



Dick Whittington

by Bradford and Webster

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PantoScripts Sample

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 15 The Metro Centre
 Peterborough PE2 7UH
 Telephone: 01733 374790
 Email: info@noda.org.uk
 www.noda.org.uk

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PantoScripts Sample

DICK WHITTINGTON**Cast List**

DICK WHITTINGTON	Principal Boy. The young hero. Traditionally played, usually by a female.
ALICE FITZWARREN attractive	Principal Girl. A slightly spoiled, but sweet and young girl.
SARAH, THE COOK	A traditional panto dame. Warm-hearted, fun & flirty. Always on the look-out for a rich husband.
IDLE JACK	Sarah's son. Very lazy and not very bright! Needs to have a good rapport with the audience.
ALDERMAN FITZWARREN	Wealthy businessman. Father of Alice.
TOM	A cat, with character. Mute, yet expressive.
KING RAT	A mean and nasty rat. Traditional panto "baddie".
ROT & STENCH	Henchmen to King Rat. Dim-witted comedy duo.
FAIRY BOW BELLE	Traditional panto fairy.
CAPTAIN Groat".	Captain of Fitzwarren's ship the "Everything's A
QUEEN MEGABAZOOMA	South American Queen.
HIGH PRIESTESS	The Queen's grovelling servant.
STENCHESS	An attractive female. Is supposed to be "Stench" in disguise – but obviously isn't! (one scene only)
HARRY & DORA	Friendly London couple. They persuade Dick not to leave London.
RATS	A group of young rats, played by small children.

CHORUS ROLES of Londoners, Sailors and Courtiers

Plenty of opportunities for dancers to perform

Scenes and Staging**ACT I****Warm Up**

This is front of tabs.

Scene 1 Old London Town

Full stage scene. "Old Town" backcloth. Some market stalls, perhaps?

Scene 2 The Sewers
created,

Front of tabs or front cloth scene. Easily using subdued lighting (with a greenish tint), a smoke machine and possibly, a gobo.

a

Scene 3 The Kitchen of the
centre.
Fitzwarren House
too

A full-stage scene. A table and chairs set
The 'safe' will need to be set upstage (but not obvious).

Scene 4 The Attic of the
be
Fitzwarren House
with
an

A front cloth or tabs scene. A book-flat could be used (high at the centre, lower at the sides, beams painted on) to give the impression of attic room. This scene also requires a with a false (curtained) back.

"wardrobe"

Scene 5 The Kitchen of the
Fitzwarren House

A full stage scene. As for Scene 3.

Scene 6 A London Street
company

A front cloth or tabs scene. It is a full-scene, so allow as much space as possible.

ACT II**Scene 7 The Kitchen of the**
Fitzwarren House

A full stage scene. As for Scene 3.

Scene 8 The Road out of London

A front cloth or tabs scene. Don't forget the traditional "mile marker" stone.

Scene 9 A Hallway in the
Fitzwarren House

A front cloth or tabs scene.

Scene 10 On Board Ship
cloth, if
of

A full stage scene. A "Ship's Deck" back possible. Or add props to give the impression a ship's deck.

Scene 11 Under the Sea

This is an optional UV scene. Mid-stage black

Notes).

tabs or cloth, if available. (See Additional

Scene 12 On the Sea

A front cloth or tabs scene. Keep it simple! "Ocean" and "Seagull" sound effects will help.

Scene 13 The Palace of Queen Megabazooma

A full stage scene. South American style! A central staircase works well, if possible.

Song Sheet

Front of tabs

**Walk-Down and Bows
ACT ONE**

Full stage. "Rio Carnival" party!

Warm Up

JACK enters front of curtains. He is carrying a small electric bar heater. He puts the heater down and stands in front of it.

JACK

Hello boys and girls! Are you looking forward to the show? Oh, I am. It's got some great characters in it. It's got er.... Dick Whittington ... well of course it's got Dick Whittington it wouldn't be called Dick Whittington if it didn't have Dick Whittington in it. And who else is there? There's me, of course. I'm Jack ... some people call me Idle Jack!... but I'm not really idle no, I'm ... I'm just saving my energy for when I might really need it. Tomorrow, maybe, or the day after that or ... But, anyway, what was I doing? Oh yes, I remember ... oh!

