

DICK WHITTINGTON

An original pantomime

by Gail Lowe

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NODA LTD
15 The Metro Centre
Peterborough PE2 7UH

Telephone: 01733 374790
Fax: 01733 237286

Email: info@noda.org.uk
www.noda.org.uk

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SYNOPSIS: *DICK WHITTINGTON* by Gail Lowe

6F, 6M, 4 either; plus chorus and scope for dancers if required

6 main sets plus 4 insets or curtains, as elaborate or simple as necessary

This new and original script follows the adventures of Dick and his friends as they travel from London to Morocco in search of fame and fortune. It has a strong, comic story line and some entertaining new characters as well as the traditional favourites of Kitty, Sarah the Cook, King Rat and the Sultan. There are some very strong roles for women such as the tomboyish Alice, the man-chasing Maneeta, the ever-proper Miss Peabody, and the evil Esmerelda. A fun-filled panto from start to finish: a cat, a camel and lots of laughs, culminating in an exciting showdown by a shark pool in King Rat's Lair.

CHARACTERS *(in order of appearance)*

Fairy Bowbells	A good fairy
Esmerelda	A wicked witch - ambitious and ruthless
Rosalind	A young girl
Kitty	A loveable cat
Alderman Fitzwarren	A rich merchant and ship owner
Bosun Bowleg	A burly sailor, first mate to Alderman Fitzwarren
Sarah the Cook	Cook to the Fitzwarren household
Alice Fitzwarren	A tom-boyish principal girl, and daughter to Alderman Fitzwarren
Dick Whittington	An attractive but -shy young man
King Rat	King of the rats - a slimy, nasty piece of work
I	A simple private detective
Spy	An even simpler private detective, slightly camp
Miss Peabody	An -Ever Ready Girl Guide Captain
Jeeves	A traditional English butler to the Sultan
The Sultan	A playful ruler of Morocco
Maneeta	The Sultana of Morocco

Various townsfolk, sailors, gaolers, harem girls, guards and rats.

NOTES ON CASTING

The character of *Dick Whittington* can be played by either a male, or female playing principal boy

The character of *I* can be played by either a male or female

Fairy Bowbells and *Kitty* can either be played as separate parts, or by the same person

The chorus can be expanded or contracted to accommodate any number of participants.

ACT ONE

Prologue

A London Dockyard in the early hours of the morning. A row of large houses stands on one side of the stage, one of which is the house of the Fitzwarren family. In front of the houses is an large yard on which several market stalls are set up. The dockside is on the opposite side of the stage to the houses.

The stage is very dimly lit. Mist rises eerily from the river. There is a sudden crack of thunder.

There is a distant sound of bells which gets nearer and nearer. The dawn begins to break. The bells become nearer and Fairy Bowbells enters. She carries a small box and reads from a piece of paper.

Bowbells This must be the place - I've followed the instructions. I just hope I'm not too late.

She looks around fearfully.

Bowbells *(Calling out)* Hello - is anyone there? *(Pause)* I've brought what you wanted.
(Pause) Hello?

Esmerelda *(From the shadows)* Did anyone see you?

Bowbells looks around nervously - looking for the source of the voice.

Bowbells Hello - who's there?

Esmerelda *(Angrily)* I said did anyone see you?

Bowbells No, no - I'm here all alone.

Esmerelda Show me the talisman

Bowbells Where's Rosalind?

Esmerelda The talisman! Show me the talisman.

Bowbells takes a locket out of the box - It is a necklace which glows slightly. She holds it up. A cloaked figure emerges slowly from the shadows. She is bent double and walks slowly.

Esmerelda Give it to me.

Bowbells *(Snatching the talisman away)* Not until I see Rosalind.

Esmerelda Hah! Sentimental idiot. There.

Esmerelda pulls a black drape off a cage. Inside is a little girl.

Bowbells Rosalind

Rosalind Fairy Bowbells.

Esmerelda *(Threatening Rosalind)* Now give me the talisman - we made a deal, remember.

Rosalind No Bowbells - it's a trap.

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Esmerelda Shut up brat! *(She stabs at Rosalind)* The Talisman - give it to me.

Bowbells throws the talisman to the ground out of Esmerelda's reach.

Bowbells There.

Esmerelda struggles slowly towards the talisman. Bowbells rushes to let Rosalind out.

Bowbells *(To Rosalind)* Are you alright?

