February.

**Alice** February next year?

**Absinthe** The year after.

*Enter Fitzwarren, and Thelma Pudding.*

**Fitzwarren** Good morning wife, good morning my precious little angel.

**Alice** Good morning, father.

**Fitzwarren** I say, my dear, you look a little tired. Why don't you go and have a nap?

**Alice** *(To Lady Absinthe)* Yes, why *don't* I go and have a nap?

**Absinthe** Er... what an excellent idea, Alice. We all need our beauty sleep.

**Thelma** Some more than others.

*Alice exits. Patch, Windy and Jack enter, looking rather guilty.*

**Fitzwarren** Ah, Captain Patch, have you finished loading my cargo onto the ship.

**Patch** Well, if by "finished loading" you mean is the cargo on the vessel, I'd have to say no.

**Fitzwarren** No?

**Windy** Truth is, Councilor Fitzwarren, we got... mugged.

**Thelma** Mugged? Oh, you poor boys.

**Patch** They took everything.

**Fitzwarren** What, the hundredweight of skate?

**Patch** Yes.

**Absinthe** The quart of ruby port?

**Windy** Yup.

**Fitzwarren** The twenty gallon of Scottish salmon?

**Patch** All of it.

**Fitzwarren** The two ton of ox tails from Wales?

**Windy** Plus, the thirty eight pail of quail, the cubic yard of lard, and the ream of shaving cream.

**Jack** *(To audience)* We don't even know what a "ream" is, but they took it all the same.

**Absinthe** Who were these dastardly highwaymen? We shall have their necks in a rope!

**Patch** They weren't highwaymen.

**Absinthe** Then, what were they?

**Windy** Rats.

**Thelma** Rats?

**Jack** Yes, mother. Rats. They ambushed us on a dark road.

**Thelma** How could rats carry off all that lot? How many of them were there?

**Jack** Thousands!

**Fitzwarren** Thousands?

**Jack** Well... quite a lot.

**Windy** And it was dark

**Absinthe** How many rats?

**Jack** Three.

**Fitzwarren** Three???

**Jack** But they were very big rats.

**Patch** Massive.

**Fitzwarren** Oh, for heaven's sake, first we get massive cats, and now massive rats! What's going on in this city?

**Absinthe** Well, we can't go to sea with no cargo!

*Dick and Smudge enter.*

**Dick** *(Slapping his thigh)* Hello boys and girls!

**Audience** Hello Dick!

**Dick** Don't worry Councilor Fitzwarren, we rescued everything from those troublesome creatures.

**Fitzwarren** Everything? But how?

**Dick** Smudge and I went after them. We followed them for hours through the night, and when we finally caught up with them, Smudge frightened them off again. They won't be troubling us any more.

**Fitzwarren** Well I must say I am impressed.

*Fitzwarren goes nose to nose with the cat, and speaks slowly.*

**Fitzwarren** It seems... I owe you... a vote of thanks.

**Dick** Don't touch him.

**Fitzwarren** This enormous and slightly disagreeable feline has more than repaid my confidence.

**Dick** Absolutely.

**Fitzwarren** I shall reward him generously. *(To the cook)* Mrs Pudding...

**Thelma** Sir?

**Fitzwarren** I think you know what to do.

*Mrs Pudding pulls a large fish out of her bloomers, marches across the stage, and hands it to Fitzwarren. He presents it to the cat, with a bow.*

**Fitzwarren** Smudge, please accept this as a token of my esteem.

*Smudge glares at Fitzwarren. After an awkward silence, he grabs hold of Dick and walks him angrily downstage.*

**Smudge** *(Loud whisper)* Seriously? One fish?

**Dick** Just take the fish.

**Smudge** I rescued his cargo.

**Dick** Just take the fish.

**Smudge** It was worth thousands.

**Dick** Yes.

**Smudge** I *totally* saved the day.

**Dick** Take the fish.

*Smudge strides back to Fitzwarren, snatches the fish angrily, and walks off in a huff.*

**Fitzwarren** Now we can get ready to set sail on our voyage to the distant Island of Utoovia.

**Dick** Utoovia? What's on the Island of Utoovia?

**Fitzwarren** A very rich king indeed. Have you never heard of King Bono of Utoovia?

**Dick** I can't say I have.

**Fitzwarren** Our plan is to establish trade with King Bono and make both he and I even richer.

**Dick** Even richer?

**Fitzwarren** Even *richer!*

**Dick** *(To audience)* You have to say, nothing drives a panto plot forward like capitalism.

*Everyone exits. Curtain.*

#### Scene 4

*On tabs. A dark alleyway. Shadowy spot downstage. Enter Lady Absinthe.*

**Absinthe** Time for a little evil plotting, I think. That colossal cat could be worth a lot of money with its talent for dealing with pesky rats. What I need is to find some dim, dark, rat infested place and then

rent out that cat to dispose of them. Or, dare I say it, I could hire my *own* army of rats to infest a whole city, then send in the cat as... The Terminator. Ooh, I'm excited! I'll make loads and loads of lovely money and then leave that idiot husband of mine and marry a handsome, hunky pop star like... Peter Andre.

#### Song 4

*Lady Absinthe sings a song about becoming wealthy.*

**Absinthe** Now, who would be willing to pay a fortune to get rid of a few rats? I've got it! King Bono of Utoovia must have plenty of money to spend on pest control. I'll work my little scam on him. But first, I need to find some rats to help me.

