



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 stropky 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.