Rosalind I'm fine, but it's a trap Fairy Bowbells - don't trust her.

Bowbells Don't worry - now run home quickly - go. *(She pushes Rosalind off stage.)*

Bowbells turns to face Esmerelda but Esmerelda has grown tall and strong from holding the talisman. She places it round her neck. There is a crack of thunder.

Esmerelda *(disdainfully)* Too late Fairy Bowbells. The talisman is mine, and with it, comes the source of all your fairy magic. Now I need only acquire the second talisman and my power, and your destruction, will be complete.

Bowbells Their magic comes from love - your hate will destroy them.

Bowbells becomes weaker as her energy is drained by Esmerelda.

Esmerelda You fool. Their magic - and magic is power. See how weak you are now - and see how strong I am. *(She laughs)*

Bowbells *(Becoming weaker)* Please, please - you don't know what you're doing.

Esmerelda Hah. You and your trust! You exchange your most precious source of magic for the life of an ungrateful mortal and then tell me I don't know what I'm doing. Idiot *(She hurls a spell at Bowbells who reels in pain)*. Can't you see they're not worth the bother. But let's see how they love you now, Fairy No-bells.

Esmerelda hurls another spell at Bowbells. There is a crack of thunder and Fairy Bowbells lets out a cry. The stage darkens for a moment as Bowbells is transformed into a cat. When the lights come up, we see Bowbells (now Kitty) who meows loudly in pain. Esmerelda laughs loudly and kicks Kitty as she exits. Kitty limps offstage.

Scene 1 - London Street by the Docks (as Prologue)

The lights come up on a bustling street market full of merchants, townsfolk, sailors etc.

SONG Chorus *(Suggestion: WITH A LITTLE BIT OF LUCK)*

At the end of the song, the people begin selling their wares, loading ships etc. The Bosun and Alderman Fitzwarren enter. Alderman is a finely dressed merchant who has made his money as a ship owner. The Bosun is a large, burly man who tries to affect an upper class accent - poorly.

Alderman Ah Bosun, all ready for tonight? Looks like the weather's going to be perfect.

Bosun Er yes - well you see sir, it's like this. . .

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Alderman Like what?
 Bosun Yesterday was the 24th birthday of Old Wooden Leg's dog, Tigger, the finest and oldest sea dog in the world.

Alderman Yes.

Bosun So the men thought they'd all have a little celebration, cos of his living to a record breaking age without having so much as a flea in his ear sir - h'if you know what I mean.

Alderman Yes yes man, get on with it.

Bosun And so sir, they all celebrated in the traditional way.

Alderman You mean..? *(Alderman mimes drinking a pint)*

Bosun *(Very solemnly)* Oh no sir, much worse than that.

Alderman *(Suddenly struck by panic)* You don't mean.....

Bosun I'm afraid so sir.

Alderman No. How could they do this to me - my best crew. I've warned them before. You can't mean a birthday cake.

Bosun I do sir. I tried to warn 'em but they woz 'aving none of it. I even 'id her recipe book sir, but one of the lads tripped over it and gave it 'er back.

Alderman Chocolate?

Bosun Yes, sir, and a rum 'un at that.

Alderman I see. Then it's serious. Are they all....?

Bosun *(Removing his cap)* It appears so. Not one of 'em is in a fit state to go anywhere - except to the "you know whats" sir. In fact, we've had to take the h'unprecedented step of installing new "you know whats" at the back of the "you know where" sir - that old pier's not what it used to be.

Alderman And the dog?

Bosun Dead sir - took one look and fell stone dead.

Alderman Well this is disastrous. We must sail tomorrow or we'll miss the tide. We'll just have to get another crew. Put up a notice advertising for people with relevant experience. And send my commiserations to Old Wooden Leg will you - what a terrible way to go.

Bosun I, I sir.

Alderman Oh, and Bosun

Bosun Yes?

Alderman What's the daily rate for sailors these days?

Bosun 4 pence ha'penny a day standard, and sixpence for them wot 'as both legs sir.

Alderman Right. Well halve it just this once eh. Can't miss an opportunity to save money eh?

Bosun *(Looking at him knowingly)* Yes sir, leave it to me.

Alderman and Bosun exit. Sarah is heard singing from the back of the stage, "Tiptoe through the Tulips". She enters, carrying a bunch of tulips, her hair in large curlers. She is pushing a shopping trolley loading with make-up products.

