

NODA presents

# DICK WHITTINGTON

A traditional pantomime tale

*Written by*

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## SYNOPSIS

This is an up to date script in terms of its music, yet still provides the fun and tradition of the ever popular Dick Whittington. This is an ideal production for a small stage, yet can easily be transformed into a large production. There are strong characters within, yet still plenty of opportunities to bring in new and less experienced cast members, helping to build them into the 'stars' of the future. Parts include:

In order of appearance

- Fairy Bowbells** Female – The traditional 'Dick Whittington goodie' who acts as a narrator of the show. She is completely in charge and embraces her contact with the audience. She has no fear of the Rats. Singing essential.
- Dick Whittington** Female – Principal Boy. Arrives from Yorkshire in search of wealth and happiness. As the title role, this character should completely own the story and the stage. Confident and should have an excellent rapport with Tommy, the cat. Strong singer required.
- Tommy** Child – Either male or female. Needs to mime and be able to portray a wide range of emotions.
- Fitzwarren** Male – Alice's father and owner of the store. Used to being in charge, but is evermore becoming the victim of Queen Ratifa and her evil plans to gain control. Is quite well to do, but obviously losing his money quickly.
- Billy Dough** Male – (Cockney!) Comedy role. Son of Dame Dilly and works for Alderman Fitzwarren, although can be a little lazy. Must have a good rapport with the audience. Singing role.
- Alice Fitzwarren** Female – Principal Girl. Daughter of Alderman Fitzwarren. A confident young lady who falls for the charms of Dick Whittington. A strong singer required.
- Queen Ratifa** Female – Baddie of the show. Intent on becoming the most powerful in London and will stop at nothing to achieve this. Works with her 'Rat Pack'. Singing essential.
- Vermina** Female – part of Queen Ratifa's 'Rat Pack'. Vile and submissive towards the Queen. Will do anything to please her mistress. Singing part.
- Ratman** Male – Also part of Queen Ratifa's 'Rat Pack'. Equally vile and submissive towards the Queen and will also do anything to please his mistress. Singing part.

- Captain Cockle** Male – Comedy duo. Obviously the one in charge. Characterisation needed. Must be able to sing. Timing is absolutely essential.
- Burley Bosun** Male – Comedy duo. Stooge to Captain Cockle. Open to characterisation, however, is not necessarily interested in the female characters of the group! Must be able to sing. Timing is absolutely essential.
- Dame Dilly Dough** Male – Larger than life and should have excellent rapport with the audience. Works for Alderman Fitzwarren and mother of Billy Dough. A singing and comedy role. Timing is essential.
- Sailor** A small walk on part in Act Two. This is ideal for one of the younger chorus members and will allow them to develop their stage skills. Timing and singing essential.

## A C T O N E

### PROLOGUE

**In front of the curtains. We hear the sound of Bow bells. Fairy Bowbells enters through the curtains and moves to stand SR.**

Fairy Bowbells      Do you hear that sound? It is the sound of Bow bells. They are calling the hero of our Pantomime to old London Town. Who is the hero, I hear you ask?

**She puts her hand behind her ear and listens. When there is no response, she tuts and shakes her head.**

Fairy Bowbells      You need to do much better than that. The audience has to join in – that is if you are to enjoy the full Pantomime experience. I shall try again – only once though mind you! I am a very busy Fairy. **(She repeats) Who is the hero, I hear you ask? (Places her hand behind her ear again)**

Audience            Who is the hero?

Fairy Bowbells      That is a much better effort. I can now continue. The hero of this tale is a lad called Whittington. Dick Whittington. He is a poor Yorkshire boy who heads to London to seek his fame and fortune. He has been told the streets are paved with gold.

**Dick enters through the audience, carrying a knapsack. He joins Fairy Bowbells on stage. Fairy Bowbells announces his arrival.**

Fairy Bowbells      **(Pointing to Dick)** Here he comes now.

**Dick walks towards the stage speaking to the audience as he approaches.**

Dick                    I am a poor Yorkshire boy who heads to London to seek his fame and fortune. I have been told that the streets are paved with gold.

**Dick finishes centre stage.**

Fairy Bowbells      That is right Dick, you are within sight of your dream of riches.

