



Dick Whittington

by Robert Marlowe

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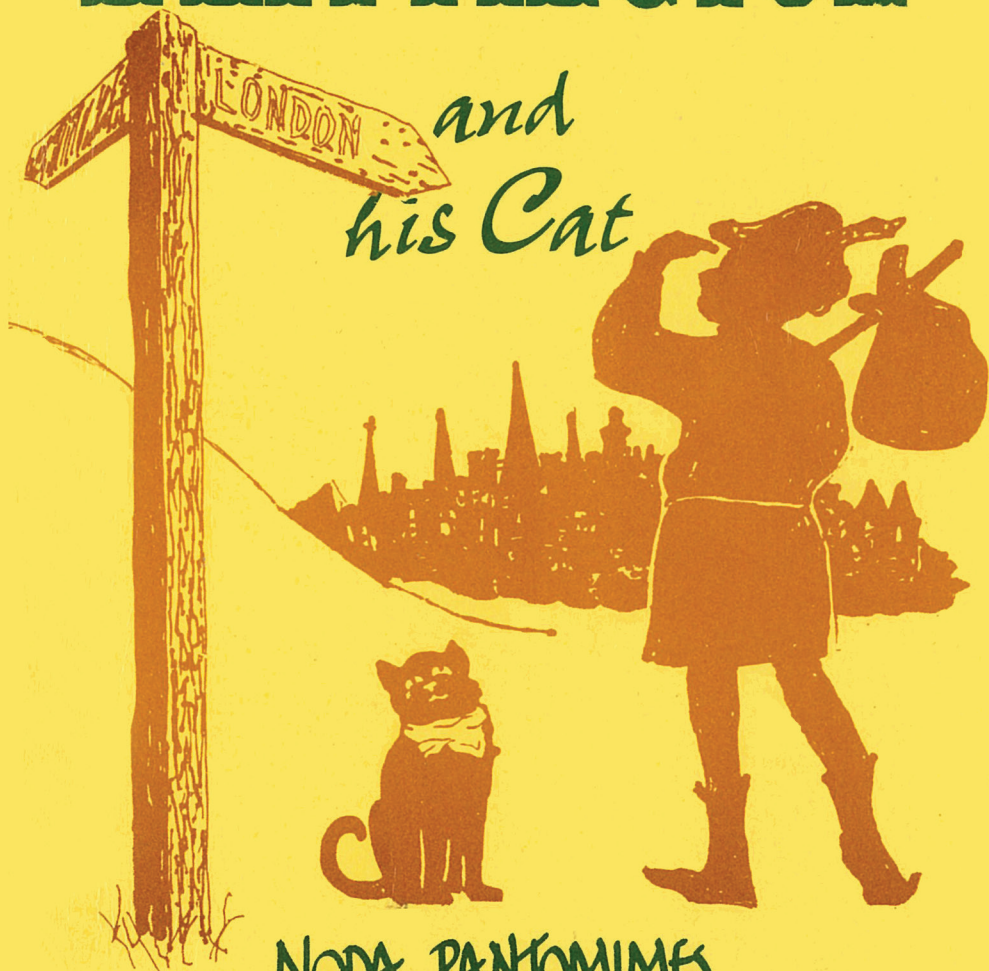
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ROBERT MARLOWE'S

DICK WHITTINGTON

*and
his Cat*



NODA PANTOMIMES

DICK WHITTINGTON *and his Cat*

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NODA Pantomimes
15 Metro Centre, Peterborough, PE2 7UH
Tel: + 44 (0) 1733 374 790 Fax: + 44 (0) 1733 237 286