Sarah *(To the audience)* Tip toe through the tulips..... *(to the audience - surprised)* Oh my goodness, an audience at last - you don't know how pleased I am to see you! I was beginning to think I was on El Dorado (or similar). Hello everybody, boys and girls, mums and dads, how are you? (HELLO etc.) My name's Sarah the Cook, and I work for Mr Fitzwarren, the merchant. Well I say work, but I cook all this gorgeous food and no one seems that hungry around here these days - I can't imagine why. Oh but he's a nice man you know - that Mr Fitzwarren, - a very very nice man. He said to me the other day, "Sarah", he said, "what would you give to the man who has everything - wealth, charm, good looks?" I said, "my phone number". I said "I have a ready wit", he said "fine - let me know when it's ready!" Oh, but it's nothing like that you know - he's not my type - he's too refined. I like a man with whose still got all his rough edges, and you see, I've already got a boyfriend, - he's tall, dark and handsome...

The townsfolk have entered and are listening intently from behind.

Boy ...and blind.

Sarah *(In a dream)* ... and blind. *(To the boy)* Who asked you? *(To the Audience again)* Ooh he's so hunky. You know, we've got a date tonight and I'm so excited, I've just been to the beauty salon.

Boy Closed were they?

Sarah Watch it. *(To audience)* Do you like my new hairdo - cost me a packet.

Boy ... of spaghetti by the looks of it.

Sarah *(Ignoring the interruptions)* I haven't felt this good in years - not since I accidentally backed into the spin programme on my washing machine - that brought a tear to my eye I can tell you. *(Singing)* Tip toe, through the tulips....

Trader Why are you in such a good mood, Sarah?

Sarah Spring is in the air - the birds are singing, the bees are buzzing, the time has come to pay heed to nature's little calling...

Trader You too - well you'll have to wait your turn like the rest of 'em. They're putting up a new one behind the pier.

An ill sailor runs quickly across the stage.

Sarah Love dear boy - I'm talking about love. *(Suddenly poetic)* Love is nature's way of giving, that reason to be living, that golden crown that makes a man a king.

Trader Oh - I thought you'd got the "you know whats".

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Sarah That's a vicious lie and I'll deny everything!
Alice enters. She is dressed more like a man than a girl and looks like she's just been in a fight.

Alice Morning Sarah

Sarah Morning Alice - at last, someone who appreciates class.

The entire cast look round at Sarah's behind, comparing it for size.

Sarah I said class!

Alice *(Concealing a smile)* Er...nice hairdo Sarah - what's the special occasion?

Sarah No special occasion. Not all us girls want to go around looking like Calamity Jane you know... Oh all right, I've got a date tonight.

Alice Really with a man - who ?

Sarah Of course with a man, and don't sound so surprised. Anyway, it's a secret?

Alice *(With a knowing look)* Oh, yes. Wouldn't be Bosun Bowleg by any chance?

Sarah How do you know?

Alice Feminine intuition - and you're always so rude to him, it couldn't be anyone else.

Sarah It's that obvious huh?

Alice Only if you know what to look for. Anyway, I thought you were married already Sarah.

Sarah *(Melodramatically)* Oh I was, yes - it was tragic, tragic. For 10 years my husband and I were blissfully happy.

Alice What happened?

Sarah We met and got married. It was love at first sight - I just went off him on the second viewing. I asked him if he had any liquid assets and he said "yes". Turned out to be three bottles of scotch and a fizzy orange. You know, my mother used to say "Jack was the sweetest, most darling husband a woman could want - too bad you married George!" But don't you worry about me, cos this time I've got it all worked out, perfectly - I've been reading Lady Di's best seller - "*How to keep your man*" - and you could take a lesson from me too young lady.

Alice Oh yes.

Sarah Yes.

SONG Sarah, Alice and Chorus: (Suggestion: *KEEP YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL*)

After the song, the Chorus exit. Bosun enters carrying a poster.

Alice Look out, now's your chance. (She exits)

Sarah hides. She spies Bosun about to put up the poster and creeps up behind him to make him jump.

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Sarah Boo!

Bosun Do you mind not molesting a member of His Majesty's Naval Forces. I was in the middle of a very delicate manoeuvre.

Sarah His Majesty's what?

Bosun (Proudly) Naval forces.

Sarah Huh. The only naval forces you know are the ones which mean your trousers don't fit. How long were you in the navy?

Bosun About 5 ft 10 inches, same as now.