JACK looks around (but not behind him)

JACK

I was sure I brought it on. Have any of you seen it? A heater. A little one.

AUDIENCE

Behind you!

JACK

Sorry what?

AUDIENCE

Behind you!

JACK

You'll have to shout a bit louder.

AUDIENCE

Behind you!

JACK

Oh no it isn't!

AUDIENCE

Oh yes it is!

JACK

Oh no it isn't etc.

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JACK eventually turns round to see the heater and jumps in surprise.

JACK

Well, would you believe it? It was there all the time. Well done! You're all right, you lot. Hey, tell you what, whenever I see you, I'll shout, "all right kids!" and then you can shout "All right Jack!" Do you want to have a practice? OK then. Pretend I've just come on ALL RIGHT KIDS!

AUDIENCE

All right Jack.

JACK

Brilliant! Right then, do you know if there's anywhere around here I can plug this in? They've asked me to do the warm up, you see. Now that's a very important and responsible job, that is, warming up the audience before the show and they don't ask just anybody I think maybe I should have brought a bigger heater ... though perhaps if you all snuggle around it you should be OK

SARAH enters carrying a pan with a hole in the bottom.

SARAH

Ja-ack!!

JACK nearly jumps out of his skin.

JACK

Blimey, mother, where did you come from? I nearly jumped out of my skin. Boys and girls, this is my mother, Sarah. Say hello, mother.

SARAH

Hello mother. Now then, you idle, good-for-nothing so-and-so, someone's left one of my best pans on the hot stove. It's ruined ... and I want to know who did it. Have you got anything to say for yourself?

Jack looks worried. He crosses his fingers.

JACK

Er ... it wasn't me.

SARAH

And you expect me to believe that, do you?

JACK

Oh, mother, don't be cross. Hey, I know what'll cheer you up! I bet if you said hello to the boys and girls, they would say "hello Sarah" really loudly. That'll make you smile.

SARAH

Oooh, I don't know.

JACK

Go on mother. You know you want to.

SARAH

Oh, you know what would be even more fun

JACK

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What, mum?

SARAH

If I shouted hello boys and girls and the boys and girls shouted "WHAT'S COOKING, SARAH?!" Would you do that for me, boys and girls, shout "what's cooking Sarah?"? Come on, let's have a go. HELLO BOYS AND GIRLS!!

JACK & ALL

What's cooking Sarah?????!!!!!!

SARAH smiles.

SARAH

You're right. That's cheered me up no end.

JACK

Shall we do it one more time. Even louder this time.

SARAH

Go on, then. Hello boys and girls!

JACK & ALL

What's cooking Sarah?!!

SARAH

A great big apple crumble. And it's all for me ... Well, we can't stand around here all day chatting, we've got work to do. Come on Jack, back to the kitchen.

JACK

Oh, no, I can't mum I'm busy.

SARAH

Busy? You? That'll be the day. What exactly are you doing?

JACK holds up the heater.

JACK

Isn't it obvious?

SARAH

Er no

JACK

They've asked me to warm up the audience. I was going to use this.

He holds up the heater again.

SARAH

You're as daft as you are idle, Jack. You're two sandwiches, eight mini rolls and a can of pop short of a picnic. That's not how you "warm up" an audience.

JACK

I know. I just said that.

(to audience) Didn't I just say that?

(to Sarah) I was just saying I'll never get them properly warmed up with this little thing. Tell you what, you wait here and keep them interested while I go and get a bigger heater.

SARAH

No Jack, you dimwit! You don't warm the audience up with a heater.

JACK

You don't?

SARAH

No, you don't.

JACK

So you mean you tuck them in with a great big blanket

SARAH

No

JACK

You give them each a pair of gloves and a woolly hat? How many do we need ...

JACK starts counting the audience.

JACK

One, two, three um er

SARAH

No!

JACK

No?

SARAH

No.

JACK

Oh ...

SARAH

Oh, for heaven's sake.

SARAH grabs the heater from JACK.

SARAH

Come on, let's get out of here, the show's about to start.

JACK looks round in a panic.

JACK

Oooh, blimey, is it? Oh, see you later then, everyone. Hope you enjoy the show.

