

**DICK WHITTINGTON: school version**

By Chris Lane

**5 MILES FROM LONDON**

*Milestone: LONDON 5 MILES*

*MUSIC: Dick appears, his bundle on a stick over his shoulder.*

DICK: Look! Look! Come on, Cat! Look at this milestone - only 5 miles to go. We're almost there! Come on! (*CAT appears at a leisurely pace, looks at the milestone, then starts to groom.*) How can you be so calm? We've walked a hundred miles from Gloucester and now we're almost there! London - they say it's as big as all of Gloucestershire, and is so rich the streets are paved with gold! (*He settles down by the milestone, rests his pack and daydreams*) Can't you just see it, Cat? Can't you just imagine it? London!

**SCENE ONE**

**THE STREETS OF LONDON**

DICK: Come on, Cat! What are you waiting for! Come on - I'm off to find my fame and fortune! (*He runs onto the stage, Cat slowly follows*)

*When he arrives the stage is now dark & gloomy.*

DICK: Oh - this must be wrong - this can't be London. We must be in the wrong place. I'll ask someone. I just need someone helpful. (*A figure enters*) Excuse me - can you tell me the way to London? *They exit. Cat shows its claws.* Be nice, Cat. Be nice now. We're just in a bad part of town, that's all. (*There is horrible laughing offstage*) Ahh ... best move on I think. (*More laughing*) Let's just go over here and - err - hide! (*to side of stage*)

*Two rats enter. One is obviously very rich and carries a gold-topped cane or sword stick. The other is dressed in plain black and carries a wooden club. They have long pink tails curled up at their backs.*

RATTIGAN: Here it is. Fitzwarren's shop. The very place I told you about. Now - how long to wait? Mmm? Scabley?

SCABLEY: What?

RATTIGAN: Time.

SCABLEY: What?

RATTIGAN: Time!

SCABLEY: OK - on your marks - get set - GO! (*Looks up to see where Boss has got to. Can't see him. Peers.*) Wow - fast! (*Jumps when tapped on shoulder*)

RATTIGAN: No - let me have the time.

SCABLEY: Certainly. (*Folds arms and looks at him*) All the time you want, guvnor. What do you want to tell me?

RATTIGAN: No! (*Angrily gestures at wrist*) Watch!

SCABLEY: I'm watching. Ready when you are, guvnor!

RATTIGAN: My dear Scabley. (*Slowly*) Think - wristwatch - hands - time. Look - (*indicates wrist*) - tell me what it says!

SCABLEY: (*slowly*) It says: "Make poverty history". (*Twangs rubber strap*)

RATTIGAN: Scabley; *(into his face)* do you have the slightest idea why we are here?  
SCABLEY: *(nose to nose)* No - I do not have the slightest idea.  
RATTIGAN: Stop. Think. Look in your hands - wooden club. Look over there - very posh shop full of money. Lots of gold coins - gold coins in a bag carried by a small girl. Got it? Wooden club? Girl with gold coins?  
SCABLEY: *(slowly)* I is going to take my wooden club ..  
RATTIGAN: *(slowly)* Yes ...  
SCABLEY: ... and sell it to her!  
RATTIGAN: Yes. NO! You are going to club her and take the money! You and your evil smelling friend .... and ... *(looks round)* .. where is he?  
SCABLEY: Who?  
RATTIGAN: OK. Listen. Evil smell. Hideous ugly face. Breath like an open sewer. Hair like a badger's bottom ..... well?  
SCABLEY: *(slowly)* Whoever called you that - they was not nice. But you is takin' it very well. Sticks and stones may ...  
RATTIGAN: Where is your stinky friend - Winnet?  
SCABLEY: Oh - right! Just coming.  
RATTIGAN: I trust *he/she* will have brought *his/her* club - I did tell *him/her* what we were going to do.  
SCABLEY: Here *he/she* is now.  
*Winnet enters in disco clothes.*  
WINNET: How's about this then - I remembered what you said, Mr Rattigan.  
RATTIGAN: And what was it that I said?  
WINNET: You said get prepared -  
RATTIGAN: Yes ...  
WINNET: ..as we was going clubbing! *(Does disco moves)*  
SCABLEY: You never told me that - I'd have put on something nicer! You said ..  
RATTIGAN: Quick! Here she comes! Masks on! *(looks)* No - on the front of your heads! Hide!  
*Alice Fitzwarren comes comes downstage with a wicker basket on her arm. The rats creep toward her.*  
DICK: Look out! It's a trap!  
ALICE: What? What do you want?!  
DICK: It's a trap - they're going to attack you and steal your money!  
ALICE: Who are?  
RATTIGAN: We are ... we are going to steal all your money!  
DICK: Get back! *(Waves stick at them)*  
RATTIGAN: My word. How very brave; don't you agree, lads? *(Other rats agree)* Now then - *(pulls sword from stick)* - let's see how brave you are after we have removed your.. *(Suddenly Cat leaps out and flies at them)* Aargh! A cat! *(He flees. The other two hesitate then flee screaming with Cat after them)*  
DICK: *(checks they have gone)* I think they've gone. Are you all right?  
ALICE: They'll be back.  
DICK: You know them?!