*Creepy music as scuttling rats begin to appear on stage and in the auditorium.*

**Absinthe** And who better to ask than that ugly, nasty, evil, villainous creature... King Rat.

*Loud, discordant note.*

**King Rat** Did somebody call? Aha ha ha ha ha! Oh, stop booing me, or I'll come out there and steal all your sweets!

**Absinthe** King Rat, how good of you to stop by.

**King Rat** It's my pleasure Lady Absinthe. Oh, and thank you so much for tipping us off about the loading of that ship's cargo.

**Absinthe** Don't mention it. Oh, and sorry about the cat. He wasn't part of the plan.

**King Rat** Euuuggggh! Cats. I hate cats.

**Absinthe** Never mind that. I have a job for you, for which you will be richly rewarded.

**King Rat** I'm listening...

*Absinthe whispers in the ear of King Rat.*

**King Rat** But that's a vile, wicked, corrupt and loathsome scheme.

**Absinthe** Are you in?

**King Rat** Do chickens have lips?

**Absinthe** What?

**King Rat** Yes, of course I'm in. When do we start?

**Absinthe** Right away!

**King Rat** Excellent.

**Absinthe** Or at least, as soon as I've finished watching *The One Show*.

*All exit.*

#### Scene 5

*Tabs open to reveal Thelma's kitchen. Thelma Pudding, Jack and Smudge are on stage.*

**Jack** So, mother, it's time to make tea for Councilor Fitzwarren and his family.

**Thelma** Yes. And I need you and Smudge to help me.

**Jack** Right.

**Thelma** But before we start, I have to ask the boys and girls a question.

**Jack** What?

**Thelma** Boys and girls, can the cat *really* talk?

**Audience** Yes!

*Smudge looks at Jack, who puts his finger on his lips.*

**Thelma** *(To audience)* What's that? I can't hear you.

**Audience** Yes!

**Smudge** Oh, alright, I admit it. I *can* talk.

**Thelma** I *knew* it! But can you sing?

**Smudge** Sing?

**Thelma** There's only one way to find out.

### Song 5

*Thelma, Smudge and Jack sing a song about how lovely it would be to be in showbiz. At the end of the song, Thelma grabs two aprons.*

**Thelma** Right, time to make a cake. *(To Dick and Smudge)* Put these on.

**Smudge** Uh oh, I don't like the sound of this.

**Thelma** In honour of our new house guest Mister Dick Whittington, we're going to make that great British classic "Spotted Dick".

**Jack** Spotted Dick?

**Thelma** Spotted Dick. It's delicious and nutritious. Now, pass me that big mixing bowl over there.

*Smudge goes and gets a mixing bowl. Thelma wheels on a trolley, loaded with oversized boxes and tins of ingredients.*

**Thelma** This is my very own secret recipe.

**Smudge** What's the secret?

**Thelma** I nicked it from Prue Leith.

**Smudge** Sneaky.

**Thelma** Jack, you get the flour, Smudge, you get the baking powder.

**Both** Got it.

**Thelma** Now, when I say "go" sprinkle the ingredients.

**Jack** Gotcha.

**Thelma** Ready, steady, go.

*Smudge and Jack sprinkle the flour and baking powder all over Thelma's head.*

**Thelma** Aaagghhh! What are you doing?

**Jack** You said "go".

**Thelma** Not over me! In the bowl!

**Smudge** You didn't say that!

**Thelma** *(To audience)* I never had this trouble on Masterchef.

*They sprinkle what's left of the flour and baking powder into the bowl.*

**Thelma** Now, we need to put in the other ingredients.

*Smudge goes to the ingredients trolley. Jack stands half way between the trolley and Thelma.*

**Thelma** Sugar!

*Smudge throws a packet of sugar to Jack.*

**Smudge** Sugar!

*Jack throws it to Thelma.*

**Jack** Sugar!

*Thelma chucks it into the bowl with a thud.*

**Thelma** Currants!

*Smudge throws a packet of currants to Jack.*

**Smudge** Currants!

*Jack throws it to Thelma.*

**Jack** Currants!

*Thelma empties currants into the bowl.*

**Thelma** Lemons!

*Smudge throws a lemon to Jack.*

**Smudge** Lemon!

*Jack throws it to Thelma...*

**Jack** Lemon!

*Thelma chucks the lemon into the bowl. Smudge throws another lemon to Jack...*

**Smudge** Lemon!

*Jack throws it to Thelma.*

**Jack** Lemon!

*Thelma chucks the lemon into the bowl. Smudge throws a third lemon to Jack..*

**Smudge** Lemon!

*Jack throws it to Thelma.*

**Jack** Lemon!

*Thelma chucks the lemon into the bowl.*

**Thelma** No more lemons!

*Smudge throws a fourth lemon to Jack.*

**Smudge** Lemon!

*Jack throws it to Thelma...*

**Dick** Lemon!

*Ad lib they throw several more lemon towards Thelma.*

**Thelma** STOP!

*There is silence.*

**Jack** What's the next thing in the recipe?

**Thelma** I know what it is, but I am reluctant to tell you.

**Smudge** What?

**Thelma** The next thing in the recipe is custard.

**Smudge & Jack** Custard?

**Thelma** Custard.

**Smudge** *(To audience)* Shall we give Thelma some custard, boys and girls?

**Audience** Yes!

**Jack** Are you sure?

**Audience** Yes!

*Smudge and Jack both grab containers of custard from the trolley and hold them over Thelma's head.*

**Thelma** Hold on...

**Jack** What?

**Thelma** Let me just put this on.

*Thelma puts on a big waterproof hat.*

**Smudge** Ready?

**Thelma** Yup.

**Smudge & Dick** Custard!

*Smudge & Jack pour custard over Thelma then run off stage.*

**Thelma** You horrible pair! You wait until I catch you...

*Curtain.*

## Scene 6

*On tabs. Enter Fairy Jinglebells.*

**Fairy** So now our tale continues  
At the dawn of another day.  
Jeopardy is in the air,  
(But at least the custard's out of the way.)