Sarah *(With a knowing smile)* That's my boy. Anyway what are you doing?

Bosun I'm creating an h'advertisement for crew to sail on the Hey Ho Me Hearty. Thanks to your latest -burnt offering the whole crew's got dire....problems.

Sarah I hope you're not inferring that my cooking was to blame.

Bosun I never h'infer nothing! I was stating a fact!

Sarah Well, how ungrateful can you get. That's the last time I cook anything for your uncouth thugs again. Ever.

Bosun Promise?

Sarah What's wrong with my cooking?

Bosun Well take that spring lamb you cooked yesterday.

Sarah What about it?

Bosun Four of the men broke their teeth on the springs.

Sarah Well, at least you got a choice?

Bosun What's that?

Sarah Take it or leave it.

Bosun If only it were that simple!

Sarah *(Noticing to the poster)* And what, may I ask, is that?

Bosun *(Proudly)* This is the h'advertisement.

Sarah That won't get you a crew?

Bosun Why not?

Sarah Well for a start, you don't spell enquire with an "h", and there's an "a" in seamen!!

Sarah exits.

Bosun Oh. *(He hurriedly changes the poster which now reads:)*

CAPTAIN & ABLE SEAMEN WANTED
to sail with the
Hey Ho Me Hearty
Able Seamen 3p per day
Not-So-Able Seamen 4p / 2 per day
Enquire within.

He pins the poster to the door and exits.

Dick Whittington enters. He is alone and carries a small stick with a handkerchief tied onto it.

Dick This must be London, but I've walked round three times and there's no sign of any streets paved with gold. My feet are killing me, I've not eaten since yesterday and if I don't find a job soon, there'll be nothing left of me to worry about. Better just rest here a while - I'm lost anyway.

He sits down and closes his eyes. Several rats enter, carrying Kitty in a net. They are about to throw her into the river when Dick wakes up.

Rats Ding Dong Bell, Pussy's down the well....

Dick Hey you - stop that - leave the cat alone.

They put Kitty down and turn on Dick.

Rat Who's going to make us fishface?

Dick I will, now leave her alone.

Rat Get him lads.

The rats attack Dick Whittington, three to one and appear to be winning. Kitty meows loudly from the net. Suddenly, Alice enters and runs to help Dick. Together they fight off the rats. Dick unties Kitty from the net.

Dick Are you alright little cat?

Kitty purrs loudly.

Dick *(To Kitty)* Lucky for you I came along when I did - *(to Alice)* and lucky for me you came along when you did. Thanks - for a minute there I thought I was a gonner.

Alice That's OK. Three onto one's not a fair fight.

Dick Where did you learn to fight so well?

Alice Oh, round and about - there're some pretty rough characters around here you know.

Dick So I see. *(Introducing himself)* Dick Whittington, at your service.

Alice Alice Fitzwarren - pleased to meet you.

Dick *(Taken aback)* Alice? As in Wonderland - as in girl?

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Alice I'm not so sure about the Wonderland - but definitely as in girl.

(Alice removes her hat letting her hair down)

Dick Sorry - I'd didn't mean to be rude. It's just that you're clothes, I mean, they're .

Alice That's OK - I'm used to it. Everyone says I don't dress or act much like a girl so I guess it's no surprise.

Dick It is for me - do you live round here?

Alice Round about, yes. What about you?

Dick Oh no. A small village miles from here. There's not much there now so I left.

Alice And you've come to find fame and fortune in the big city, right?

Dick Something like that, yes. This is London isn't it?

Alice Yes - the very heart of it.

Dick *(Disappointed)* I thought so.

Alice It's not that bad really - not when you get to know it.

Dick I'm sure. It's just not what I expected that's all.

Alice What did you expect? No, don't tell me - all the street's to be paved with gold, right? *(She laughs)*

Dick laughs uneasily at first - then realises she is only teasing him.

Dick Now you mention it - it does sound a bit silly. I thought I might at least be able to find a job, but I've been round the city three times now and there's nothing.

Alice Well I may be able to help you there - they're looking for crew on the Hey Ho Me Hearty. It's a ship that's sailing on tomorrow's tide. How are your sea legs?

Dick I've never had the chance to find out.

Alice I wouldn't let that bother you - you look OK to me. And nothing's impossible you know.

SONG Alice / Dick: *(Suggestion: PICK YOURSELF UP)*

Dick Do you think I stand a chance - about a job I mean? Where can I apply?