ALICE: I don't know who they are but they've robbed us so many times that nobody will work for us now. They say it's not worth being beaten up for. That's why it was me who had to close the shop tonight. If you hadn't been here ...

DICK: *(Suddenly embarrassed)* Just happened to be passing through; we're on our way to London!

ALICE: On your way to London?

DICK: Yes indeed. *(Proudly)* Off to make our fame and fortune.

ALICE: But..

DICK: No - don't **you** try to put me off as well. I'm off to London where the streets are paved with gold.

ALICE: But - this IS London. And the streets are NOT paved with gold!

DICK: Oh. *(Looks round disappointed)* Well - what are the streets paved with?

ALICE: With 10,000 horses here - what do YOU think they're paved with?

DICK: *(Looks at shoe.)* Ah - ooh. *(Looks around)* London eh? Oh. *(Miserably )* Right then. Where's Cat? Cat?!

ALICE: Is this all you've got - that little bag?

DICK: It's all I need. Actually, it's mostly Cat's things. Squeaky mouse, blanket, *(unlikely item)*, you know.

ALICE: No food? And where are you staying? With family? Friends?

DICK: My family are back in Gloucester. Haven't exactly got any friends - not yet - but ...

ALICE: Well you have ONE friend now. Come on - let's get you into the shop and get some food in you. Well? Come on!

DICK: Just a moment, where's *(Cat returns smugly)* Cat! There you are! You brave cat!

ALICE: You certainly are a brave cat. You come in as well; I'm sure we can find some milk for you! *(They go up to front of shop and open the door)* Here we are; welcome to Alderman Fitzwarren's Emporium! **THEY EXIT**

## SCENE TWO RATTIGAN'S DEN

RATTIGAN: Not good. The Alderman has got a new boy working in his shop. And - come closer my evil little friends. Err, not you Winnet. Back. .... Back. ....Farther. - And *(looks round)* and this **fellow** has got - **a cat**.

WINNET: *(from a distance)* What'd he say? I can't hear over here.

SCABLEY: He says there's a new boy in the shop and he's yellow and got a hat.

WINNET: Oh. I had a hat once. Wasn't yellow though.

RATTIGAN: I didn't say that!

SCABLEY: *(loud)* He didn't say that!

WINNET: He didn't say what?

SCABLEY: *(leans in)* What didn't you say?

RATTIGAN: I didn't say he was yellow and has a hat!

SCABLEY: (*nods knowingly and taps nose*) Right. Say no more. We didn't hear it from you. Got that Winnet? The new yellow chap with the hat - we never heard about him from the boss.

WINNET: I can't hear anything from back here.

SCABLEY: So, boss. What is your evil plan?

RATTIGAN: Simple. He will have to - hee-hee - disappear.

SCABLEY: Off you go then, Winnet. Your turn to hide. We'll count to snork then we come and find you.

WINNET: There's no such number as snork!

SCABLEY: Isn't there? (*Thinks*) Well what comes after six then?

WINNET: Er ... dunno. Just count to six!

RATTIGAN: Not him! It's not Winnet that's got to disappear!

SCABLEY: Oy! Winnet! Mistake!

WINNET: What?

SCABLEY: Not your turn! Whose turn is it then, Boss? You went last yesterday so it must be..

RATTIGAN: The boy in the shop! Him! The boy in the shop!

SCABLEY: The boy in the shop! Right! Winnet - the boy in the shop! It's his turn to hide!

WINNET: Right! (*Looks around*) He's very good - I can't see him anywhere. I reckon he's played before!

SCABLEY: Get on with you. Should be easy to find him. He's bright yellow and got a great big hat on!

RATTIGAN: He's not hiding!

SCABLEY: Whose not hiding, Boss?

RATTIGAN: Look. Just stop.

SCABLEY: Haven't counted to snork yet, Boss.

RATTIGAN: STOP! (*Regains composure*) I have hired professional help.

SCABLEY: Psychiatrist, Sir? About time, if you ask me.

WINNET: Plastic surgeon be more useful!

RATTIGAN: A sea captain! An old mate of mine. A ship's captain. They call him - The Captain But - a warning!

WINNET: What?