We've set out on our journey,  
And we've met the vile King Rat.  
It's going well for Whittington  
But there's a surprise in store for his cat.

*Exit fairy. On tabs a dimly lit street. Enter Dick and Smudge.*

**Dick** I hear you weren't much help in the kitchen, Smudge.

**Smudge** Not really.

**Dick** No wonder you didn't get on *Great British Bake Off*. And I should never have entered you for *One Man and His Dog*.

**Smudge** Schoolboy error. I'm not a dog, you see. The clue was in the title of the show.

**Dick** I suppose I could try entering you for *Countdown*.

**Smudge** I can't do sums.

**Dick** *Strictly Come Dancing*?

**Smudge** Can't dance.

**Dick** *Mastermind*?

**Smudge** I'm not allowed on chairs.

**Dick** *Wheel of Fortune*?

**Smudge** The wheel would make me dizzy.

**Dick** Ok, forget it. Come on, we need to help Fitzwarren get ready for the voyage to Utopia.

*Dick heads off stage.*

**Smudge** I'll catch you up. I'm just going to stop off and pick up some milk from Lidl.

*Smudge heads in the other direction. Enter Lady Absinthe.*

**Absinthe** Well, well, well, if it isn't the world's cleverest and yet somehow most annoying cat. I was hoping I would bump into you.

*Smudge tries to keep walking but Lady Absinthe grabs him roughly.*

**Absinthe** Not so fast, furball. I have a proposition for you, so listen carefully.

**Smudge** A proposition?

**Absinthe** A proposition. *(Beat)* You can talk?

**Smudge** Yes, I can talk. But we've already covered that at some length. What's the proposition?

**Absinthe** I have chartered a little ship of my own to sail to the Isle of Utoovia.

**Smudge** What for?

**Absinthe** So I can arrive before my husband does.

**Smudge** Why?

**Absinthe** Stop asking questions. Let me explain. The only cargo on the ship will be... *rats*.

**Smudge** Rats?

**Absinthe** Thousands of rats. And when we get to The Island of Utoovia we'll let the rats ashore.

**Smudge** But that will cause chaos.

**Absinthe** Precisely. Then you will show up and chase the rats away.

**Smudge** Oh?

**Absinthe** King Bono of Utoovia will richly reward us and we will split the bounty three ways.

**Smudge** *Three* ways? Who gets the other third?

**Absinthe** King Rat.

**Smudge** The rats are in on it?

**Absinthe** Yes.

**Smudge** Cunning.

**Absinthe** What do you think?

**Smudge** Well, I have to say it's a very well thought out plan.

**Absinthe** Thank you.

**Smudge** There's only one snag.

**Absinthe** What's that?

**Smudge** I'm not doing it.

**Absinthe** Oh, yes you are.

**Smudge** Oh, no I'm not!

**Absinthe** Oh, yes you are.

**Smudge** Oh, no I'm not!

**Absinthe** Oh, yes you are.

**Smudge** Oh, no I'm not!

*Ad lib with the audience a few times. Then Smudge tries to run for it again.*

**Absinthe** Get him!

*A gang of rats appear and furiously chase the cat around and around the stage. Finally they catch him and throw a big net over him.*

**Absinthe** My furry friend, I regret to inform you that you have no choice. You're joining me on this trip whether you like it or not. Now, let's get down to the harbour and prepare to set sail.

### **Song 6**

*Smudge is dragged off stage. Absinthe and the rats sing a rousing song about setting off on a long journey. Curtain.*

## **ACT II**

### **Scene One**

*Tablès open on the town square. Morning.*

### **Song 7**

*The townspeople sing a bright song about the start of a new day. At the end of the routine, Alice urgently runs on stage with a group of cats.*

**Alice** Father! Dick! Everyone, come quickly!

*Dick, Fitzwarren, Thelma, Jack, Captain Patch and Windy enter.*

**Fitzwarren** Alice? What on earth is going on?

**Jack** Where did all these cats come from?

**Alice** They woke me up this morning. They're trying to tell us something, father.

**Dick** Stand aside! I'll tell you what they're trying to say.

**Patch** But how?

**Dick** I speak fluent cat.

**Thelma** Fluent cat?

**Dick** Fluent cat. Twenty six dialects to be precise, including a smattering of Siamese.

*One of the cats runs towards Dick and whispers in his ear.*

**Dick** The cat says Lady Absinthe has done a secret deal with the evil King Rat.

**All** Oh no! Not King Rat!

**Dick** He says she's already set sail with the rats, and they plan to trick King Bono of Utoovia into giving them money.