Alice *(Pointing to the Fitzwarren House)* Over there - ask for Mr Fitzwarren, he's the owner.

Dick Isn't that your name - Fitzwarren?

Alice *(Smiling)* I dare say they could do with a ship's cat too. Better hurry though, it sails tomorrow. I'd better be off, I've got things to do.

Kitty starts to pull Dick over to the house

Dick Yes. Right. *(Alice begins to exit) (To Alice)* Oh, wait, I mean, nice to meet you.

Alice And you too. *(She tries to leave)*

Dick *(Calling after her)* Yes....., er, and thanks again.

Alice You're welcome. *(She tries to leave again)*

Dick *(Calling her back again)* Alice...I, er...well, I.... will I see you again? I mean, hypothetically speaking, do you think the daughter of a rich ship owner would speak to a poor cabin boy if she saw him again?

Alice *(With a knowing smile)* Hypothetically speaking - I think she would. *(Alice exits).*

Dick and Kitty cross to the house, as Esmerelda enters. Kitty suddenly sees Esmerelda and cries out, running off stage in fright.

Dick Hey, Kitty, where're you going, come back. *(He runs after Kitty)*

King Rat enters, followed by several smaller rats dragging caskets.

Esmerelda *(Striking King Rat)* Where have you been - you know I don't like to be kept waiting. I was just beginning to think you weren't going to turn up. You're lucky I'm feeling patient today.

King Rat *(Squirming and hissing as he speaks)* We had a little problem with one of the guards mistress.

Esmerelda I trust you "negated" the situation?

King Rat Of yes mistress, - he's definitely "negated".

Esmerelda Good, it wouldn't do to have my reputation tarnished. Did you get all the treasure?

King Rat All eighteen cases - yes.

Esmerelda I think you'll find it's twenty cases, don't you?

King Rat Ah, yes..of course - twenty cases - slip of the tongue, slip of the tongue.

Esmerelda *(Threateningly grabbing his ear)* Well make sure you don't have any more slips eh? I can be prone to a little "accident" myself. *(She throws him to the ground)*

King Rat No mistress, I won't mistress, pretty mistress.

Esmerelda Now show me the goods.

King Rat opens one of the caskets to reveal that it is full of jewels, Esmerelda picks them up

Esmerelda You're sure this will be enough to secure the second talisman.

King Rat Of course mistress. Only a fool would refuse 20 caskets of treasure in exchange for one necklace.

Esmerelda That's what worries me. You're sure that old fool the Sultan has the second talisman.

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King Rat Oh yes mistress.

Esmerelda Good, and if he won't part with it in exchange for the treasure, there are always alternative methods of persuasion. Where are those guards you hired - I don't want Fitzwarren nosing.

King Rat They should be here soon mistress.

Esmerelda Well get this lot out of sight and go and check.

King Rat Yes mistress.

They all exit taking the treasure with them.

I & Spy enter talking as they go. They are dressed as American private detectives with trilbys and overcoats. Spy carries a very colourful umbrella and I carries a large book entitled "How to Be A Successful Spy". Throughout the scene, they act as if they are watching for something.

Spy Hey, this is a great disguise eh?

I Brilliant.

Spy No one will ever recognise us now, will they?

I Never. *(Pretending not to recognise Spy)* Sorry - who are you?

Spy I'm Spy

I Oh yes, didn't recognise you for a minute.

They continue to look around suspiciously.

Spy Hey - and it's a great name, isn't it?

I What?

Spy You know - "I Spy - private detectives".

I Oh that - yes, brilliant.

Spy You're I, and I'm Spy - I Spy.

I Yes yes, brilliant.

They continue to look around

Spy Hey - what are we doing?

I *(Reading from the book).* Surveillance.

Spy Oh right. I thought we were just looking around.

I *(Again from the book)* A good spy always checks out his position....

Spy *(He turns around and looks down his trousers)* Mine's fine thanks.

I *(Not listening)* I and checks for bugs.

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Spy *(He looks down then stamps on something)* Got one.

I What?

Spy A bug.

I Not that kind of bug, stupid - a listening bug.

Spy *(Picking up the dead insect)* I don't think it's listening now.

I *(To Spy)* Idiot!

Spy Oh *(to the insect)* Sorry!

I We must now wait for the rendezvous

Spy Oh I like them. I've got all their records.

I Simpleton!!

Spy Can we play a game while we're waiting. I love games.