Dick                    Are the streets really paved with gold?

Fairy Bowbells      Only to those who become heroes.

Dick                    Me? A hero? Oh no I'm not!

Fairy Bowbells      **(Encouraging the audience)** Oh yes you are!

Dick **(Shyly)** Oh no I'm not!

Fairy Bowbells **(With the audience)** Oh yes you are!

Dick But I can't be. I haven't done anything to make me a hero.

Fairy Bowbells Maybe not yet. But now you're in London, your adventure can begin.

Dick I must say, it all sounds exciting!

SONG *HERO*

Fairy Bowbells I shall help you become the hero of this Pantomime, Dick. You deserve to find wealth and happiness. Follow the path chosen for you and all you've ever dreamed of will become yours.

Dick I have dreams about my future. It's what made me set out for London.

Fairy Bowbells Keep dreaming Dick – they'll lead you on your true path. However, I feel I can help you further.

Dick What do you mean?

Fairy Bowbells As you make your way through London, you will encounter those who will help you, and those who will not. I shall gift you a friend.

Dick That would be wonderful. I've felt so lonely since I left Yorkshire.

**Fairy Bowbells waves her wand, the stage blackens briefly and Tommy comes through the curtains. The lights come back up.**

Fairy Bowbells This, young Dick, will be your companion.

Dick A cat?

**Tommy looks disgruntled at the comment. He looks away from Dick.**

Dick **(Realising)** I'm sorry, I didn't mean to be rude. It's that I didn't expect my new friend to be a cat.

**Tommy looks pensively towards Dick and then coyly to the floor.**

Dick You will be my friend, won't you?

**Tommy glances at Dick, then once again at the floor. Again at Dick and then nods his head and moves in to 'nuzzle' Dick.**



Dick Well if we're to be friends, then we had best introduce ourselves.  
**(Offering to shake hands)** My name is Dick. What's your name?

**Tommy shrugs.**

Dick Don't you have a name?

**Tommy shakes his head.**

Dick Well that will never do. I shall call you Thomas!

**Tommy, obviously unhappy, hisses and spits.**

Dick **(Laughing to the audience)** Obviously you don't like that name!

**Tommy whispers to Dick.**

Dick Ah! But I can call you Tommy. Well hello Tommy – it's a pleasure to meet you.

**They shake hands. Fairy Bowbells moves centre stage to join them.**

Fairy Bowbells And so Dick, with your new companion, you can now begin your adventures in London. To become a hero and find your just rewards will take a little time. May I suggest you start by finding a job?

Dick I must find work, for at the moment I am penniless. **(To Tommy)** Unless you have ... **(Tommy immediately shakes his head vigorously)** I guess that's a 'no' then!

Fairy Bowbells Now come on Dick, you must move along.  
Tommy here will keep you strong.

**She signals for them both to leave through the curtains. They exit.**

Fairy Bowbells His journey as our hero, won't be calm.  
There is a chance he'll come to harm.  
It won't be long before you'll see –  
Our villain who you will agree –  
Is so so so disgustingly vile  
She makes all Londoners run for a mile.

But let's not worry about her yet.  
There's a chance, us all, she won't upset.  
Now now, come on, don't look so down  
As we follow Dick to London town.

**Fairy music and she exits through the curtains.**

**SCENE ONE*****Outside Fitzwarren's Shop***

**Full stage. Typical London with flats that can equally represent the Docks. All Chorus, Billy and Alderman Fitzwarren are on stage.**

SONG

*WHO WILL BUY*

Fitzwarren            Good morning everyone. What a beautiful day it is.

Chorus                Good morning, Alderman Fitzwarren

Fitzwarren            Have you brought me some fresh flowers for the shop young lady?

Rose Seller            Only the very finest for you Alderman. I've brought you beautiful red roses.

Fitzwarren            Well as it's near Valentine's Day, I'll be able to double the price. And what about you young lady? Have you brought me fresh milk?

Milkmaid             Only the freshest milk. Straight from Farmer *[insert local name]*'s farm.

Fitzwarren            That's what I like to hear.

Strawberry Seller    I have lovely fresh strawberries, Alderman.