**All** But how?

**Dick** He says they've kidnapped Smudge, and they're going to force him to pretend to chase the rats away!

**All** But that's terrible!

**Dick** Yes!

**Jack** Just to check, is everyone following this?

**All** Yes! We think so.

**Dick** We have to rescue Smudge right away!

**Fitzwarren** Don't worry, lad. We'll help you get your cat back safely.

**Patch** We'll set sail on the Good Ship Endeavour as soon as the tide turns.

**Windy** I'll go and weigh the anchor.

*Windy runs off then runs straight back on.*

**Jack** How much does it weigh?

**Windy** About twenty tons.

**Thelma** Enough of this banter. Let's go and rescue that cat!

*Exit everyone except Dick.*

**Dick** I'm beginning to think it was a bad idea to come to the big city. There's no gold. Just a load of scruffy pigeons and about a thousand branches of Starbucks. And now I've lost the best friend I ever had.

*Dick walks downstage purposefully.*

**Dick** There's nothing for me here. Good bye London Town, hello brand new start.

*Dick exits. Alice enters immediately afterwards.*

**Alice** Dick? Where are you Dick? I waited for you at the harbour but you didn't come. Have you seen Dick, boys and girls?

*Alice ad lib according to audience reaction.*

**Alice** Gone? He *can't* be gone. He wouldn't walk out on us, would he? He wouldn't leave me. He *couldn't* leave me. Could he?

### Song 8

*Alice sings a sad love song. At the end of the song she walks downstage and talks to the audience.*

**Alice** I know what I have to do. I'll go after Dick and persuade him to turn back. Will you help me, boys and girls? Will you? Then come on, let's go.

*Alice runs off. Curtain.*

## Scene Two

*On tabs. Lights up on a large stone milestone in the centre of the stage which reads:*

“HIGHGATE HILL  
5 MILES TO LONDON”

*Enter Dick with all his belongings tied into a little bundle and hung on the end of a stick, which he carries slung over his shoulder.*

**Dick** (*Sadly*) Oh dear, I really thought I'd found a home in the big city. I can't believe that horrible woman only wanted to trick us. I'll *never* go back to that rotten, old place.

*Dick turns to look at the city. Alice enters but Dick doesn't see her at first.*

**Dick** Before I leave forever, I will turn around one last time and look at London.

**Alice** Dick?

**Dick** Alice? How did you know where I'd be?

**Alice** I guessed you'd be on the main road out of town.

**Dick** Yes, of course. Where else but the A1? The North Circular would be jammed with traffic at this time of day.

**Alice** I've come to talk some sense into you.

**Dick** Well, I'm afraid you're too late.

**Alice** But you can't just disappear like that without a word to your friends.

**Dick** I've made up my mind.

**Alice** You've walked away from Smudge, you've walked away from father, who took you in and gave you a job, but worst of all... you've walked away from me.

**Dick** I'm sorry.

**Alice** (*Sternly*) Sorry is not good enough, Dick! You've got responsibilities. You've got a job to do. Pick up your things and come back to London with me right NOW!

*We hear the distant sound of chiming.*

**Alice** Can you hear that?

**Dick** Yes. That's the sound of Bow Bells. All Londoners know that.

**Alice** Do you know what they're saying?

**Dick** (*Smiling*) No. I can understand cats, but I'm afraid I don't know what church bells are saying.

*A heavenly choir can suddenly be heard.*

**Alice** Then I'll tell you what they're saying. They're saying this:

“Turn again, Dick Whittington, it's time to make amends,  
Turn again, Dick Whittington, your place is with your friends.”

*The bells and the choir stop. Silence for a few seconds.*

**Dick** Alice... you're right.

**Alice** Hallelujah!

**Dick** I don't know what I was thinking. I can't abandon Smudge, and I can't abandon you. Thanks for coming after me, and thanks for being there for me.

**Alice** You're very welcome, I'm sure.

**Dick** I'll never let you down again, Alice. Now, let's go and sort everything out together.

**Alice** Together.

### Song 9

*Dick and Alice sing a duet about friendship and being together. At the end of the song Alice takes Dick's hand.*

**Alice** Come on, there's no time to lose. The ship's about to set sail...

*They run off together, hand in hand.*

### Scene 3

*Tabs open to reveal the deck of the Good Ship Endeavour. The sound of seagulls. On stage are Fitzwarren, Alice, Thelma, Jack, Captain Patch, Windy and crew members. They are all busying themselves sailing the ship. Enter Dick.*

**Dick** So, here we are, sailing the Seven Seas in search of adventure!

**Alice** It's so exciting!

**Dick** *(To Captain Patch)* How many of the seven seas have you sailed, Captain?

**Patch** Oh, I dunno. About four of 'em.

**Dick** How many have you sailed, Windy?

**Windy** Well, master Dick since you ask, I have sailed *all seven* of the seven seas.

**Dick** Bravo!

**Windy** I've also sailed sea number *eight*.

**Dick** Sea number eight? But there are only *seven* seas.

**Windy** Not true. There's a little known sea... in Chiswick.

**Dick** Chiswick?

**Windy** Most people don't notice it. It's behind a big hill.

**Dick** Is that true?

**Windy** Yep. It was discovered by Christopher Columbus.

**Dick** What was Christopher Columbus doing in Chiswick?

**Windy** Picking up a takeaway.

**Dick** What?

**Patch** Take no notice of him, Master Dick. I reckon he's pulling your leg.

**Fitzwarren** Keep an eye out for land, boys! We should be seeing the Island of Utoovia very soon.

**Windy** I'm not so sure. By my reckoning I'd say we were miles off course.

**Thelma** *(To Jack)* It feels to me like we're going round in circles, Jack. Round and round and round and round...

**Jack** No wonder I feel so seasick. I've said cheerio to my breakfast about three times now.

**Alice** *(Pointing)* Look everyone, a ship! I can see a ship!

**Patch** *(Calling out)* Ship ahoy!

**Windy** Let me see. *(Looking through a telescope)* It is a ship right enough, and she's catching up to us fast, Captain!