antoScripts Sample

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antoScripts Sample

DICK WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT

BY ROBERT MARLOWE

DICK WHITTINGTON	A COUNTRY LAD
TOMMY HIS CAT	
ALDERMAN FITZWARREN	A MERCHANT TRADER
ALICE FITZWARREN	HIS DAUGHTER
SARAH	FITZWARREN'S COOK
IDLE JACK	FITZWARREN'S APPRENTICE
CAPTAIN OF THE GOLDEN VENTURE	
MATE OF THE GOLDEN VENTURE	
SULTAN OF MOROCCO	(COULD BE SULTANA)
FAIRY SILVER CHIME	SPIRIT OF THE BOW BELLS
KING RAT	
LEADER OF MOROCCAN GUARDS	
CHORUS OF - CITIZENS OF LONDON - SAILORS - EASTERN	
DANCING GIRLS - MOROCCAN GUARDS - ATTENDANT RATS -	
MASTERS OF THE LONDON GUILDS WITH THEIR LADIES.	

SCENES

ACT ONE

SCENE 1 A street near The Mansion House.
SCENE 2 Outside Fitzwarrens stores in London Town.
SCENE 3 A street near The Mansion House.
SCENE 4 Inside Fitzwarren's stores.
SCENE 5 The milestone on Highgate Hill.
SCENE 6 Dick Whittington's dream.

- INTERVAL -

ACT TWO

SCENE 1 The Pool of London.
SCENE 2 All at sea, below decks.
SCENE 3 The deck of the Golden Venture.
SCENE 4 On Morocco's wild shores.
SCENE 5 The banqueting Hall of the Royal Palace of Morocco.
SCENE 6 A street near The Mansion House.
SCENE 7 Wedding of The Lord Mayor.

NOTES ON CASTING AND SCENERY

DICK

Should be typical Principal boy with good figure, particularly legs, also strong singing voice.

ALICE

Young and prettily feminine. Able to sing and move well an asset.

ALDERMAN FITZWARREN

Mature actor with presence.

CAPTAIN AND MATE

Teamwork required between these two. Captain bossily exploits his mate throughout.

SARAH

This is the Dame role. Can be played by a woman but is traditionally a male which makes certain business more acceptable to an audience. A female showing her knickers can be strangely offensive!

TOMMY THE CAT

A good cat skin is essential so that your audience can believe totally in the animal qualities. Though cat is male, he can obviously be played by either. sex though should be small. Probably an intelligent child could cope.

SULTAN OR SULTANA

Best played by a man who can create a greater atmosphere of fear. However if played by female must still be a fearsome character in vein of the Wicked Queen in Snow White. Actor should be possessed of strong presence and singing voice, also of commanding stature.

FAIRY

Preferably young and pretty. Every little girl's idea of what a fairy should be like. Able to dance an advantage, to partake in a ballet sequence for Highgate Hill scene, though this is not essential. If played by older actress then still remain glittery in style of Billie Burke in the film of "Wizard of Oz".

KINGRAT

Really heavy character, menacing and evil. A good mover would be an advantage to lead the jazz dance routine that the rats perform to sink the ship in Act two. However this can be omitted if only an actor is used.

Note

If you use local dancing school, try to get older girls for routines. Small babes can be used if desired, but preferably only in the Highgate Hill scene where they could be included either as small woodland creatures or pixies, elves etc. Small children tend to steal every scene just by being present so my advice is to use them sparingly no matter how appealing they are. Children can of course, be used as little rats to overrun the banqueting scene where quite a few are needed to create havoc.

SCENERY

The scenery is of course governed by your space. The pantomime is written so that a full set is followed by a front cloth or tabs so that the next set can be changed. If hiring sets then there will be no problems. If however you are designing and making your own keep everything simple and very brightly coloured as in any child's fairy tale book. In fact, children's books can be a source of inspiration. Cut-out pieces against a cyclorama sky cloth can be as effective as full cloths; in fact some times better.

The period of most Dick Whittington pantomimes is medieval but obviously personal taste of the Director can place it in any period Tudor etc. In fact, available costumes will probably dictate your particular period.

You will notice that I've used one front cloth three times for ease of settings. Obviously if you have no facilities for cloths of any sort then a small cut-out piece of scenery against the tabs will have to indicate the location. i.e. a signpost with a milestone for Highgate Hill, a palmtree with rocks for Morocco's wild shores etc. etc. Ingenuity is the keyword.