Scene 1 Old London Town.

JACK sneaks back on carrying something.

JACK

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All right, Kids!

AUDIENCE
All right, Jack!

JACK puts his finger to his lips. He places the "something" centre stage. It is a large cut-out number "eight". JACK stands proudly next to it.

SARAH (off stage)
Jack!!! Ja-ack!!!!

SARAH enters.

SARAH
For heaven's sake Jack, will you stop wandering off when there's work to do and ... what on earth is that?

JACK
This, mum? **This** is the opening number!

JACK grins.

SARAH
The ...

JACK
... opening number!

SARAH
The opening number????!!!!!! Right, that's it, you're for it.

SARAH goes for JACK, who picks up his number, runs round the stage, and exits, with SARAH in hot pursuit.

OPENING SONG "London Medley" – chorus (a short medley of "London" songs)

Song ends. Lights low. Chorus freezes as Fairy enters

FAIRY BOW BELLE enters, carrying a wand and a large "Dick Whittington" book. Spotlight.

FAIRY
Welcome, welcome one and all to a tale of a young man little more than a boy who set out one day, full of hope, from his humble home, carrying with him only his dreams and one of those strange little bags on a stick that people always seem to carry when they leave home you'd have thought a sturdy rucksack would have been much more sensible but, if he wants a bag on a stick (She shrugs)

(She opens the book, looks down at it, then looks up again, and closes the book)

Do you know the story? I had to get this out of the library. I'm not really supposed to be here, you know. I was all lined up to be Cinderella's Fairy Godmother - now that's a real part for a fairy, that is - and then they gave it to that Tamzin Burrows McCutcheon woman from that awful TV soap EmmerEnders Streetside, or whatever it's called - Nobody seems to want a real fairy any more, but there you go ...

(She opens the book again)

Anyway, here he is here is our boy our hero ... our Dick Whittington!

Dick has entered through rear auditorium door. FAIRY indicates towards auditorium. Dick steps forward into spotlight in front of stage. He turns to face the audience, his face a mixture of bewilderment, apprehension, exhilaration and excitement (go on, try it).

FAIRY

Look at that face ... is that not the face of a boy whose heart is full of dreams? And what dreams! Do you want to know what they are? Then listen carefully

DICK

... and I want a Playstation 3 and an AppleMac and an Iphone and a date with

FAIRY looks down at her book quickly, looks up shocked, coughs loud and long and walks over to Dick and stamps hard on the stage behind him, then returns to stage right.

DICK

To London I must go, where the streets are paved with gold, where there are dreams to be discovered! Where my future, my fortune, my destiny awaits me!

FAIRY

That's more like it. Good for you, Dick. Off you go.

DICK heads off out of side auditorium door. FAIRY closes her book.

KING RAT enters stage left.

KING RAT

Oh, isn't that just soooooo sweet? I could throw up.

FAIRY

Well, what a surprise. And what do you want you you ... you rat!

KING RAT

I think you'll find it's KING Rat ... and don't you forget it.

KING RAT starts to follow DICK's trail but stops, sniffs and returns to centre stage.

KING RAT

And who was that then, my dear, another of your pet projects?

FAIRY

Oh, can't you just leave well alone.

KING RAT

Surely, you know me better than that? If I see "well" the one thing I can't do is leave it alone.

FAIRY

You'll never get this one.

KING RAT

Oh, won't I?

FAIRY

No, you won't for he is good and pure and honest all the things you don't understand and will never understand.

KING RAT

Good and pure and honest oh my! Good and pure and honest oh my!

FAIRY

What are you doing?

KING RAT

I'm mocking you. But to tell you the truth, it's not that much fun. I'd much rather be ruining this good, this pure, this honest young man.

FAIRY

You can't. You couldn't.

KING RAT

Can't? Couldn't? Oh? Oh!!!!?????!!! Is that a challenge my pretty little fairy foe? Are you challenging me over the future of this ... this boy this hero this Dick Whittington?

FAIRY

No I

KING RAT

Too late. I accept. And mark my words, your honest lad's purity will be flushed down the sewer with his dreams before the curtains open on Act Two. Ha ha ha ha ha

KING RAT exits laughing.