Knife Grinder        And all your knives are as sharp as can be.

Fitzwarren            Excellent service everyone. Bring it all into the shop.

**Fitzwarren turns towards the shop, SR, but it's closed.**

Fitzwarren            What's this? The shop is closed! Where on earth is Billy?

**Billy moves down from US.**

Billy                  'Ere I am Fitzzy!

Fitzwarren            Don't Fitzzy me, you cheeky young man.

Billy                  Sorry – keep your Fred on.

Fitzwarren            My 'Fred on'? You're not making sense.

Billy                  Fred Astaire! Hair!! **(To audience)** Come on – keep up!

Fitzwarren            You are late again.

Billy                  I'm sorry Alderman. It's just that me little brother Willy swallowed me alarm clock and I 'ad to get him to the hospital last night.

Fitzwarren Swallowed your alarm clock?

Billy Swallowed it 'ole. That's why I'm late.

Fitzwarren Does it bother him?

Billy Bother 'im? No! But it bothers me. Every time I go to wind it up, 'e bites me finger!

**He starts to laugh at his own joke. All the way through this, the chorus begin to exit. USL, USR and SL. All except Rose Seller, Milkmaid, Strawberry Seller and Knife Grinder.**

Fitzwarren Oh for goodness sake, get the shop open. And where's that good for nothing mother of yours?

Billy She'll be along shortly. She's just finishing this morning's baking for the shop.

**Billy enters shop, SR. The four sellers move DS.**

Rose Seller Alderman! I think it's a disgrace.

Fitzwarren What's a disgrace?

Milkmaid So do I. The town is overrun with rats. They're everywhere. I even found one in my bath this morning.

Fitzwarren What was it doing there?

Milkmaid The breast stroke, I think?

Fitzwarren You could cook a 'rat-atouille' with them!

Knife Grinder Don't be ridiculous. We've heard about your plans to become Lord Mayor of London – and if I were you, I'd form some serious plan of action. That is of course if you don't want Alderman [*insert name of local councillor*] to beat you to the job.

Fitzwarren Alderman [*insert name*]? S/He has no plans on how to deal with the rats, unlike me! I discussed my plans with Alice only yesterday.

**Alice enters from the shop, SR.**

Alice Did I hear my name mentioned?

Strawberry Seller Your father was telling us about his supposed plans to rid us of these rats.

Alice **(Turning to her father)** What plans are those Father?

Fitzwarren **(Encouraging her to join his scheme)** You remember Alice. My plans!

Alice **(Realising)** Oh yes, of course Father – those plans! Excellent plans if I may say so too!

Strawberry Seller Well I wish you'd say what they are.

Fitzwarren But that would be telling.

Alice Yes, that would be telling!

Knife Grinder Your plans had better be good – that's all we can say, or you'll have no chance of being Lord Mayor. Let's go and find out what Alderman [*insert name*] plans are. I suspect they may be a little grander than yours.

**The sellers exit – SL.**

Alice Was I meant to understand any of that Father?

Fitzwarren I was trying to stall people about my intended plan to rid the town of rats.

Alice You mean you've finally come up with a plan?

Fitzwarren No my dear. That's the problem. And if I don't think of something quickly then not only will I have no chance of becoming Lord Mayor, but we shall have no stock left in the shop. They're eating us out of house, home and shop!

Alice Don't worry father, I'm sure you'll think of something soon. Let's go inside and have a nice cup of tea. It'll help you think of something.

**They exit into the shop – SR. The stage darkens and sinister music is heard. Queen Ratifa, Ratman and Vermina enter from USL. Queen Ratifa is laughing evilly.**

Ratifa That foolish Alderman thinks he is clever enough to hatch a plan to rid the town of me!

Vermina How dare he, Your Majesty. He is a weak and foolish man.

Ratifa He knows no better than to mess with my own evil plans.

Ratman Have you decided what you are going to do?

Ratifa Do? **(Shouting)** Do?! I, Queen Ratifa shall do nothing. It is you, my faithful servants who shall be doing!

Ratman I apologise, Your Majesty. Have you decided how best we can serve you?

