

DICK WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT

by

DANIEL O'BRIEN

with music

by

PETER WHITE

COPYRIGHT  
DANIEL O'BRIEN  
72 High Street  
Ashwell  
SG7 5NS

November 2011

## **CAST OF CHARACTERS**

\*

### ***MEN***

*DICK WHITTINGTON*

*ALDERMAN FITZWARREN/THE SULTAN OF MOROCCO*

*TOMMY THE CAT*

*TEACHER #1/SHOP ASSISTANT #1/CAPTAIN LUBBER*

### ***WOMEN***

*ALICE FITZWARREN/SULTAN'S DAUGHTER*

*SARAH THE COOK*

*QUEEN RAT*

*FAIRY BOWBELLS/SHOP ASSISTANT #2/BOATSWAIN BEATRICE*

### ***CHORUS***

*6 JUVENILES*

**ACT ONE SCENE ONE**

*Ext: Highgate Hill*

**ALL**

Half the population's dead,  
Our lives are filled with constant dread  
Here on Highgate Hill we're safe,  
Away from the rats in the smelly sewers  
But our families are still in danger,  
We're scared of any viral stranger.  
**BLACK DEATH, it's the BLACK DEATH!**

Not meaning to be vague,  
We're fighting a terrible plague.  
The battle is won but the war's still raging,  
London is overrun with contagion.  
**BLACK DEATH, it's the BLACK DEATH!**

**ALDERMAN FITZWARREN**

Before this disease I was prosperous  
My name it shone as brightly as phosperous.  
I'm never scared of a fight  
But these rats they gave me a fright.  
Now the money's tight but I'm not a shirker.  
I'll survive cause I'm a hard worker.

**ALICE**

I help my father as I can  
For I believe he's an honest man.  
Since his wife, my mother, was taken  
By the plague his world's been shaken.  
Together we'll weather the storm and we'll survive,  
We'll stay alive, from the:

**ALL**

**BLACK DEATH, it's the BLACK DEATH!**  
Not meaning to be vague,  
We're fighting a terrible plague.  
The battle is won but the war's still raging,  
London is overrun with contagion.  
**BLACK DEATH, it's the BLACK DEATH!**

**DING DONG DING DONG etc. (sung bell canon)**

**ALL**

The bells they keep on pealing  
But what we need is healing  
So now we are appealing  
For a saviour to be dealing with  
The Queen Rat, Queen Rat!!!

**QUEEN RAT**

Only yesterday there was something there to remind you of hope  
But you won't last a day with me around, we've only just begun.  
I'm on the top of the world looking down on my creation  
And all the rats, like me, they long to be close to you.

**ALL**  
**BLACK DEATH, it's the BLACK DEATH**  
**Not meaning to be vague**  
**We're fighting a terrible plague**  
**The battle is won but the war's still raging**  
**London is overrun with contagion**  
**BLACK DEATH, it's the BLACK DEATH**

*At the end of the song Bow Bells are heard once more as DICK WHITTINGTON enters. He carries all his worldly goods in a red handkerchief with white spots. He makes up the lyrics to match the chimes of the bells*

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Goodbye old life.  
Trouble and Strife  
Where can I be?  
I need a wee!

*He is about to disappear behind the nearest tree when he spots the audience and is embarrassed*

Whoops! Oh hallo everyone! I didn't see you there. Hallo! The name's Richard Whittington. But my friends call me Dick! Would you like to be my friends? Would you?

**AUDIENCE**

Yes.

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Great. Then so you shall be! I've been walking for ages to get here. And I don't know where I am. Oh look there's a milestone. H - I - G - H - G - A - T - E. That spells Highgate. And look, only four miles to go to London. Where the streets they say are paved with gold. I can't wait!

*A rat enters and scuttles across the stage adopting a very memorable pose at the end of its scuttle.*

What was that?

**AUDIENCE**

A rat.

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

A rat?

**AUDIENCE**

Yes!

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Oh no. Not here too. There are rats everywhere. I've had to leave my home town 'cos it's been overrun by rats which have caused the Black Death!

*Scary FX*

But now they're here too! What shall I do? I know. Will you help by warning me if you see a rat? Will you?

**AUDIENCE**

Yes.

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Oh thank you! If you see one of those horrid rodenty things scuttling about like this [*he demonstrates*] just shout out 'R-a-a-a-t running'. Just like that! Can you do that?

**AUDIENCE**

Yes.

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

OK let's give it a try. I'll pretend to be a rat and you shout out 'R-a-a-a-t running' when you see me do it. Ready?

**AUDIENCE**

Yes.

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Here we go then.

*He pretends to be a rat scuttling across the stage and adopting the memorable pose*

**AUDIENCE**

R-a-a-a-t running!