FAIRY

Oh dear, that didn't go as well as I'd hoped. But do not worry for, as well as being good and pure and honest, Dick is also strong and I am sure he will win the day. Wait, I think I hear him arriving in Old London Town.

Chorus "unfreezes". DICK enters and strides to centre stage. He stands heroically. Maybe a burst of "Eastenders" theme tune?

DICK

London! London Town at last. I've been walking for days and now I'm here.

DICK takes a deep breath of London air. He starts coughing and hacking. DICK looks around. He is not that impressed.

DICK

Call that fresh air. You know, I think I've changed my mind. I don't like the look of this place. I'm off back to the village.

DICK turns to go off.

FAIRY steps forward. Everyone freezes.

FAIRY

Oh, dear! I had a feeling I was going to have problems with this story.

FAIRY waves her wand. Lights come up. Chorus mime again, more lively now. Fairy exits. HARRY and DORA come forward to stand each side of Dick, chorus follow, very friendly.

CHORUS

Welcome (*shakes Dick's hand*) / Hello / What's your name? / (*child*)Want to play?

HARRY

Hello, young fella. Strike a light, apples and pears, me old china.

DICK

I beg your pardon ...

DORAH

Don't mind him. He hasn't been the same since he had a walk-on part in EastEnders.
Good morning to you.

DICK

Hello. I'm Dick. Dick Whittington.

DORA

Up from the country are you, Dick? Come to town to seek your fortune?

DICK

Yes, exactly. How did you know?

HARRY

Little bag on a stick. Bit of a give away.

DICK

Oh, yes, I suppose so. But actually I was just thinking about going back to the country.

HARRY

Blimey mate, you've only just got here!

DICK

I'm just not sure if it'll work out.

HARRY

Sure it'll work out! With a bit of luck!!

SONG "With a Little Bit of Luck. Harry, Dora & Chorus

DICK

Maybe you're right ...

DORA

Of course we are! See you later, Dick!

All exit, except Dick.

DICK

Bye! Well, this certainly is a friendly town. I think I will stay after all.

FAIRY peeps out from stage right.

FAIRY

Thank goodness for that.

(Fairy exits)

DICK

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Hello boys and girls. You all seem very friendly too. I'm feeling a bit peckish. I think it's time for breakfast.

DICK sits on a barrel, centre stage, opens his bag and takes out a hunk of bread. As he is about to take a bite, some rats scurry out from stage left and crowd around him, stretching their arms up. DICK holds the bread up in the air.

DICK
Shoo! Go on, shoo! You nasty little rats, shoo! Shoo!

*The rats carry on crowding around DICK's feet.
TOM the cat enters and coolly strolls towards centre, then stops and coughs.*

TOM
Ahem!

The rats freeze, slowly turn to look towards TOM, then jump and scamper off and exit stage

DICK
Gosh, thanks. I can't stand rats. Nasty dirty smelly things.

TOM is a cool cat. He simply smiles to himself and sits a little away from DICK and starts to clean himself. DICK looks at his bread, then at TOM and holds the bread out towards him.

DICK
Would you like to share my breakfast? It isn't much but it's all I have.

TOM turns, looks at DICK for a moment then nods gently and coolly begins to pad over. DICK gives TOM half the bread.

DICK
There you go, puss.

TOM turns and frowns at DICK.

DICK
Oh, sorry. Don't like being called puss, then?

TOM shakes his head.

DICK
But I don't know your name. I suppose I could guess.

TOM sits back and smiles.

DICK
Is it Whiskers?

TOM shakes his head.

DICK
Is it Ginger?

TOM looks at himself. He is not ginger. He shakes his head.

DICK
Is it Millicent?

TOM turns sharply to look at DICK, looks down, scowls and shakes his head.

DICK
Is it Fluffikins Kugelschreiber the third?

TOM raises an eyebrow.

DICK
Sorry, that was a bit of a long shot. How about no, that would be too easy it wouldn't be that would it? Is your name Tom?

*TOM grins and nods furiously. He goes over to DICK and rubs his head against DICK'S knee.
DICK scratches TOM's head.*

DICK
Well, it's a pleasure to make your acquaintance, Tom. My name's Dick. Dick Whittington. Thanks again for scaring away those rats.

