

An Excerpt from Dick Whittington

In the Prologue we meet the two protagonists- The Fairy and the Villain. As traditional Pantomime Immortals, they talk in Rhyme.

In the excerpt from scene 1, we meet Jack, the Comic Lead, the Dame, Fitzwarren and his sea captain, Captain Albert Ross!

ACT I Prologue

Enter Fairy BOWBELLS.

BOWBELLS: I am Bowbells, I'm full of pride
For London Town, where I reside!
A lov'ly place it used to be
'Til evil came from o'er the sea.
Hiding truth behind a disguise,
Spreading foulness, deceit and lies!
Only I know all about this man
'Tis King Rat with wicked plan!

His vileness spreads like plague I fear
And outcomes could be quite severe!
He'll turn our heaven into Hell!
Methinks it's time to ring my bell!

Bell rings.

Enter KING RAT.

KING RAT: Clang, clang, you rang? Well goodness me
Have you lost your Christmas tree? *(laughs)*
Your tinsel fades, so from now on-
I now am the powerful one!

(To audience) You lot, out there, you peasants vile,
Your odour really cramps my style.
London is mine just wait and see.
Your feeble 'Boos' cannot stop me! *(Laughs and exits)*

BOWBELLS: Down to the sewers where you hide
Disguise won't hide the rat inside!

(To audience) Virus and blight-a fiendish man!
But fear not friends, I have a plan!

Bells tinkle/ring

From a village not too far away
Young Dick Whittington comes this way!

He'll be our hero- do not fret-
It's just he doesn't know it (**pauses**) yet!
So relax my friends- settle down
And come with me to London town! (**Exits**)

ACT 1 Scene 1: London Town.

(1) OPENING SONG/DANCE. JACK, ENSEMBLE and JUVENILES

JACK: Hello boys and girls. I said Hello boys and girls! My name is Jack. Now you know my name, I want you to tell me your names. Will you do that? I'll count to three and then you all shout out your names and I'll write them down, (**pulls note pad and big pencil out of pocket**) Okay, here we go... one, two, three! (**Encourage Audience participation as JACK writes furiously!**) Good, now we are all friends don't forget every time I shout 'Hello boys and girls!' you all shout 'Hello Jack'? Can you do that? I said (**Loudly**) can you do that?

Enter MISS TAKE

JACK: Look boys and girls, it's Miss Take! She used to be my teacher.

MISS TAKE: Good morning!

ENSEMBLE: (Chant in rhythm together) Good morning Miss Take, good morning everyone!

MISS TAKE: That will do! We are not in school now!

JACK: Now everyone say ahh... because Miss Take lost her job last week. Isn't that a shame? Altogether...Ahh!

ENSEMBLE: Ahh! (**Encourage audience participation**)

MISS TAKE: I didn't just lose my job, I lost the whole school! They closed it down!

JACK: No more school! Hey, what do you call a teacher with no children in the class? ... Happy!

MISS TAKE: Once a teacher always a teacher! (**To audience**) Head up, shoulders back. (**JACK pulls faces**) No slouching now, and (**pauses without turning round**) ... and Jack... Don't do that!

JACK: (To audience) How does she do that?

MISS TAKE: All teachers have eyes in the back of their heads, all children know that! (**ENSEMBLE laugh**) And now (**To ENSEMBLE**) ... Class dismissed! (**ALL laugh**) Now who are all these people? (**To audience**) You look an ill-disciplined lot to me! You, (**points to adult in audience**) yes you, sit up straight! You'll

get round-shouldered sitting like that. You, yes that man at the back, keep your feet still and stop shuffling about... what the matter with you? Oh, you need the toilet! Well you'll have to wait 'til the interval. You should have gone before you came in! **(Picks audience member)** Now what's your name dear? Well **John** don't do that!

JACK: I hope you find another job and that's no mistake, Miss Take! I've found a new job- I'm working as Lord Blight's personal assistant!

MISS TAKE: What on earth possessed you to work for Virus Blight? **(shudders)** Horrible man!

JACK: I needed a job and he was willing to pay me... beggars can't be choosers! I'd better go or my new Boss will be cross! I'll leave you chatting with my friends. See you later! Bye! **(exits)**

MISS TAKE: (To audience) So you are all Jack's new friends, are you? What brings you here I wonder... Why you would have left all the highs of **name of town** behind to come all this way? How will you manage without your nights out at **name of local place**? **(Pauses...thinks)** Yes, you're right- welcome to London! Place of fish and chips, cup o' tea, jellied eels, dancing chimney sweeps and Mary flipping Poppins! The streets aren't exactly paved with gold but like Jack I've already found a new job, working as the cook in the household of a rich merchant. I'm really lucky to have found this new job, especially as I can't cook! Happily for me no-one seems to have noticed my lack of culinary skills... yet! **(There's a commotion in the doorway of the Tavern)** Oh look, here's my new employer, Alderman Fitzwarren but he doesn't look too well, does he?

Enter ALDERMAN FITZWARREN and CAPTAIN ROSS with ENSEMBLE

FITZ: No, wait, it will come back to me. We were downing a few jugs of ale and I think I signed my name on a piece of paper. Am I close? We talked about chips, or was it ships?

MISS TAKE: You look a little peaky. Make some space... give him some room. Oh dear. I think you have a touch of 'Tavern Tummy' or some other ailment. **(To audience)** Ale-ment... get it? Ale...ment... oh please yourselves!

FITZ: Yes, it's coming back to me. Gordon Bennett, what have I done? Ahem. May I introduce the new err... Captain of my ship, Captain Ross!

CAPT: Splice m' main brace and shiver m' timbers, 'tis an honour M'am. Cap'tin Ross at your service!

MISS TAKE: I don't understand a word you're saying Captain Ross **(Aside)** Captain Ross? He's certainly no Pol-dark is he girls? More Pol-axed! In fact, he doesn't look much of a captain at all to me!

CAPT: Tis Albert mi hearties, Captain Albert Ross!

MISS TAKE: Albert Ross, Albatross? Oh please! An ancient mariner and bad luck too!

FITZ: He told me he'd already captained three ships!

CAPT: Hoist m' halyards! Fine vessels they were... and losing them... well it were none of my fault! Well blast m' bilges!

MISS TAKE: It is quite clear that this man is totally incompetent and unfit to command even a rowing boat. You need to find someone else.

FITZ: I'm afraid that's not possible. You see I realize now what is that I have signed- the contract to employ Captain Ross. Oh, crikey! Tell me it will be all right.

MISS TAKE: It will be all right.

FITZ: Oh good.

MISS TAKE: But I'm probably lying! I wouldn't want to be you if Captain 'Birdseye' here messes up again... oh dear can this get any worse?

FITZ: Well Lord Blight has agreed to invest in this latest venture.

MISS TAKE: Virus Blight? It's worse! He's a nasty, dishonest man!

FITZ: Well I've heard that Lord Blight may **(coughs)** cheat a little and tell the odd **(cough)** lie.

MISS TAKE: The odd little lie? I've heard he tells whopping great porky pies!

FITZ: He'll be standing for * *local council** then, **(laughs)** Ouch! I mustn't laugh, it hurts my head.

MISS TAKE: I don't approve of political jokes; I've seen too many of them get elected. And in his case, that's what worries me!

FITZ: We should go down to the docks and check that my vessel is all ship-shape.

CAPT: Is it pointed at one end and blunt at the other?

FITZ: Err... yes, I believe it is.

CAPT: That sounds ship-shaped to me and at least we'll know which way we're going.

MISS TAKE: I wouldn't bank on it!

Continues...