N.B.

The author has endeavoured to write a script that will be "All things to all men". This may have resulted in some gags being too "cheeky" for certain clubs or organisations.

Whilst these gags are purely in the spirit of Music Hall and many culled from children's comics etc., they can quite easily be toned down or erased without affecting the meaning within the scene, which has sufficient material to scan and play well. In actuality the script can benefit from the inclusion of local place names, and personalities known in the locality. A careful perusal of the script to this end would personalise your production!

ACT ONE

SCENE 1

A STREET NEAR THE MANSION HOUSE.

This is a frontcloth prologue. It is night and has a sinister atmosphere. If possible use a smoke machine and dim lighting, a dance routine involving little rats slithering and squeaking, even possibly running down into the audience so that we have the impression of being overrun by rodents.

Musical suggestion - "Hall of the Mountain King" from Peer Gynt or similar creepy music.

Rising music to a crescendo and enter, with a flash, KING RAT, the small rats all cluster cowering around his feet.

N.B. In the tradition of pan to, evil must always enter P.S. whilst good always enters O.P. (from the audience's point of view this is R for evil L for good, and you must never alter this rule. Neither do the protagonists cross into each other's domain - which is an equal half - unless they are alone with other characters when the whole stage is their domain.)

KING RAT (*thunderingly*)

Behold! - 'Tis I The mightiest power on earth.
Master of all I survey,
A King of ignoble birth!
At my command, it's within my power
To over-run London this midnight hour!
Hordes of rats a plague will spread,
That all of the citizens will soon be dead.
Then will I assume my rightful crown,
As **the** Lord Mayor of Olde London Towne.

(Small Rats squeal excitedly)

(FAIRY ENTERS with flash and tinkling chimes)

FAIRY *(ringingly)*

King Rat, the time is now at hand
To foil your plans to rule this land.
A champion I'll find to win this fight,
Cool of courage, with strength of right!

KING RAT *(scornfully)*

Ha! Cool of courage, strength of right?
You'll not find one to match my might.
Thousands of rats will spread disease
From house to house, just as I please!
Of one thing I'm sure or I'll eat my hat,
Every human being is scared of a rat.

FAIRY

'Tis true. Your vile and cowardly plan
Brings fear to all - especially man.
But I've another adversary - who
Will be unafraid - even of you!
The answer to the vilest rat,
Will be in man's friend - the humble cat!
(At mention of cat all the little rats squeal and quickly EXIT)

KING RAT *(witheringly)*

You don't scare me so easily. First find your
champion Then we'll see
Exactly who will win the day.

FAIRY

I have no doubt that I shall find
A lad who's honest, good and kind.
Then will you learn in every way
That evil must perish and good hold sway.

(They EXIT to their respective sides as lights fade to BO)

ACT ONE

SCENE 2

Outside Fitzwarren Stores in London Towne

At curtain rise stage is dimly lit as the dawn is just about to break. Set should resemble an old view of London if possible, depending on the period you finally decide on, with a shop doorway clearly indicating 'Fitzwarren's stores'. Slowly, an old nightwatchman shuffles across stage." He carries a lantern. Have music softly playing to create atmosphere. Musical Director could arrange a montage of the old London cries for the following: London Bridge is Falling Down; Cherry Ripe; Won't You Buy my Blooming Lavender etc. The action will show what is required.

NIGHT WATCHMAN

Six O'Clock on a fine morning and all's well.
(walks across) Six O'Clock on a fine morning and all's well.

(He greets various characters as they enter, one or two at a time, until the scene is bustling and the lights come up as though day has broken).

N.B. *(Be sure to bring lights up slowly and imperceptibly)*

GIRL FRUIT VENDOR

Cherry Ripe! Cherry Ripe!
Ripe I cry! Full and Fair ones
Come and buy!

MAN KNIFE GRINDER

Knives to Grind
Come! Come!
Knives to Grind
Come! Come!