**Fitzwarren** *(To Windy)* What flag is she flying?

*Patch grabs the telescope from Windy.*

**Patch** It's a black flag, with the face of a bald man on it.

**Jack** Is it Tom Allen?

**Patch** No.

**Jack** It is Claude off the Apprentice?

**Patch** No.

**Jack** Kojak?

**Thelma** One for the grandparents, there.

**Fitzwarren** What's the bald man on the flag doing?

**Patch** Not much. He's got his arms folded.

**Fitzwarren** Are you sure?

**Patch** No, wait. It's not a bald man with his arms folded. It's a skull with a couple of bones underneath it.

**Fitzwarren** The skull and cross bones?

**Dick** Oh no, it's a pirate ship! She's flying the Jolly Roger.

**Windy** *(Looking through telescope)* Well the crew don't look very jolly to me.

**Dick** Where are our weapons?

**Patch** Well, you loaded the ship. Where did you put them?

**Dick** Uh, oh.

**Alice** Look out! The pirates are boarding the ship!

*A scruffy looking bunch of pirates suddenly appear, led by Beardy Pete.*

**Pete** Ah ha ha! Throw down your weapons and prepare to surrender!

**Dick** We haven't got any weapons.

**Pete** What, no swords?

**Dick** No.

**Pete** No pistols?

**Dick** No.

**Pete** No rifles?

**Dick** No.

**Pete** No cannons

**Dick** We've got one cannon.

**Pete** Oh?

**Dick** But there's a seagull nesting in the barrel.

**Pete** Ah!

**Fitzwarren** We are unarmed, sir!

**Pete** Then, this is going to be easier than we thought.

**Alice** Who are you?

**Pete** I am Beardy Pete, and this is my villainous pirate crew.

**Crew** Arrrrrr! Arrrrrrrr!

**Pete** Silence you scurvy dogs.

**Thelma** Why do they call you Beardy Pete?

*Pete goes nose to nose with Thelma*

**Pete** They call me Beardy Pete, on account of my long, greasy, grimy, grubby, grungy, scuzzy beard.

**Thelma** Mm. It is a *bit* unhygienic...

*Thelma pulls Beardy Pete towards her by his beard.*

**Pete** Ow!

**Thelma** But I *like* it.

**Pete** Why thank you, madam.

**Thelma** (*Aside to audience*) When I did that last night it came off in my hand.

**Pete** Your name, madam?

**Thelma** Thelma Pudding at your service. Ship's cook.

**Pete** Ah ha! I like the cut of your jib, Thelma. We need a ship's cook.

**Thelma** How much do you pay?

**Pete** Pay? Aha ha ha ha! We don't pay. You will work as a skivvy.

**Thelma** A skivvy?

**Jack** It's called a zero hours contract, mother.

*The pirates grab Thelma.*

**Dick** Unhand that woman!

**Pete** Seize him!

*The pirates grab hold of Dick.*

**Pete** You are *all* our prisoners now! We'll take you all on as skivvies, and when we get to the island kingdom of King Bono of Utoovia, we'll sell you.

**Dick** We will never be your prisoners, Beardy Pete! We would rather die.

**Thelma** Speak for yourself, dear.

### **Song 10**

*Pete and the pirates sing a song about being bad. At the end of the routine, Fitzwarren and Beardy Pete meet downstage.*

**Fitzwarren** Bravo! Bravo! I have to say you pirate chappies really are very good singers

**Pete** Thank you kindly, sir.

**Fitzwarren** I hope you don't mind, but I have a proposition for you.

**Pete** A proposition?

**Fitzwarren** What if I was to tell you that you could make a lot more money by *not* selling us into slavery?

**Pete** (*Drawing his cutlass*) What if I was to make you walk the plank?

**Fitzwarren** Hear me out. We have a plan.

**Pete** A plan?

**Fitzwarren** A plan to earn money from King Bono of Utoovia.

**Pete** Money? But how?

**Fitzwarren** We plan to trade goods.

**Pete** Trade? But that is a decent, honest way of doing business.

**Fitzwarren** Yes.

**Pete** It isn't sneaky?

**Fitzwarren** No.

**Pete** Or dishonest?

**Fitzwarren** No.

**Pete** Or corrupt?

**Fitzwarren** No.

**Pete** But what's the point of that?

**Fitzwarren** If you and your scurvy crew help us, we will split our earnings with you half and half.

**Pete** Which half do we get?

**Fitzwarren** The second half.

**Pete** Are the two halves the same size?

**Fitzwarren** Near as dammit.

**Pete** What do we have to do?

**Fitzwarren** Just help us to navigate to the Island of Utoovia.

**Pete** Well, that's easy.

**Fitzwarren** Why?

**Pete** (*Pointing*) It's just over there.

*Pirate music sting. Curtain.*

#### Scene 4

*On tabs. Below decks on the ship. Thelma, Idle Jack and some pirates enter.*

**Thelma & Jack** (*To the audience*) Hello everyone!

**Thelma** Before we anchor on the Island of Utoovia, Jack and I thought you might like to sing a little song with us. Would you like that, boys and girls?