RATTIGAN: This man - he's only got one eye.

WINNET: That's right though, isn't it?

RATTIGAN: What are you talking about, Winnet?

WINNET: There's only one 'i' in captain - two 'a's, one 'i' - else it would be 'captaiiiiiin'.

RATTIGAN: Listen carefully. Just don't mention the fact that he's only got one eye.

SCABLEY: Why? (*Comes closer*) Doesn't he know?

RATTIGAN: Of course he knows! But it's just not polite!

WINNET & SCABLEY: OooOOooH!

WINNET: Is **he** yellow as well?

RATTIGAN: What?! No! Just be tactful about the fact that he's got one eye!

SCABLEY: Trust us. (*Thinks*) Where does he keep it?

RATTIGAN: What?

SCABLEY: Where does he keep this eye? Is it like in a box, or in a jar of vinegar or..

WINNET: You wouldn't keep it in a jar of vinegar. One night you might think to yourself: "oh, I fancy a pickled onion with this bit of cheese" and before you know it..

SCABLEY: Very wise words. Very wise.

WINNET: *(has come closer now)* Very wise.

RATTIGAN: Winnet - move back. Even for a rat you smell disgusting! Have you never had a shower!

WIINET: Did once.

SCABLEY: Standing in the sewers beneath Wembley stadium at half time is not what the boss would call a shower.

RATTIGAN: I don't know why I bother. I could have been a singer you know.

SCABLEY: What - you mean a sewing machine?

RATTIGAN: Just listen.

### COMEDY SONG

Narrator: Dick and the others set off in search of fortune but are shipwrecked in a far off land.

#### SCENE THREE THE PALACE OF THE SULTANA

*A very richly appointed throne room glittering with silk drapes and gold.*

*The Sultana is raised on a platform with a huge throne, surrounded by chests filled with treasure. She is being fanned by a slave.*

SULTANA: Ah-ha!! Bring in the spies.

*Rattigan, Captain, Winnet & Scabley are forced in and onto their knees.*

RATTIGAN: Have mercy on us, oh great and powerful one! We are not spies - we were on a ship and somehow we all fell into the sea! I am - *(looks around shiftily)* - the Lord Mayor of London and these are - err - all rich and important people - Aldermen!

SULTANA: I have heard of this 'London'. Arise and tell me of London.

RATTIGAN: London - well, it has every modern convenience - gas light, sewers, trams, and some houses are even getting loos!

SULTANA: Loos? What are 'loos'?

SERVANT: Your majesty! What have you said?!

SULTANA: Me? I just said 'what are loos'. Oh no!

RATTIGAN: I don't understand!

SULTANA: *(in despair)* You will see! Listen!

*Sound of little feet steadily grows louder until MANY rats pour on stage and sing & dance to: Abba: WATERLOO. They exit squealing.*

CAPTAIN: Barnacles and winkles! What on earth be that?!

SULTANA: It is our curse! Our land is over-run with rats - Abba singing rats! Any mention of a song by those screeching Swedish women and the rats appear!

I would give half my fortune to anyone who could rid me of this plague!

SCABLEY: Have you tried rinsing with mouthwash?

WINNET: Not 'plaque' - plague! Call yourself a rat and don't know what plague is?

SULTANA: Rat? You are rats?! Off with their ...

RATTIGAN: Ignore this poor fool, oh merciful one - *he/she* has been adrift at sea for many moons!

SULTANA: Hmm. Now tell me about London. Will it be ready for the Olympics in 150 years?

RATTIGAN: Er - probably not.

SULTANA: I expect it is the same as here - everyone wants their bribe to get things done.

RATTIGAN: Very true, oh all seeing one - even in England it is gimme, gimme ..

SERVANT 5: , gimme .. No! I couldn't help it! The tune is so catchy! I can't get it out of my head!

SULTANA: Well I have the cure for that! Off with her head!

#### RATS - ABBA SONG

SULTANA: I'm losing the will to live. Perhaps now I can hear a decent tune? Try again, singers; what have you for us tonight?

SINGER 1: Tonight, oh permed and tinted one, we shall be singing ...

SERVANT: (*enters excitedly*) Oh lustrous and luminous one!

SULTANA: You did it again, you festering flake of athlete's foot! Off with his ...

SERVANT: Hang on ..... err .... Oh queen of quiet, quality .... Oh heck. What else starts with a 'q'?

SCABLEY: The Harrods' sale?

SULTANA: Oh, just get on with it.

SERVANT: There are more spies!

RATTIGAN: (*To aud & cronies*) That will be the wretched boy and his cronies! I saw them swimming ashore farther down the coast! (*Louder*) Your wonderfulness!

SULTANA: You may speak, grovelling one.