GIRL LAVENDER SELLER

Who will buy my blooming lavender
Sixteen branches a penny,
Who will buy my blooming lavender
Sixteen branches a penny.

ANOTHER FRUIT SELLER

Ripe strawberries ripe,
Ripe strawberries ripe,

MILK MAID (*with buckets and yoke*)

Any milk today mistress
Any milk today mistress.

(These cries should all be blended into each othe! in a melodic fashion).

NIGHT WATCHMAN (*finally*)

Six O'clock on a fine morning and all's well.

(Street action is now busy with people buying, sweeping steps, going about their general business etc.)

(ENTER ALICE FITZWARREN who is greeted by all, and into full production number with dancing and singing.)

(Suggested number "London is London, "from 'Goodbye Mr. Chips').

ALICE

Good morning everyone. What a beautiful day it is.

ALL

Good morning Miss Alice.

(ENTER ALDERMAN FITZWARREN from shop)

FITZWARREN

Alice, what are you doing wasting your time gossiping. You know my ship sets sail for Morocco next week and we've got to get all the provisions organised for a long sea voyage.

ALICE

Yes I know Father! But really we could do with some more help. Your apprentice Idle Jack is not much use, he's always asleep somewhere

FITZWARREN

I know my dear, but I'm afraid I can't afford any more staff. Not since all those rats got into the cellars and ate up all the stock.

ALICE Oh Father, those horrible rats seem to be everywhere, and we don't seem to be able to get rid of them.

FITZWARREN *(takes handkerchief from pocket, mops, brow)*
I've tried! I've tried! I'd use rat killer but it hasn't been invented yet! *(Puts handkerchief back in pocket, gives a screech and pulls out a large black rat wriggling by its tail)*

ALL Ooooh! Ooooh! Ugh! How horrible etc. etc.

ALICE Quickly Father get rid of it before it bites.
(FITZWARREN rushes round stage as all cower away. Then he goes downstage and hurls it into audience - it is fastened to a length of elastic so will spring back again. Repeat a couple of times but no more otherwise it loses its impact. He finally flings it offstage)

FITZWARREN I can't understand where they're all coming from. They seem so organised as though someone is in charge and leading them. If we're not careful they'll overrun London and eat us out of house and home. Talking about eating, I've not had my breakfast yet. Has anyone seen Sarah? She went shopping early, where has she got to!
(He EXITS into shop with ALICE)

(DAME now ENTERS with up tempo catchy tune. Suggestion "Busy doing Nothing", in which she is joined by chorus. Make this brief though).

SARAH *(to chorus)* Now off you go! I want to talk to my friends.

(CHORUS EXIT and Sarah turns to audience)
Hello! *(They will probably make a feeble response)*
I said hello! *(Response)* Well now, my name's Sarah. I expect you know yours!

I do hope we're going to be friends. I want you to do something for me - will you? (*Persuade a reply*) I want you to look after my aspidistra and if anyone tries to steal it will you tell me? You will? Oh good! (*She gets potted plant from wings*). Look, I'll stand it here by the side and if anyone tries to take it you all shout "Oi!" Shall we have a practice? I'll go off and creep back and then you shout "Oi!" Ready - here I go. (*She EXITS and returns immediately with exaggerated tiptoe towards plant*) Did you do it? Well I didn't hear a thing! You'll have to be much louder than that! Let's do it again. (*Repeat business as you wish, though not too much*). Ooooh! That's lovely! Well, now we're friends I'd better tell you a bit about myself. I was born at a very young age yes - and then when I was four I was orphaned. Aaaaaahhh! (*to audience*) Come on, don't be mean - Aaaaaahh! (*They respond sympathetically*) Well I wasn't actually orphaned. Mum and Dad sent me out to play - then moved!!! But I was very good at school. Oh yes, I knew all the answers. The geography teacher asked me where the Welsh border was. I told her, he'd run away with Auntie! Then when I was six I was expelled. Aaaaaahh! (*Sympathy business with audience again*). I was caught behind the bike shed playing tiddley-winks with the boys. Every time they tiddled, I winked! Anyway I've got a lovely job now. I'm cook for Alderman Fitzwarren. Oohhh, he does enjoy my brown Windsor pate!!! And as for my puddings. We often have a roly-poly together! Oi! - You! (*points to lady in audience*) Out! - We don't want