TOM looks around and starts to pad off.

DICK
Oh, are you off then? See you around, Tom.

TOM waves and exits.

DICK
Well, I'd better get going. I'm on my way to Alderman Fitzwarren's house. I hope to be taken on as his apprentice. I've got my letter of introduction.

DICK lifts an envelope out of his bag and holds it up. He puts it in his jacket pocket.

DICK
And what else have I got in here? Oooh, my life savings.

DICK holds up a tiny coin.

DICK
A note from my mum.

DICK holds up another envelope. He also puts that in his jacket pocket.

DICK
And what's this?

DICK picks up some neatly folded material. He shakes it out. It is a pair of underpants. He flusters and nearly drops them then puts them back in the bag.

DICK

And some ... er ... clean underwear. Thanks mum! Right, I'll just pack up all this lot and then I'll be off.

As DICK is packing up, KING RAT enters stage left with a few little rats in tow. He encourages a reaction from the audience

KING RAT

And you lot can keep quiet! So this is our boy, our hero, so good and pure and honest. Well, we'll soon put a stop to that.

KING RAT goes round behind DICK in the hope that someone will shout "behind you"

DICK

What sorry?

AUDIENCE

Behind you!

DICK

Really?

DICK turns to look, sees KING RAT and jumps. KING RAT moves forward.

DICK

Gosh, where on earth did you come from?

KING RAT

You don't want to know. Good morning to you, my dear sir. Do you know of anywhere I could put up this poster? *(he unravels a poster with the words "Good, pure, honest boy wanted")*

You see, I'm looking for a good, pure and honest boy for a very important position in my, shall we say, commercial empire. He would be extremely, did I say that quite clearly enough, **extremely** well paid. Why, young sir, you wouldn't happen to be good and pure and honest, would you? You certainly look the type *(he sneers)*

DICK

Well, yes, as a matter of fact, I am good and pure and honest ...

KING RAT

Oh, really what a coincidence.

DICK

But I'm afraid I already have a job or, at least, I hope to have a job I'm on my way there now as it happens.

KING RAT

Wait just a moment. You ... are a ... poor person. I'm offering someone someone exactly like you the opportunity of a lifetime with as much gold as you could safely tuck down your trousers and loads of other really great stuff. And you're turning it down?

DICK

Absolutely ... because I already have this other

KING RAT

Yes, yes, yes but this job of yours can't possibly be as fabulous as the one that I am offering. You would be perfect for this job. Its yours if you want it.

KING RAT tries to do some hypnotism thing with his fingers. It has no effect.

DICK

It is very kind of you to take this trouble but Alderman Fitzwarren is one of the most respected merchants in Old London Town and he is expecting me. I am afraid I must say no to your offer.

KING RAT looks down at his fingers. He wiggles them at his own face, goes bleary eyed then shakes his head with a start and pushes his hand away.

DICK

Right, I'll be off then.

KING RAT becomes more menacing.

KING RAT

Oh no, I don't think so. You don't get away that easily, Master Dick Whittington.

DICK

How how did you know my name?

KING RAT

Oh, I know many many things....

TOM enters

KING RAT

Aaaaargh! get that flea-bitten beast away from me!

KING RAT leaps backwards.

DICK

This is Tom, he's very friendly.

KING RAT

I hate cats!!!!!!!!!!

DICK

You hate cats? Hold on if you hate cats, then that must make you a a mouse.

KING RAT

Yes, yes what?! No! I'm a rat, not a tiny little mouse. Oh dear, honest but not that sharp. In fact, I am **King** Rat ... emissary of evil and enemy of all that is good and pure and honest. Oh, and one more thing I never lose, so you might as well give up now. You cannot defeat me!

DICK and TOM look at each other.

DICK

Oh yes we can!

KING RAT

Oh no you can't!

DICK
Oh yes we can!

KING RAT
Oh no you can't, can't, can't!

DICK
Oh yes we can, can, can!

KING RAT
Can't, can't, can't!

DICK
Can, can, can!

*Can-can music starts and dancers come on. KING RAT, DICK and TOM are gobsmacked.
Dancers dance off.*

KING RAT
You haven't seen the last of me, Whittington! Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ...