Ratifa As a matter of fact, I have. Vermina – have you managed to destroy the Alderman’s stock?

Vermina Very nearly, Your Majesty. The rattlings have gnawed their way through most of it.

Ratifa But it’s taking too much time.

Ratman You must be patient.

Ratifa I will not be told to be patient. I need results now.

Ratman Then we need to speed up the Alderman’s demise.

Vermina And how can we do that?

Ratifa **(Sinister)** Poison!

Vermina) Poison?

Ratman )

Ratifa My very own rat poison!

Ratman And where do we place this – poison?

Ratifa Where it will do the most damage.

**She hands over a small vial.**

Ratifa Enter the Alderman’s shop and pour this into his freshest milk.

**She laughs evilly, joined by Ratman and Vermina. They are goading the audience.**

Audience Boo!

Ratman Go ahead – boo all you like. It’s a dastardly plan.

Vermina The very best, Your Majesty.

Ratifa **(Smugly)** I know! Fitzwarren will drink the milk for his breakfast – and then ....

**She mimes choking by putting her hand round her neck. Ratman and Vermina do the same.**

Vermina And with luck – the same fate for his pretty little daughter!

Ratifa In you go – do not fail me.

Ratman Do not worry. By the end of this very day, Fitzwarren will be no more. Come Vermina.

**Ratman and Vermina exit SR into the store.**

Ratifa **(To audience)** Soon Fitzwarren will be no more. I shall take his Alderman's chain and then the way will be clear for me to become Lord Mayor of London. My filthy rattlings will be able to live in the dirt and grime they so like. The stench will be immense! **(She laughs evilly)**

**Fairy Bowbells enters from USR and moves FSR.**

Fairy Bowbells Just wait a minute, you evil rat. I think you'll find that your plans have a flaw.

Ratifa You would say that. I think you're jealous of my brilliance. A plot to beat all plots.

Fairy Bowbells But you forget that I appeared first. I've already appointed a hero who will foil your plan.

Ratifa **(Looking around)** I see no-one near to foil my plan.

Fairy Bowbells Just bide your time, he'll be here soon.

Ratifa And by that time the Alderman will be poisoned and I shall have claimed his chain! **(Moving to exit DSL)** You're too late Fairy Bowbells! Ha ha ha!

**Queen Ratifa exits again, challenging the audience.**

Fairy Bowbells **(Moving to FCS)** Oh dear. I didn't consider she'd go as far as poisoning people. It looks as though it's not enough to make Dick and Tommy our heroes. I need more help. Now let me see.

**She starts to cast a spell.**

Fairy Bowbells Alderman Fitzwarren is not well  
Which is why I need to cast this spell.  
I need to come up with a notion  
Which will nullify that nasty potion.  
But who can help, you do exclaim?  
I know, I'll go and find the Dame!

**Fairy exits SL. Captain Cockle and Burley Bosun enter USL.**

Bosun Here we are Captain Cockle. Alderman Fitzwarren's store.

Captain Aharr!

**Captain nudges Bosun and sends him flying.**

Captain            Belay there. Splice the mainbrace. Shiver me timbers, yer scurvy dogs. Aharr!

Bosun             Why do you say that?

Captain            Because it's what all experienced sailors say.

Bosun             But I don't say that.

Captain            That's because you're not an experienced sailor.

Bosun             But I am! I'm a Boatswain.

Captain            **(Spitting)** You pathetic pirate. It's not boatswain. It's 'Bosun'. A real pirate always drops his 'w's!

**Bosun reacts as though Captain is spitting in his face.**

Captain            Well now we've established you are a Bosun – what is your first name?

Bosun             It's Burley. Burley Bosun!

Captain            **(Confused)** Is that because you think you are butch, strong and all muscle?

Bosun             No – it's because that's where I'm from. Burley in Wharfedale.

Captain            I might have expected a foolish answer like that.

Bosun             I'm as clever as you are.

Captain            That's what you think. I'll test you then. Suppose you were in the Pacific Ocean and facing north. What would be on your right-hand?

Bosun             Oh, that's easy. My thumb and four fingers.

Captain            **(Ignoring him)** Then suddenly a terrible storm blows up. The waves are a hundred feet high. What do you do?