RATTIGAN: I know of these infidels! They are indeed spies - sent by the King of ... King of .... Quick! Name of somewhere violent and primitive!

WINNET: \*\*\*\*\*.

RATTIGAN: Good! .. the King of \*\*\*\*\* - to spy on you!

SULTANA: Spies! I shall boil them in oi....

SERVANT: No - don't say the 'o' word! We'll be up to our necks in Americans!

SULTANA: Good thinking. Bring the spies in!

*Dick & Alice are dragged in.*

RATTIGAN: Yes - these are the very spies of which I warned you! Off with their heads!

SULTANA: Oy! I say that bit!

RATTIGAN: Sorry.

SULTANA: Right, No problem. Off with their heads!

DICK: Hang about - we're not spies! I am Richard Whittington of Gloucestershire and this is my friend Alice

SULTANA: Very well thank you. Is this the Isle of White?

DICK: And who are you?

SULTANA: Me? You dare speak to ME in this manner! Off with his head.

DICK: Stop larking about. Who are you then?

SERVANT: She is THE SULTANA.

*Dick giggles*

SULTANA: Why do you laugh?!

DICK: "sultana"!

SULTANA: Boy! Why do you laugh?!

DICK: No ..... "raisin" ! (*gets hysterical*)

SULTANA: Do you mock me?

DICK: Not at all - to meet you is a 'grape' pleasure, my 'old fruit'!

SULTANA: Are you jesting?

ALICE: No - I mean - to meet someone as important as you is really super. Really!  
Super!

VOICE: TROOPER!

SULTANA: WHO WAS THAT?! OFF WITH THEIR HEAD!

ABBA SONG

SULTANA: Will nobody rid me of those rats?

DICK: I think they're quite cute?

SULTANA: Cute? You wouldn't think so if that's all you could hear every minute of every day? Having to watch every word.

WINNET: I wouldn't mind - not if I was as rich as you!

RATTIGAN: Ignore my feeble minded friend - all he thinks about is money, money, money! (*As he says the last word there is widespread cry of dismay, but too late*)

ABBA SONG

DICK: Ah - bless! Thank you, little rats - thank you for the music!

ABBA SONG

DICK: Ah - yes - I see what you mean. It could get on your nerves a bit.

RATTIGAN: Your imperial mintiness. Shall you not dispose of these spies?

SULTANA: Whatever. I've really lost all interest in being nasty to people.

RATTIGAN: I'm sure that's not true. I think you and I are very like in many ways; I'm sure we think alike. May I suggest that - knowing me, knowing you - the best...

ABBA SONG

RATTIGAN: Get off - filthy little things! I don't think I can stay sane much longer.

SULTANA: And to make it worse - just look at my coat of arms!

CAPTAIN: What is it - a plant and a circle? What type of plant is it?

SULTANA: A fern.

RATTIGAN: The letter 'O' and a fern. What's wrong with that?

SULTANA: Think about it.

DICK: I get it! Fern and O!

ABBA SONG

SULTANA: Does anyone want to chop their heads off? I've gone past caring.

RATTIGAN: I'd like to! Off with their heads! Sorry kid - but that's the name of the game!

ABBA SONG

SULTANA: (*very angry*) That's enough! Are you doing this on purpose? The next one to say an Abba song is in real - deep trouble - up to their necks - which will be just as far as their body goes! Do you get my drift? (*sudden idea*) Ah-ha! Right! I have it! A competition! Look - here is a huge pile of treasure. It is all up for grabs. The winner will be the first one to get rid of those singing rats and THE WINNER TAKES IT ALL! Aargh!!

ABBA SONG

*In the middle of the song Cat appears and rounds up the rats & villains, chasing them off. The rats pretend to be afraid. As the last one leaves:*

DICK: Meet you on the boat like we planned! (*Winks*)

SULTANA: Gone! They have gone! And all thanks to this amazing creature. What manner of beast is it?

DICK: This, is a cat!

SULTANA: Is it safe? (*Nervously strokes cat*) Truly magnificent! *Cat exits proudly.*  
The treasure is now yours!

DICK: Now nothing left but to load the treasure on the ship and sail home to England!

ALICE: This happy day has come at last.

DICK: And all my dreams have come to pass.

SCABLEY: No more crime - we know that's wrong.

WINNET: Just cut the chat - let's have a song!

SULTANA: No Abba songs - they make me sick!

ALICE: Those days are gone now, thanks to Dick.

SCABLEY: The world is free from that evil rat.

DICK: And all due to this splendid Cat!

WINNET: Our boss just got what he was due.

SULTANA: Indeed - he met his Waterloo! ...OH NO!!!!!!

FINALE SONG WALK DOWN