I Oh alright. *(He looks around)* I spy with my little eye, something beginning with

Spy Hang on a minute, you're not Spy.

I So?

Spy Well you just said, "I, Spy".

I I know, "I spy with my little eye".....

Spy But you're not Spy, that's me. You should say "I, I", not "I Spy".

I I, I. That's not it. It's "I, I, what have we here then", not "I I with my little eye. That doesn't make sense.

Spy Neither does "I, Spy", because you're not Spy, you're I.

During the next dialogue, I becomes increasingly annoyed with Spy.

I Look, it's not "I Spy", meaning I want to be Spy instead of I; but "I spy". It's a game stupid - that's all. I say "I spy with my little eye something beginning with U".

Spy U what?

I *(Repeating)* I spy with my little eye, something beginning with U.

Spy You just said that.

I I know you idiot. Then you say "umbrella"

Spy Oh I get it. Go on then.

I Right. I spy with my little eye, something beginning with "T"...

Spy Umbrella

I Wrong!

Spy What's wrong?

I Umbrella

Spy You just told me to say "umbrella"

I Yes but it's wrong. I said something beginning with "T".

Spy So why did you tell me to say umbrella if it's wrong?

I I'm not going to tell you the answer am I?

Spy Look. Are you trying to make me look like a fool?

I Hardly - you're doing a good enough job yourself.

Dick is heard offstage.

I Listen, there's someone coming. Look inconspicuous.

They put up their umbrellas and start whistling 'conspicuously'. Dick and Kitty enter. They both notice I and Spy, giving them a strange look. Dick continues upto the door of the Fitzwarren house and knocks on it. Sarah answers. During the next sequence, I and Spy try to eavesdrop on the conversation.

Sarah Not today thank you.

She closes the door. Dick knocks again

Sarah Are you deaf? I said "there's nobody home!"

She again closes the door, but Dick persists

Sarah *(Opening the door, she thrusts a TV or similar into Dick's hands.)* Oh take the damn thing back then, I was only 12 months behind with the payments; that's the trouble with you people, no understanding for the slaving classes! *(She slams the door again, then opens it after a couple of seconds.)*

Sarah *(To Dick)* You're not the bailiff?

Dick No.

Sarah Well, what do you want? Coming here disturbing a poor woman's cooking.

Dick I've come about the job - on board the Hey Ho Me Hearty.

Sarah Well why didn't you say so before. Wait here.

She shuts the door, then opens it, snatches back the TV and closes the door again behind her. Dick turns round to find I and Spy listening behind her. They immediately try to act inconspicuous again.

Sarah *(Opening the door)* You'd better come in. What's your name lad?

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Dick Dick Whittington. And this is Kitty.

Sarah Here Kitty Kitty - Oh, never mind! *(To I & Spy)* And whatever you two are doing you can go and do it somewhere else!! *(She slams the door in their faces).*

Spy What are we doing now?

I I told you, we're waiting for the rendezvous - that lad might be one of them.

Spy Really - him too.

I Shut up! Let's try and get inside.

I and Spy creep up to the window and peer inside. They hide under the windowsill when they hear Sarah singing. Sarah opens the window and tips food scraps out over I.

I You idiot - that was your fault.

Spy How can it be my fault

I You're in the wrong place. Change places. *(They change places)*

Again they try to climb in through the window. Sarah comes to a second window (now above I) and covers him in potato peelings. Spy begins to laugh.

I That's not funny? Give me that. *(He snatches the umbrella).*

Spy again tries to climb in, but on hearing Sarah coming, I puts up the umbrella. They both crouch down under the umbrella, beneath the window. Sarah comes out of the door this time, and without noticing I and Spy, throws a bucket of water sideways onto the flowers, covering both of them - she goes back inside still singing.

I You idiot!

Spy *(Accepting the blame)* Sorry.

They climb out of the flower bed and Spy tries to wipe I down. As this happens, Esmerelda enters followed by King Rat. She walks up behind them. She interrupts them causing Spy to jump into I's arms.

Esmerelda What are you doing?

Spy Aargh!

I You must be the er.....

Spy We were just.....I mean....he wasI mean.....oops!

Esmerelda gives a disdainful look towards I who suddenly notices Spy in his arms and immediately drops him, grinning at Esmerelda nervously

Esmerelda You should've been here and hour ago.

Spy Why, what happened?

Esmerelda Imbecile. Why are you dressed like that?

I We're in disguise.