Bosun             I'd throw out an anchor, Captain. **(He runs to SR and pretends to throw out an anchor)**

Captain            Then another storm blows up from another direction. The waves are now two hundred feet high. What do you do now?

**Bosun now runs SL, throws another imaginary anchor.**

Bosun             I'd throw out another anchor Captain.

- Captain **(Continuing to over dramatise)** And now an even worse storm brews. The waves are five hundred feet high. What do you do now?
- Bosun **(Running to the back of the stage)** I'd throw out another anchor.
- Captain Wait a minute. Where are you getting all these anchors from?
- Bosun Same place, you're getting all these storms from. Anyway, what are we doing here?
- Captain We are here to see Alderman Fitzwarren. He be enquiring about a crew for his ship. Seems he needs to re-stock his shop.

**Alice comes out of the shop and places a bucket of red roses by the door.**

- Captain **(Nudging Bosun)** Look at that beauty. She be a right looker. Ask her if she wants to shiver ye timbers!
- Bosun Oh I could never do that. She's not my type.
- Captain That be nonsense. Ye need to show her what a true sailor is made of.
- Bosun I'd rather not, Captain.

**Alice re-enters the shop as the song starts.**

SONG

*BALLAD OF CAPTAIN AND BOSUN*

**At the end of the song, Alice comes back out of the shop to place another bucket of flowers. She feels unwell and leans against the shop, wiping her brow. Captain and Bosun run to catch her as she falls. They 'fan' her as Dick and Tommy enter from SL.**

- Dick **(Shouting)** Here! What do you think you two are doing? Leave her alone.

**Tommy runs over to 'tackle' the pair.**

- Bosun **(To Tommy)** Leave me alone. I've done nothing wrong.

**Tommy chases the Captain and Bosun off USR.**

- Captain **(Exiting)** Quick! We'll see Fitzwarren later.

**Tommy walks back down stage with a 'done and dusted' clap of his hands as Dick goes to help Alice.**



- Dick                    Are you alright, Miss?
- Alice                    Yes, thank you. I just came over a bit funny. I actually think they were trying to help me.
- Dick                    Well if you don't mind me saying, I didn't like the look of them at all. However, they have given me an excuse to help such a pretty girl. Tell me – what is your name?
- Alice                    It's Alice. Alice Fitzwarren. My father owns this store.
- Dick                    Do you know if he has any vacancies? I've just arrived from Yorkshire and I am in need of work.
- Alice                    You'd have to ask him yourself. But you must excuse me – I'm on my way to run an errand. I'm sorry I can't talk longer. I wish you luck and good fortune in London.

**Alice exits CSL but as she does, she deliberately drops her purse. Tommy sees it and picks it up.**

- Dick                    **(To audience)** I can't believe my luck. She must be the reason I've been drawn to this part of London. I think I've fallen in love.

**Tommy nudges Dick to draw his attention to the purse.**

- Dick                    What's the matter Tommy?

**Tommy indicates that it has been dropped by Alice.**

- Dick                    What. You mean this is Alice's purse.

**Tommy nods.**

- Dick                    Then I must return it at once. I shall speak to her father in the shop.

**Dick knocks on the door of Fitzwarren's store. Billy answers.**

- Billy                    'An what can I do for you? The shop ain't open yet.

- Dick                    I found a purse, and I believe it belongs to a young lady called Alice Fitzwarren.

- Billy                    'Ere – you're a bit honest for round these parts. What you after?

- Dick                    Me? Nothing. Well actually I am after a job. I don't know if there's anything going here?

- Billy                    Oh, **yer** after an Uncle Bob?

- Dick                    Uncle Bob?

Billy                   Corn on the cob!

Dick                    Corn on the cob?

Billy                   Job!

Billy                   Actually, I don't feel well this morning. I feel a bit Moby Dick.

Dick                    Don't you mean Tom and Dick! **(A knowing look to the audience – feeling smug at the attempt)**

Billy                   Don't you start getting cheeky.

**Fitzwarren comes out of the shop.**

Fitzwarren            What's going on here?

Billy                   This geezer has found young Alice's purse, Sir.

Fitzwarren            I am most grateful young man. Can I offer you a reward?