**Audience** Yes!

**Thelma** Jack, go and get the words.

**Jack** I've got a better idea.

**Thelma** What?

**Jack** I'll go and get the words.

*Jack runs off and enters again with a big board with some song lyrics written on it. It's upside-down.*

**Thelma** No Jack, you've got it the wrong way around.

**Jack** Sorry, mother.

*Jack turns the board so that the words are facing away from the audience.*

**Jack** How's that?

**Thelma** No, turn it around.

**Jack** I have turned it around.

**Thelma** No, the other way.

*He turns it to face the audience, but it's still upside-down.*

**Jack** Like this?

**Thelma** No! You need to put the top at the bottom and the bottom at the top.

**Jack** The top at the bottom...

*He rotates it the correct way around.*

**Thelma** Yes!

**Jack** And the bottom at the top.

*He turns it once more, leaving it upside-down again.*

**Thelma** No! Rotate!

**Jack** Rotate?

*Jack rotates himself on the spot.*

**Jack** What, like this?

**Thelma** Not you, the board.

**Jack** Rotate?

*Jack flips the board around a vertical axis, showing alternately blank and upside-down faces.*

**Thelma** Stop! Stop!

*Jack stops with the upside-down words facing the audience.*

**Thelma** Now, listen very carefully. Turn the board around.

**Jack** Turn the board around.

*He flips it around a horizontal axis showing alternately blank and upside-down faces.*

**Thelma** Oh, for heaven's sake, let me do it. *(As Jack holds it, Thelma rotates it the right way up)* Turn the board around.

**Jack** *(Repeating what she said and rotating it upside-down again)* Turn the board around.

**Thelma** Oh, give it to me.

*Thelma snatches the board and shows the words to the audience.*

## Song 11

*Jack and Thelma teach the boys and girls a well known audience participation song.*

### Scene 5

*At the end of the song, Jack and Thelma exit. Enter Fairy Jinglebells on tabs.*

**Fairy** And now we turn our focus  
To that spiteful Absinthe witch.  
She plans to fool King Bono,  
And make herself very rich.

But the lady hasn't reckoned  
On a feline with a grudge,  
The key to this adventure  
Is a creature known as Smudge.

*Exit fairy. Tabs open to reveal the magnificent court of King Bono of Utoovia. On stage is King Bono, wearing a huge, flowing, floor-length robe and seated on a throne.*

**Courtier** Pray silence for King Bono of Utoovia.

**Bono** I hear we have some visitors.

**Courtier** Yes, sire. They have traveled from a distant land.

**Bono** Mm, I hate tourists. I suppose you'd better show them in.

*Courtiers bring in Absinthe and Smudge the cat, who is tied up.*

**Absinthe** It is a great honour to meet your majesty.

**Bono** Yes, I know.

**Absinthe** We have journeyed from the distant city of London.

**Bono** Ah, London. How are Tottenham Hotsur doing these days?

**Absinthe** Your majesty?

**Bono** I hear they made a couple of new signings in the summer.

**Absinthe** We are not here to talk about football, your majesty.

**Bono** Have you brought me any gifts?

**Absinthe** Gifts?

**Bono** Gold? Silver? How about some nice Diamonique jewelry from QVC?

**Absinthe** I have brought you the most valuable gift of all.

**Bono** Oh, goody.

**Absinthe** I have brought you... this cat.

**Bono** Is that all? You've just brought me this enormous, mangy old cat.

**Smudge** (*To audience*) Mangy? I'm not mangy. I have a beautiful coat.

**Absinthe** Your majesty, this is no ordinary cat. This cat has a very special talent.

**Bono** Can it juggle?

**Absinthe** No.

**Bono** Does it perform close-up magic?

**Absinthe** Not as far as I am aware.

**Bono** Then what can it do?

**Absinthe** Your majesty, this cat can rid your kingdom... of rats.

**Bono** Rats? We don't have any rats.

**Absinthe** I fear you are mistaken, sire.

**Bono** There is no vermin in this kingdom.

**Absinthe** Then what, may I ask, is that!?

*King Rat peeps out from under the robe of King Bono.*

**King Rat** Good evening.

**Bono** Aaaaaahhhhh!

*King Rat scurries out from beneath the robe and the stage is suddenly crawling with his henchmen.*