any mucky thoughts here! Really, Mr. Fitzwarren's such a considerate boss. He came into my kitchen the other day and he said "Have you got rats"! I said, "No! I always walk like this!" "No, No" he said, "We're over-run with rats - they're everywhere. Upstairs! Downstairs! In the ladies chamber". I pulled myself up to my full height. I told 'im - I said, "They most certainly are not! I empty those every day!" Anyway I can't waste time with you lot. Where's that Idle Jack? I sent him out shopping but I'll bet he's got it all wrong. Jack! Jack! Where are you? Come here, you idle good for nothing.

JACK ENTERS circling the stage on a scooter. He finally collides with Sarah and topples to floor)

SARAH

What are you doing down there?

JACK

Getting up! *(he rises)*

SARAH

Ask a silly question! *(To audience)* Well what do you expect - Chekov? Now, Jack, have you done' my shopping?

JACK

Yes I've got your shopping.

SARAH

Well I'm going to check it with my list *(takes out list)* First flour. Did you get my flour?

JACK

Yes. I got your flower. *(Dips into bag and brings out large daisy)*

SARAH

(Snatches it and hits him with it) Oh you stupid juvenile detergent. I didn't mean flower, I meant flour. *(consults list)* Did you get my bacon?

JACK What sort did you want?

SARAH Lean back.

JACK *(Stands sideways to audience and leans backwards)*
What sort did you want?

SARAH *(Watching him, bemused)* I told you -lean back.

JACK *(peering in bag still leaning back)* I didn't get that.

SARAH *(drily)* No - neither did they *(pointing to audience)*. I bet you didn't remember to get my chicken.

JACK Oh yes I did!

SARAH Did you remember to get it dressed!

JACK Of course I got it dressed *(He takes a prop chicken from bag. It has a little net skirt round its middle)*

SARAH What on earth's it wearing?

JACK It's wearing a "four"!

SARAH It looks like a tu-tu to me.

JACK Well, two two's are four *(to audience)* get it, tutus are four - Oh well, please yourselves!

SARAH But Jack, look, its got a bulb in its mouth! *(This prop can be easily accomplished by the props people. It needs to be larger than life of course and fitted with a bulb and battery which can be switched on)*

JACK *(Holds chicken towards audience so that head is clearly visible and switches on light)* Of course it has. It's a battery hen!!!

(Optional - They could go into a quick chorus if desired to get them off. Suggestion "Hey Little Hen" or We're off to Bake a Sunshine Cake"

(As they EXIT, the CAPTAIN and MATE come on and move towards aspidistra. Hopefully audience will not forget their duty).

CAPTAIN I say, what on earth is this *(goes to grab it)*.

AUDIENCE Oi! Oi! Oi!

(DAME pokes head round proscenium)

SARAH Hey! What are you doing? Don't you dare touch my aspidistra.

CAPTAIN Oh it's yours is it? I'd heard you'd got the biggest one in the world!!

SARAH *(pushes him)* Cheeky - but I like you. Thanks kids. Keep an eye on it won't you?
(She EXITS)

CAPTAIN Well here we are in Cheapside and this looks like Alderman Fitzwarren's shop, the gentleman who's engaged us to sail his ship to Morocco. *(To mate)* Tell me, have you ever sailed a ship before?

MATE *(Incredulously)* Have I sailed a ship? Have I sailed a ship - *(pause)* No!

CAPTAIN What jobs have you done before?

MATE Well I was a bouncer for Mothercare and then I became a Test Pilot for Airfix.

CAPTAIN Well that hardly qualifies you so I'll have to tell you about a boat. On one side is starboard and the other is portside, then below is the bulwarks.