Dick                    Oh no Sir. I do not wish for money.

Billy                   **(To audience)** Listen to 'im. 'E don't want money!

Dick                    Well actually, I do want money, but I want to work for it.

Billy                   **(To audience)** 'E wants to work for it?

Dick                    Even my cat would work for you Sir.

Fitzwarren            Can he catch rats?

Dick                    **(Looking at Tommy for approval – and gets it)** Of course he can.

Fitzwarren            Then I shall hire you on a trial basis, starting now. I think I've eaten something which hasn't agreed with me. Get into that shop and start work.

Dick                    Thank you, Sir. We won't let you down. Come on Tommy.

**Dick and Tommy enter the shop.**

Fitzwarren            Where is that good for nothing mother of yours? She should have been here half an hour ago.

Billy                    She'll be 'ere soon, Sir. Just putting her slap on as I left.

Fitzwarren            That could take hours.

**Enter Dame Dilly – USR.**

- Dilly 'Ere cheeky. I heard that! You can't rush when dealing with such natural beauty as mine!
- (To audience)** Well hello, hello, hello – pleased to meet you, I'm Mrs Dough. Although to my friends I'm known as Dame Dilly. And I'm sure we'll become friends very quickly. Do you like my nice pink dress? It's my favourite colour.
- Fitzwarren Why are you so late this morning, Dame Dilly?
- Dilly I was right on time with my baking. Buns in the oven. I have to admit my baps are even looking fine today! And never fear children, I even remembered – sweeties!
- Billy That'll cheer everyone up, Mum. Everyone's feeling a bit Sue Lawley **(nursing his stomach)** Poorly!
- Dilly Oh that'll never do. Sweeties should cheer everyone up! **(She throws one sweet to each side of the audience)** There you go.
- Billy Mum! Stop being so Sean Bean.
- Dilly I'm not being mean. **(Points out to the audience)** But that lot out there are so miserable they don't deserve any more sweets.
- Fitzwarren **(Moving SR of Dame – still appears poorly)** You're being a bit tight.
- Dilly Call it deflation!
- Billy I know what'll get this lot going. A competition. I like a competition. 'Ere boss, you can take that side **(SR)** and I'll take this side **(SL)**.
- Dilly And I'll be the judge! The loudest side wins sweets!
- Billy We'll sing it through once – then all you have to do is sing as loud as you can.
- Dilly You'd better tell 'em the words! Are you ready?

**Billy, Dilly and Fitzwarren sing through the song.**

SONG

*NICE ONE DILLY*

- Fitzwarren Right – my side first. Now come on – sing as loud as you can. That's if you want sweets!

**Fitzwarren leads the audience SR in the song. Some of the chorus enter USR and join in their side. They clap and cheer as the side does well.**

Dilly Oh I say. That was very good.

Billy I bet my side can do better.

**Billy leads the audience SL in the song. More chorus enter USL and join in his side. They also clap and cheer as the side does well.**

Dilly Well I really don't know what to do now. You all did so well.

**Dame Dilly decides a winner and throws out sweets to the winning side – perhaps being generous and giving some to the losers, too! Alice enters from SL.**

Alice Daddy – I don't feel well at all.

Fitzwarren Now you come to mention it – I don't feel too good myself.

Billy Me neither!

**They are all clutching their stomachs, wiping their brows.**

Dilly **(Suddenly)** That's it!

Fitzwarren That's what?

Dilly That's why I was late! Just as I was finishing my baking, a rather lovely lady came by and asked me to make up a special potion. She said that people would suffer if I didn't follow the recipe to the letter and bring it immediately to the shop.

Fitzwarren Well give it here. I'll drink anything to make this pain go away.

SONG *DAME DILLY WEARS PINK*

**The remaining chorus enter to join in the song. At the end, the curtains close.**

## SCENE TWO

### *A London Street*

**In front of the curtains. Queen Ratifa, Ratman and Vermina enter through the fire curtains.**

Ratifa I cannot believe my plan – my beautiful rat poison – has been foiled. And by a pathetic, putrid fairy at that.

Vermina A most excellent plot too, Your Majesty. What shall we do now?

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