**Absinthe** Your court is swarming with rats!

**Bono** (*Standing on his throne*) Ah! Rats! Rats!!

**King Rat** (*Bowing*) It's a pleasure to meet you, your majesty. My fellow creatures love your kingdom,

**1st Rat** It's a delightful kingdom.

**2nd Rat** A very comfortable kingdom.

**1st Rat** Such a *convenient* kingdom.

**King Rat** So, we have decided to stay.

**Bono** But I don't want you to stay. You're not welcome here!

**King Rat** Not welcome? But we've *already* taken advantage of your hospitality.

**1st Rat** We've eaten all the food in the cupboards...

**2nd Rat** (*Tipsy*) And drunk all the wine in the wine cellars! Hic!

**Bono** My wine! My lovely wine!

**King Rat** You will *never* get rid of us! This island is now the Kingdom of the Rats! Aha ha ha ha!

**Bono** (*To Absinthe*) Help! What should I do?

**Absinthe** It seems your majesty is suddenly interested in the services of my cat.

**Bono** Yes, yes, I'll give you anything!

**Absinthe** Anything?

**Bono** Anything!

*Absinthe begins to untie Smudge.*

**Absinthe** Very well, I shall set this cat on the rats and he will chase them away.

**Bono** Oh, thank you, thank you.

**King Rat** (*Not very enthusiastically*) Oh no! Not the cat!

**1st Rat** (*Sarcastic*) Ooh dear, I'm *so* scared.

**2nd Rat** Anything but the scary cat!

**Absinthe** There's just one little detail.

**Bono** What's that?

**Absinthe** A small matter of... a reward.

**Bono** Reward?

**Absinthe** I was thinking somewhere in the region of... a million pounds?

**Bono** A million pounds? Is that your best price?

**Absinthe** You want to negotiate?

**Bono** Yes.

**Absinthe** In that case, *two* million pounds is our best price.

**Bono** But that's even worse!

**Absinthe** Two million it is then.

**Bono** Oh, very well! Just rid my kingdom of those infernal vermin!

*Absinthe frees Smudge.*

**Absinthe** Get to work, cat. This is your finest hour! You are The Terminator!

**Rats** Ahhhhh!

*Smudge doesn't move.*

**Absinthe** (*Shoving the cat*) Well? What are you waiting for?

**Smudge** No! I won't do it!

**Absinthe** What? Get on with it right now, or I will throw you into a deep, dark, dungeon for a thousand years!

**Smudge** Any chance of early release for good behaviour? Say, after a couple of hundred years?

**Absinthe** No!

**Bono** *(To Absinthe)* Wait! Something smells fishy here.

**Smudge** It's not me.

**Bono** *(To Absinthe)* I have a nasty feeling that you and these rats are working together.

**Absinthe** How could you suggest such a thing?

**Bono** You're trying to trick me out of money. Yes that's it, isn't it?

**Absinthe** What an absurd suggestion.

**Bono** *(Beckoning to Smudge.)* You, cat, come over here.

*Smudge goes nose to nose with King Bono.*

**Smudge** Your majesty?

**Bono** Tell me, honestly. Is this woman trying to mug me off?

**Smudge** Definitely.

**Bono** And are these rats trying to trick me?

**Smudge** Beyond a shadow of a doubt. Anything else you'd like to know?

**Bono** No, thank you.

**Absinthe** *(To audience)* What a very unreliable cat.

**Bono** I knew it! Guards! Seize this woman and throw her into jail!

*Two palace guards hold Lady Absinthe by the arms.*

**Absinthe** *(To audience)* Curses! It was a good plan, and I'd have got away with it, if it wasn't for that pesky cat!

**Bono** Your evil plan is foiled! But, now who will rid my kingdom of these rats?

*Enter Dick.*

**Dick** Hello, boys and girls!

**Audience** Hello, Dick!

**Dick** *(To Bono)* I will rid your kingdom of the rats!

**Bono** Who is this man?

**Dick** I am Dick Whittington, and this is *my* cat.

*Smudge runs over to Dick. Dick hesitates momentarily to hug him, but the cat finally holds out his arms and the pair hug.*

**Bono** I am *so* confused. Is the cat a goody or a baddie?

**Dick** I can assure you that the cat is a goody your majesty.

**Bono** Really?

**Dick** Your majesty, it was Lady Absinthe who plotted to trick you out of money. Not Smudge.

**Bono** Smudge? Who is Smudge?

**Smudge** That's me.

**Bono** What a ridiculous name for a cat.

**Smudge** (*Aside to audience*) And this from a man called "Bono"?

**Dick** My cat refused to work for Lady Absinthe. He is innocent of any crime.

**Bono** Very well. (*To Smudge*) Cat, come over here again.

*Smudge once again goes nose to nose with King Bono.*

**Bono** Would you be prepared to do some work for me?

**Smudge** I might be persuaded.

**Bono** Good.

**Smudge** What's the fee?

**Bono** I will pay you... in fish.

**Smudge** Fish?

**Bono** Yes.

**Smudge** How many fish?

**Bono** How many fish do you want?

**Smudge** Enough fish for all my friends.

**Bono** Friends?

*Enter Fitzwarren, Thelma, Jack, Alice, Captain Patch, Windy and Beardy Pete.*

**Smudge** These friends.

**Bono** All of them?

**Smudge** Yes. And I want the fish served... with chips.

**Bono** Very well.

**Smudge** And salt and vinegar,

**Bono** Right.

**Smudge** And mushy peas.

**Bono** Ok.

**Smudge** Oh, and some pickled eggs.

**Bono** You sir, have a deal. Dispose of the rats!

**1st Rat** We're really for it now. Run away, boys! Run away!

*Chase music as Smudge flies at the rats, who scatter into the auditorium. Meanwhile, the guards march Absinthe off stage. When the rats are gone, Smudge returns to the stage.*

**Bono** You've done it, Smudge!

**Dick** Well done, old friend.

**Bono** All the rats are gone!

*A green light picks out King Rat as he pokes his head onto the stage.*

**King Rat** Not *all* the rats.

**All** King Rat?

**King Rat** Did you really think you'd get rid of me as easily as that? I am the most vicious, vile, wicked, repulsive, magnificent panto villain on the planet. Aha ha ha ha!