KING RAT exits left.

DICK
Well, he wasn't very nice, was he? But everyone else seems very friendly, especially you Tom. Would you like to come with me to Alderman Fitzwarren's house? I could do with a companion.

TOM nods. They set off across the stage.

Blackout.

Scene 2 The Sewers

*Little rats milling about. Perhaps a big black throne in centre.
KING RAT's two henchrats, ROT and STENCH, enter.*

ROT
Blimey, Stench, I'm starving. Look, I'm wasting away (*points to stomach*)

STENCH
Yeah, all right, Rot, keep yer tail on.

ROT
Ere, Stench, why don't we nick some sweets from the kids? We could eat those.

STENCH
Hmmmmm? Nah, I'm not hungry. I've already had something.

ROT
You never. Aw, that's just not fair. What did you have?

STENCH
Leftovers.

ROT
Leftovers? Leftovers of what?

STENCH
Leftovers Leftovers of leftovers.

ROT
All right, but what was it originally?

STENCH
Hard to tell.

STENCH picks up a small pan from the floor. He sniffs it. It smells terrible.

STENCH
There's some left in here, do you want it?

ROT
I don't know, what is it?

STENCH sniffs it again.

STENCH
Bean soup.

ROT
OK, so it's been soup, but what is it now?

STENCH
Look, do you want it or not?

ROT
I'm not just eating any old rubbish.

STENCH
But that's what you're supposed to do Rot, you're a rat.

ROT
Yeah, well, I've got to be careful, I got food poisoning last week.

STENCH
Food poisoning!!!!?????

ROT
Well, I've got a delicate constitution I'm not feeling too good, Stench, I reckon I'm coming down with something.

STENCH
What is it this time?

ROT
You know, I reckon I've got the plague, I know I have.

STENCH

You're a rat. You're supposed to have the plague. We've all got the plague.

KING RAT enters.

KING RAT

Ah, Rot and Stench. (*rotten stench*)

STENCH

Yeah, sorry about that.

STENCH wafts his hand about. RAT sits on throne.

KING RAT

Curse that Dick Whittington! But I'll get even with him and his little cat too. Then I'm going after that fairy and, once she's gone, the city will be mine! I'll be the Lord Nightmare of London! ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha.

ROT and STENCH look at each other then start laughing too.

KING RAT holds up his hand to stop them.

KING RAT

Well, did you manage to find anything out about him, this Dick Whittington?

ROT

Oh yes, we did, sir.

STENCH

Certainly, yes sir.

ROT

Yeah, we followed him underneath the road in the sewers and listened at the grates. He's been talking to that mangy old cat, telling him his life story. I mean, as if the cat can understand what he's saying. Ridiculous. Next they'll be having us believe that animals can talk and ...

STENCH hits him.

ROT

.... um ... er yeah er ... anyway. Sorry, forgot.

STENCH

Yeah, anyway, what we found out is he's good and pure and honest and he's going to work for that old Alderman Fitzwarren fella.

KING RAT

I told you that, you idiots! More, I want more. His hopes, his dreams, his weaknesses.

STENCH

Oh, right, sorry, um yeah (*He turns to ROT*) what else?

ROT

Um oh yeah, he said that one day he hopes to be Lord Mayor of London

RAT

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Yesssss! Got him. Not so pure. He craves power.

ROT

..... so that he can er help the poor and underprivileged.

KING RAT

Rats!!!!

All the little rats look up at KING RAT.

STENCH

Oh, and he wants to make huge amounts of money

KING RAT

Aha! Avaricious.

STENCH

... so he can ... er give it away to the ... er poor and er underprivileged ...

KING RAT

Rats! Rats! Rats!!!!

ROT

Oh, yeah, and he wants to keep goldfish.

KING RAT

Goldfish, eh? Hmmmmmm that could be a red herring.

ROT

No, he definitely said goldfish (to STENCH) didn't he?

STENCH

Oh yes, definitely goldfish, sir.

KING RAT

Silence! Imbeciles! I must think. He must have a weakness. What can it be?

STENCH

There was one other thing, sir.

KING RAT

Yes, yes, what is it?!!

STENCH

He hopes to find true love, sir.