Esmerelda As what?

Spy Private detectives.

Esmerelda I thought you were private detectives.

Spy I know. It's a good disguise eh?

Esmerelda It's pathetic. Now listen very carefully. I will say this only once. Here's what I want you to do. You must pose as sailors to gain access to the Hey Ho Me Hearty which is sailing tomorrow.

Spy Oh goodie, I've always fancied a sailor myself.

I What he means is he's always fancied himself as a sailor, don't you?

Spy You mean what you mean, and I'll mean what I mean!

Esmerelda You must guard the cargo of the Hey Ho Me Hearty whilst it is at sea. No one must be allowed near it. Do you understand?

I Yes - guard the cargo and don't let anyone near it. I've got it.

Esmerelda *(To Spy)* What about you - have you got it?

Spy I had it when I came in.

Esmerelda Aaargh. *(To King Rat)* Why did you hire these fools, this one's a perfect idiot.

Spy *(Flattered)* Oh, thanks very much.

King Rat There're all I could find - But they'll be alright - I'll be on board.

Esmerelda You'd better be - I don't want any more mistakes. *(To I & Spy)* Get it? got it? good. Now move.

I Right. Come on Spy. Let's get going. *(They start to leave)*

Esmerelda *(Grabbing I as he passes)* This way *(Pointing to the door)* And haven't you forgotten something?

I Please, let's get going?

Esmerelda *(Dropping I)* No, imbecile - a proper disguise.

I Oh yes. *(Turning and blaming Spy)* Idiot. Trying to pass yourself off as a private detective, hah it's pathetic.

Spy But that was your idea . . .

I thumps Spy to shut him up

Esmerelda *(Grabbing Spy by the throat - threateningly)* And don't get it wrong, right?

Spy Noerm... I mean yes.

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Esmerelda Unless you want to end up as shark's dinner?

I and Spy both shake their heads vigorously

Esmerelda Good . Now get out of my way. *(She exits)*

I, Spy and King Rat exit.

Miss P enters. She is dressed as a Girl Guide leader with lots of badges and enthusiasm. She rattles a collecting tin.

Miss P *(To Esmerelda)* I say, excuse me.

Esmerelda ignores her and tries to walk past but Miss P stands in her way.

Miss P I say, excuse me - I'm collecting for the children's orphanage on Runaway Hill, would you like to make a donation?

Esmerelda Why not - we could do with some more orphans - leave it to me. *(She exits)*

Miss P I'm not sure that's quite what I meant..... *(Looking around and seeing Alderman and Bosun enter)* Now they look like a couple of charitable gentlemen.

Alderman How's it going Bosun

Bosun Not too good sir, we're still need a captain and some more able seamen - looks like we may have to postpone the trip sir.

Alderman Out of the question, if I don't make this voyage, I ruined.

Miss P *(Interrupting them)* I say, excuse me. I'm collecting for the children's orphanage on Runaway Hill, would you like to make a donation?

Alderman What? Erm...oh yes *(He fumbles for some change, then indicates to the Bosun to pay Miss P)*

Bosun Glad to be able to 'elp madame.

Miss P Erm, miss actually. Miss Peabody, Captain of the 122nd Ever Ready Brigade. Pleased to meet you.

Alderman Captain, did you say Captain?

Miss P Yes, well, actually only since yesterday. *(Proudly)* I was promoted on account of my Community Service - now I've got a golden woggle.

Bosun I thought she walked a bit funny

Alderman Well Miss Peabody....you may be the very person we've been looking for. May I call you Captain Peabody?

Miss P *(Flattered)* Oh, well, it does have a certain 'ring' to it, doesn't it.

Alderman It does indeed. Allow me to introduce myself. I am Alderman Fitzwarren, and this is Bosun Bowleg.

Bosun Pleased to meet you maam.

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Miss P Oh, pleasure, pleasure.

Alderman You see Captain, we're in a spot of bother, and we thought you might be able to help us out.

Miss P Well, I always try to do my best to help out.

Alderman Good, good. Now we have a ship sailing tonight and unfortunately, all our crew have been unavoidably detained. Unless we can make the journey, I'm ruined.

Miss P Oh dear. Sounds like you're in a bit of a pickle.

Alderman Yes, yes....But since you're a Captain, we thought you may be able to help out and captain the ship for us.

Miss P But I'm not a sea Captain, I'm a Guide Captain - 122nd Ever Ready Brigade, Be Prepared and all that.

