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The Adventures of Dick Whittington

A Traditional Family Pantomime by Brian Luff

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 stroppy 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. Scene One

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 ONE

Scene One

The overture ends. 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, you know. 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, 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 Londoners going about their work.

Song 1

The people sing a song to welcome everyone to the show. At the end of the routine, enter the dame, Thelma Pudding. She carries a broom and starts sweeping around 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, 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 at weekends. Shall I do a quick swirl? Ooh 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 the famous 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 Oh 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 much 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  Whooooaa...  

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**  Ssssshhhhhh!

**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? 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 very large breed. It’s 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**  Sssshhhhhhh!
Fitzwarren (Turning around) What's that?
Dick I said, 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. 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 Sssssshhhhh.
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 Gold? Who said that?
Dick Boris Johnson.
Fitzwarren What utter rubbish.
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. 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. (Walking off) 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 that animal spoke.

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 I need to catch all the rats that keep stealing the food in the kitchen. I shall inform the cook.

*Lady Absinthe calls into the wings.*

Absinthe Thelma! 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!

Absinthe 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 trusty old clipper the Good Ship Endeavour. 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 that barnacles on the bottom, sir. What are your orders?

Fitzwarren  I need you to start loading up the Good Ship Endeavour for the trip. 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 following cargo. Dick, read the list.

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

Patch  Righto, I'll shall go and....
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 gallon 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.

ACT 1

Scene Two


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, can't we just sit down here and wait until they have been invented?

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

Patch  Hold on a minute, 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 voyage on the Good Ship Endeavour.

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: Sounds like a great idea.

Patch: No! Our boss will skin us 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...

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.

Dick (Saluting) Good luck, Smudge.

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

King Rat Aahhhhh! 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. After exiting, King Rat pokes his head out from the wings.

King Rat Don't worry, you haven't seen the last of me. 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) Hates to be touched. Right, let's get this cargo to the Good Ship Endeavour.

Smudge What, carry it?

Dick Yes.

Smudge Using our arms?

Dick Yes.

Smudge Sorry, I've got a bad back.

Smudge scarpers. Dick sighs, picks up a box and exits.
ACT 1

Scene 3

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

Absinthe And 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.

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

Jack  Thousands!

Fitzwarren  Thousands???

Jack  Well... quite a lot.

Absinthe  How many?

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 scared them off, of course.

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 strangely enigmatic feline has more than repaid my confidence.
Dick  Yes.
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 gives it to the cat.
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  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.
ACT 1

Scene 4


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.

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! 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 the cargo at the harbour.

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

King Rat Euuuggghh! 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 Never mind. 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 Pointless.

All exit.

ACT 1

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 and 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 Mary Berry.

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 churns 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 currents 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.

ACT 1

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  What about Deal or No Deal?

Smudge  Noel Edmonds gives me nose bleeds.

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

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.

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 2

Scene One

Tabs 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 mildly witty 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 song about losing her love. 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.

ACT 2

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 how to translate church bells.

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. 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.

ACT 2

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 Patrick Stewart?

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 the 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  Aarrrr! Aarrrrrrrr!

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 me 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! 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 evil. 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._

ACT 2

Scene 4


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.*

ACT 2

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 Fulham 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  Ah, 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 finally 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)** On guard!

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

**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.

**King Rat** Not _au revoir_?

**Smudge** Nope... goodbye!

*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 *(Bow)*  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 gallon 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 Fulham 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 an enchanting 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.
Night, night.

_Fairy Jinglebells exits. Tabs open for final song._

_Song 12_

_At the end of the finale, walk down & curtain._