MATE And where's the cowshed?

CAPTAIN What do you mean, the cowshed?

MATE Where the bull works!

CAPTAIN You're next to an idiot

MATE I'll move then *(he steps aside)*.

CAPTAIN Come back here. Now tell me, can you swim?

MATE Of course I can swim. When I was three years old my Father used to row me out to sea, throw me in and I'd swim the two miles back to shore.

CAPTAIN Wasn't that difficult at three years old?

MATE Oh, I quite enjoyed the swim. Getting out of the sack was the most difficult.

CAPTAIN Well now you're a seaman, do you have any requests?

MATE Yes. If I die can I be buried at sea?

CAPTAIN Of course you can, but why do you ask?

MATE Well, my wife says when I go, she's going to dance on my grave.

CAPTAIN Come on, smarten yourself up, here comes Alderman Fitzwarren.
(ENTER FITZWARREN)

FITZWARREN Ah, gentlemen!

BOTH (*glancing behind them*) Where?

FITZWARREN You're the two I engaged to sail my ship to Morocco.

MATE Right cock!

FITZWARREN Don't call me cock, call me Sir!

MATE Sorry, Sir Cock!

FITZWARREN Now I want you to go down to the harbour and make sure there are no rats on the ship before we sail.

BOTH Aye! - Aye! - Sir. Shiver me timbers, splice the mainbrace and all that rot.
(THEY EXIT)

FITZWARREN (*going over to aspidistra*) What on earth is this weedy looking thing doing here?

AUDIENCE Oi! Oi! Oi!
(SARAH runs on)

SARAH Hey, who's tampering with my tulip!!! Oh Fitzy, it's you. Haven't you been told you mustn't tickle a lady's aspidistra! You are naughty!

FITZWARREN Why Sarah, what a lovely looking dress. Who went for the fitting?

SARAH I'll have you know I have the figure and face of a twenty year old!

FITZWARREN Well you better give it back, you're getting it all wrinkled.

SARAH Ooooh! (*she wails*). You are unkind, I don't know why I work for you. I've got a nasty little bedroom right at the top of the house. Every time I look out of my window I can see the man opposite undressing for bed.

FITZWARREN I know your room and you certainly can't see into the house opposite.

SARAH You can if you stand on top of the wardrobe!!!

FITZWARREN Now come on, Sarah, I've been waiting for my, breakfast for ages. I'm starving!

SARAH Alright. I'll go and make you a nice tongue sandwich.

FITZWARREN Oh no! I couldn't possibly eat anything that comes out of an animals mouth.

SARAH How about a boiled egg then!

(Double take, and they both EXIT into shop. There is a commotion offstage and TOMMY THE CAT is chased on by half-a-dozen boys. He has a tin tied to his tail and the boys are hitting at him with sticks and throwing things. He cowers centre stage.)

BOYS (*separatley*) Go away) you rotten mangy old beast! Clear off you fleabitten ragbag!
Shoo! Shoo! You smelly old bundle of fur!
Get off you ugly looking apology for a pussy!

(ENTER DICK WHITTINGTON who sees the boys tormenting Tommy)

DICK

Hey, what do you think you're doing? Clear off before I smash your heads together.

(He chases boys away and goes over to Tommy who is shaking with fright).

DICK

Come on don't be afraid, I won't hurt you. *(Tommy backs away)* Look! See here, I've got a little milk left in my billycan. You can have it.

(he undoes his bundle which should be the traditional red and white spotted cloth tied onto a rustic stick, and takes out billycan which he places on ground. Tommy tries to get his head into it but can't. Sits looking puzzled then has a sudden idea. He takes his tail and dips tip into can then sucks milk off tail)

DICK

(laughing) Why you clever old puss, I'd never have thought of that! Here, let me untie that old tin can for you. *(He bends to untie and the lights dim whilst they freeze into still picture)*

(FLASH - ENTER FAIRY)

FAIRY

At last a lad both kind and true
His courage has rescued Tommy, who
Together will save this beleaguered town
From the evil, King Rat swears will bring it down!