KING RAT

True love? Pah!

ROT

Sir? What is true love, sir?

KING RAT looks at ROT, he is hit by a wave of ROT's stench and KING RAT wafts his hand in front of his face.

KING RAT

Nothing you'll ever have to worry about, my dear Rot. But wait I wonder I ... wonder.

STENCH

What is it, sir?

KING RAT

I think I have a plan. Listen closely. All we need is a blonde wig and a pair of false ...

Blackout.

Scene 3 The Kitchen of the Fitzwarren House

JACK is sitting reading a magazine. He looks up, is surprised, and jumps to his feet.

JACK

ALL RIGHT KIDS!!!

AUDIENCE

ALL RIGHT JACK!!!

JACK

You didn't half make me jump. I thought it was my mum coming in.

JACK sits back down, puts his feet up. SARAH bustles in.

SARAH

Jack!!!

JACK, in his hurry to hide his magazine, falls off his chair. He stands up, flustered.

JACK

Hello mum!

SARAH

Don't you hello mum, me, you lazy so-and-so. Someone, and I'm not mentioning any names, has let the budgie out of its cage, tied a feather duster to its feet and let it fly around the sitting room in an attempt to get out of the dusting.

JACK

Ulp!

SARAH

And it's dropped little presents all over the nice clean floor.

JACK

(fingers crossed) It wasn't me, mum. Honest.

SARAH

Ooooooh, I give up.

SARAH notices the audience.

SARAH
Hello boys and girls.

JACK & AUDIENCE
What's cooking, Sarah!!!??

SARAH
Well, nothing yet but I'm about to get started. Welcome to my kitchen. Well, when I say **my** kitchen ... it's Alderman Fitzwarren's house, so I suppose it's **his** kitchen but oh, never mind. Jack? Have taken the rubbish out yet?

JACK
I was just about to, mum.

SARAH
Of course you were, dear. Do it now!

JACK
Yes mum.

*JACK picks up the bin and goes to the front of the stage and makes as if to throw the rubbish over the audience.
One ... two Just as he is about to empty it, SARAH sees him.*

SARAH
No no no! Jack, how many times do I have to tell you, don't throw the rubbish out of the window, it will attract the rats.

JACK
(tuts) OK mum.

SARAH
And don't just throw it out of the front door into the street, either.

JACK
Yes mum, no mum.

JACK exits with bin.

SARAH
Ooooh, that boy. The only reason he doesn't pick his nose is that he can't be bothered.

JACK enters, followed by DICK, who is covered in rubbish, and TOM.

JACK
Er, mum, there was someone at the door.

SARAH
Oh, uurrgh, oh dear. Are you sure it's someone, Jack? Looks more like something.

JACK
I um

JACK holds up bin.

SARAH

I thought I'd seen it somewhere before (*she hits JACK*) I told you to

DICK is picking rubbish off himself.

DICK

Good day to you. Is this the Fitzwarren household?

SARAH

Yes, it is. Can I help you?

DICK

Well, you can stop throwing rubbish at me for a start! I have come to be taken on as an apprentice.

JACK

Oh, thank goodness for that, I was worried you might be someone important.

DICK

I have a letter of recommendation.

DICK pulls letter from pocket and hands it to SARAH.

SARAH opens it, starts reading and begins to giggle, then laughs out loud. She shows the letter to JACK who also starts to laugh.

DICK (*to JACK*)

What's so funny?

JACK

I don't know, I can't read.

SARAH gets a hold of herself. She holds the letter out towards DICK.

SARAH

This is not a letter of recommendation.

DICK

I'm sorry, I think you'll find that it

SARAH (*reading*)

Dear Dick, make sure you always wear clean underwear, don't forget to wash behind your ears, don't talk to any strange men, don't talk to any strange women, and especially don't talk to any strange people if you're not sure whether they are men or women and

DICK snatches the letter off SARAH.

DICK

Ahem! I do apologise, it's from my mother. I have got a letter somewhere, I really have.

SARAH

Of course you have, dear.

DICK starts searching about his person for his letter as SARAH and JACK watch.

ALDERMAN FITZWARREN and his daughter ALICE enter stage right.

They are both carrying bags from posh shops.

ALICE