*King Rat runs onto the stage brandishing a pirate's cutlass.*

**Patch** Here Dick, take my sword!

**Dick** Thanks, Captain.

**Alice** Oh no! Be careful, Dick!

**Dick** I'm not afraid of you, King Rat!

**Thelma** Can Dick handle a sword?

**Jack** Let's all hope so.

**Dick** *(To King Rat)* En garde!

*Menacing music builds as a frightful sword fight takes place. First, Dick has the upper hand, and then King Rat.*

**King Rat** After I have defeated you, I shall rule over this kingdom forever.

**Dick** No chance, King Rat! The villain *never* wins in a fairy story.

**King Rat** There's always a first time, Dick.

*The sword fight continues. Then suddenly King Rat knocks the sword out of Dick's hand and he pins our hero to the floor with his cutlass against his throat.*

**King Rat** Prepare to meet your maker, Dick Whittington!

**All** Oh no!

*Smudge creeps up behind King Rat and taps him on the shoulder. The villain spins around. Their eyes meet.*

**Smudge** Say goodbye, Ratty.

*The cat bops King Rat on the head with his paw, knocking the creature out cold. The rat hits the stage with a loud thud. Dick jumps to his feet.*

**Dick** Three cheers for Smudge the cat. Hip, hip...

**All** Hooray!

**Dick** Hip, hip...

**All** Hooray!

**Dick** Hip, hip...

**All** Hooray!

*Smudge takes a bow.*

**Bono** Well done, Smudge! You have saved my kingdom!

**Smudge** All in a day's work, your majesty

**Dick** Oh, I have missed you, Smudge!

**Alice** *(To the cat)* And I've missed you too. We thought we'd never see you again.

**Patch** There'll always be a job for you on my ship, Smudge. No rat or mouse will dare to set foot on my decks while you're there.

**Thelma** I'll bake you a great big cake when we get back on board.

**Bono** I'm sorry to interrupt this touching reunion, but who exactly are all you people? We've not been introduced.

**Fitzwarren** *(Bowing)* Oh great King Bono of Utoovia, we have traveled from a distant land to trade with your majesty.

**Bono** What goods do you have to trade?

**Jack** I'm glad you asked us that.

There's a hundredweight of skate,  
A quart of ruby port,  
Twenty gallons of Scottish salmon,  
Two tons of ox tails from Wales.

**Windy** Thirty eight pails of quails,  
A cubic yard of lard,  
A ream of shaving cream,  
A sheaf of gold leaf...

**Bono** Is that the lot?

**All** And a hundred yards of ale.

**Bono** Very well, I shall buy all of your cargo.

**All** Hooray!

**Fitzwarren** Well Dick, your share of the profits mean you're a very rich man now.

**Dick** Then I know exactly what I'll do with the money.

**Thelma** Buy a great big car?

**Dick** No.

**Jack** Charter a private jet?

**Dick** Nope.

**Bono** Why don't you buy Tottenham Hotspur Football Club?

**Dick** Seriously? No! I'm going to ask Alice Fitzwarren for her hand in marriage. If it's OK with her father, of course.

**Fitzwarren** Fine by me, lad. I think you'll make a very fine son-in-law, Dick Whittington.

**Alice** Oh, Dick. That's wonderful! But we hardly know each other.

*Dick takes Alice's hand.*

**Dick** Alice, I knew you were the one for me the very first moment we met. Now we have the whole of our lives to get to know each other better.

**Thelma** Oooh, I love a good wedding. I think I'm going to cry. Pass me a hanky.

*Beardy Pete rushes to hand Thelma a handkerchief.*

**All** Hooray for the bride and groom, Alice and Dick!

**Beardy Pete** Shiver me timbers, all this talk of a wedding is making me feel quite emotional.

**Patch** Well I never, a pirate with a heart.

**Jack** We should have him stuffed.

**Beardy Pete** *(On one knee, to Thelma)* Thelma Pudding, will you be my wife?

**Jack** I didn't see that coming.

**Thelma** Well, this is *very* sudden.

**Beardy Pete** I'll sell my pirate ship and we can buy a nice little bed and breakfast in Bognor Regis.

**Thelma** Well, that's an offer I can't refuse.

**Jack** Blow me down, I've got a pirate captain as a step father. What were the chances?

**Dick** Can Alice and I come and stay at your bed and breakfast in Bognor, Thelma?

**Thelma** Absolutely. I'll give you ten percent discount.

**Dick** Fifteen percent?

**Thelma** Done.

**Fitzwarren** Let's all get ready to celebrate a double wedding.

**Smudge** With a grand fish and chip supper!

**Dick** And then we can all live happily ever after!

**All** Hooray!

*Curtain. Enter Fairy Jinglebells on tabs.*

**Fairy** Now our adventure's over  
and you've seen our pantomime.  
We hope you've liked our characters  
And have had a lovely time.

Dick Whittington has a future bright,  
With love and power and glory.  
He will be Mayor of London soon,  
But then... that's another story.

We hope that all your dreams come true,  
And you find your own pot of gold.  
And if you believe in magic,  
It just might stop you getting old.

*Fairy Jinglebells exits. Tabs open for final song.*

## **Song 12**

*At the end of the finale, walk down & curtain.*