(FLASH - ENTER KING RAT)

KING RAT

You interfering Fairy of the Bells!
You dare to think a country boy and his cat,
Can equal all the evil power invested in King Rat.
I'll meet your challenge and prove beyond any
doubt
That good shall perish before this night is out.

(EVIL LAUGH AND EXIT)

FAIRY

Of all his claims I have no fear
Our hero Dick Whittington, with his cat
Will survive all these evil schemes
And King Rat will be defeated by a young man's
dreams.

(EXIT FAIRY. Lighting returns to full and Dick finishes removing can, the action of which remained frozen through previous dialogue).

DICK

There, that's better isn't it? Now I'd better introduce myself. I'm Dick Whittington. What's your name?

TOMMY

Meow. Meow. Meow.

DICK

Oh dear, I wasn't very good at languages at school. Perhaps I should go to the library and get a catalogue!

TOMMY *(impatiently)* Meow! Me Me Me oww! Meow!

DICK

Sorry what was that! . *(He bends down to listen closely)* Oh your name's Moggy, that's not very original.
(CAT shakes head)

DICK

It's not Moggy! Well come on, one more time. What's that - Tommy! Is it Tommy? *(To children)* Is it Tommy, boys and girls? *(they respond and Tommy jumps up and down excitedly)*. Good, that's settled that then. Now I'm afraid I've not got any food with me. I've travelled a long way and eaten it along the way, so we'd better try and get a job somewhere. *(He sees Fitzwarren's stores)* I know, I'll try here, shall I? *(Cat nods)*.

(He moves over to door just as ALICE Fitzwarren steps from shop. They almost collide).

DICK

Oh excuse me, I was just going to enquire if there were any jobs available today?

ALICE

I don't think there are, actually. You see my Father owns these stores. I'm Alice Fitzwarren.

DICK How do you do? I'm Dick Whittington and this is my friend Tommy.

TOMMY Meow! Meow! *(He bows to Alice)*

DICK I've just walked all the way from Gloucestershire because I was told the streets of London were paved with gold, but so far I've not seen much evidence of it. And both Tommy and I are starving. We haven't eaten all day.

ALICE You poor things. Just a minute, I'll see what we've got in the larder. *(She EXITS into store)*

DICK I say Tommy, she's very beautiful isn't she? I'd certainly like to get to know her better.

(ALICE RE-ENTERS with some bread followed by Alderman FITZWARREN and SARAH who is carrying a large cheese dish)

ALICE Here you are Dick, I've found some bread and Sarah's got a piece of cheese for you.

(As she hands bread over, Sarah lifts cheese lid and gives a shriek for there sitting underneath is a huge rat. Fitzwarren grabs at it and it falls to ground. General confusion but Tommy leaps forward and grabs rat and chases all round with it, finally finishing centre front where he beats it to death amid cries of encouragement. During this scene the citizens have slowly entered wondering what is happening and they join in the cheers.)

FITZWARREN I say, what a wonderful ratter that cat is!

ALICE Father, he belongs to Dick Whittington here and they're looking for a job.

FITZWARREN Well I really can't afford any more apprentices but with the rats eating all my stocks it would certainly be useful to have a cat like that around wouldn't it?

DICK Oh Sir, please give us a job, we'll sleep anywhere, won't we Tommy? (*Cat nods*) Under the counter or down in the stockroom. I promise I'll work my fingers to the bone.

FITZWARREN That's no good. You can't serve in the shop with boney fingers. However, even though I can't afford to pay you much, you'll certainly be a useful addition to my staff, so you can start today - agreed?

DICK Oh thank you Sir, (*To Alice*) and thank you Miss Fitzwarren.

ALICE Please - call me Alice!

DICK Thank you - (*hesitates shyly*) Alice. What a wonderful day this has turned out to be!

(*Song. Suggestion - On a Wonderful Day Like Today.*)

(*Full Company Production Number into BLACKOUT at Finish*)