Alderman Yes, yes....But you must have some experience of sailing, surely, with all those badges.

Miss P Oh well, I have got my 'Boom handling' badge - there's no one can handle a boom like me you know.

Alderman Really? Now that would come in useful. *(He kneels at her feet, pleading)* Captain Peabody please - we're desperate men.

Miss P Oh, well, if you put it like that - I'll do it.

Alderman Splendid.

Bosun H'excellent.

Alderman Come Captain Peabody, let me introduce you to everyone, and Bosun - start the preparations, we sail at first light.

Alderman and Miss P exit. I & Spy enter dressed as pirates including wooden leg and parrot.

I Fifteen men on a dead man's chest.

Spy Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum.

I They all fell off and then there were none.

Spy Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum.

Bosun 'ello, 'ello. What have we here then?

Spy *(To I)* You told me it was "I I, what have we here then".

I Shut up idiot. *(He thumps Spy)*

Spy Oww. *(I thumps him again)* I mean - ooh argh - ha ha, ha ha.

Bosun Can I help you lads?

I *(In a phoney pirate's accent)* Only if you be the cap'in of the Hey Ho Me Hearty. Ooh argh, ooh argh.

Spy Pieces of ate. Pieces of ate. *(I thumps him again).*

Bosun I'm the Bosun, what can I do for you?

I We'd like the job of able seaman on the ship sir.

Spy I'dl just have the able seaman if it's alright with you.

I surreptitiously hits Spy.

Bosun *(Warily)* Well, we are looking for able seamen as it happens. 'ave you any qualifications?

I Oh yes sir, lots.

Bosun What kind?

I 4 GCSEs sir.

Bosun That sounds good. What in?

I Needlework, sir.

Bosun I thought you said you had 4.

Spy She had to take it 4 times to pass, sir.

Bosun I see, and how about you? Where are your qualifications?

Spy *(Taking Bosun by the arm)* I thought you'd never ask. Come with me and I'll show you!

I *(Grabbing Spy)* He's got 25 metres breaststroke and cycling proficiency, haven't you?!

Spy Oh yes sir, ha ha, ha ha.

I So, do we get a job sir?

Bosun Only if you can answer 3 questions. OK. Where's Felixstowe?

I *(Putting his hand up)* On the end of Felix's foot sir.

Bosun Correct. And where does the general keep his armies?

Spy *(Putting his hand up)* Up his sleeve's sir.

Bosun Good. Now what's higher than an Admiral?

I *(thinks for a moment)* ...er....his hat, sir!

Bosun H'excellent. And since we're desperate - you're hired. Be at the pier at 6 tonight. And don't be late.

Sarah enters with a large soup bowl.

Sarah You hoo, hello everybody. Are you enjoying yourself? (YES?) Course you are - nothing else to enjoy is there?

Bosun Don't tell me they've fixed the cooker.

Sarah Yes and good news, I've made the chicken soup.

Bosun Thank goodness for that. For a minute there I thought it was for us.

Sarah Who're these two? (*meaning I and Spy*)

Bosun I've just hired 'em for the trip.

Sarah Looks like you just hired them from a fancy dress shop. Well you can start by taking this inside to the others - and don't spill it.

I (*Looking into the soup pot*) Spill it? - I'd have a hard job to even slice it.

Sarah hands the bowl to I and Spy who take one look and recoil in horror. They exit with the soup bowl. The Bosun tries to sneak off but is dragged back by Sarah

Sarah Oh Bosun - we're alone. I hope you haven't forgotten our little date tonight.

Bosun What date?

Sarah Now don't pretend you've forgotten. I have a memory like an elephant.

Bosun And a body and face to match.

Sarah I'll have you know, I have the face of a 17 year old.

Bosun Well, give it back -cos you're getting it wrinkled.

Sarah (*Grabbing him melodramatically*) Oh Ivor Bowleg, you treat me so cruel. When are you going to turn me into an honest woman?

Bosun It's not the honest I'm worried about - it's the woman.

Sarah Will you kiss me?

Bosun Madam - I have scruples.

Sarah That's OK, I've been vaccinated.

Bosun Will you unhand me woman - someone might see.

Sarah (*Playing for sympathy*) You're ashamed of me - I can tell.

Bosun (*Softening*) I'm not.

Sarah Oh yes you are.

Bosun Oh no I'm not....etc.

Sarah Oh yes you are..

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