*He comes back*

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Did you do it? Is there anybody out there? Have I come to the right theatre?

**AUDIENCE**

Yes!

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Well you'll have to do better than that. They're really dangerous, the rats. Let's give it another go. Remember I'll pretend to be a rat and you shout out 'R-a-a-a-t running' when you see me do it. Ready?

**AUDIENCE**

Yes.

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

OK let's give it a go.

*He pretends to be a rat scuttling across the stage in the other direction and adopting the memorable pose*

**AUDIENCE**

R-a-a-a-t running!

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Well, it's a bit better but I think you can be louder still. Once more and this time raise the roof.

*He pretends to be a rat scuttling across the stage in the other direction and adopting the memorable pose*

**AUDIENCE**

R-a-a-a-t running!

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Magic! Well at least that should help warn me hen there's a rat about.. Thanks a lot. Now where was I? Oh yes I was going to go and have a ....

*The stage darkens and some ratlings scuttle across the stage. The audience should shout out 'R-a-a-a-t running'*

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

No. We've finished our practice.

*Some more ratlings scuttle across the stage in the other direction*

**AUDIENCE**

R-a-a-a-t running!

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

No. That bit's over now.

*QUEEN RAT scuttles across and stops at the back of the stage.*

**AUDIENCE**

R-a-a-a-t running!

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Look I just told you ....

*A musical chord of doom. The audience should boo comprehensively.*

**QUEEN RAT**

Silence! I say Silence! Ratlings! Here! Now!

*The six RATLINGS enter. They circle DICK*

**QUEEN RAT**

So cowboy-ploughboy! Up from the putrid country eh?

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Er yes! Who are you?

**QUEEN RAT**

I ask the questions, pumpkin-bumpkin! Running from the Black Death eh?

*Scary FX*

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Er yes!

**QUEEN RAT**

Seeking fame and fortune eh?

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Er yes!

**QUEEN RAT**

In London town where the streets are paved with gold eh?

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Er yes!

**QUEEN RAT**

Well they aren't.

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

What?

**QUEEN RAT**

Paved with gold. They're lined with bodies. And who knows what was the cause eh?

**ALL**

Rats! Great Queen.

**QUEEN RAT**

And their leader eh?

**ALL**

You, Queen Rat, magnificent rodent with the yellow teeth, stinky breath and slippery saliva bearing all kinds of germs, you!

**QUEEN RAT**

Rats rule the world. I rule the rats. I rule the world!

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Er ... but ... Edward is our King. He rules, not you.

**QUEEN RAT**

Oh yes I do!

**AUDIENCE**

Oh no you don't!

**QUEEN RAT**

Oh yes I do!!

**AUDIENCE**

Oh no you don't!!

**QUEEN RAT**

Oh yes I do!!!

**AUDIENCE**

Oh no you don't!!!

**QUEEN RAT**

Enough harangue-gang! Come to London Whittington, I dare you! And I'll bet you run away screaming! Human fool! Rats rule!!

**ALL**

Human fool! Rats rule!!

*And the rodents take their leave to a chorus of boos. QUEEN RAT returns a final rejoinder*

**QUEEN RAT**

Go on then. Boo as much as you like, I like my boos. Sometimes I liked to get hissed as well.

*And she exits*

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Well she wasn't very friendly was she?

**AUDIENCE**

No

*He moves to the milestone*

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Gosh this is dirty. I can hardly read what it says. I'll just give it a bit of a rub.

*He does so. Music begins and the stage darkens. There is a flash and FAIRY BOWBELLS appears.*

**FAIRY BOWBELLS**

*[portentously]* Turn again Whittington, Lord Mayor of London.

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Who are you?

**FAIRY BOWBELLS**

I am Fairy Bowblls and I was just practising for later, don't you know.

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Practising? For what?

**FAIRY BOWBELLS**

I believe you'll find out soon, dear. After you've met a cat, fought a rat and had a spat. Now fancy that!

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

I'm lost.

**FAIRY BOWBELLS**

Within the sounds of the bells of Bow Church. Bing bong, bing bong, bing bong, bing bong.

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

That's where I'm heading.

**FAIRY BOWBELLS**

Not ... to London dear?

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Yes ... to London.

**FAIRY BOWBELLS**

Not ... on your own dear?



**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Yes ... on my own. I'm not scared of the rats or their Black Death!

*Scary FX*

**FAIRY BOWBELLS**

Well you should be. You should be very scared dear. Quen Rat is all powerful.

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Well she doesn't scare me! I'm going to find the streets that are paved with gold and to find fame and fortune.

**FAIRY BOWBELLS**

I see you are determined. Then take this cat to help you fight the rats.

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Which cat?

**FAIRY BOWBELLS**

This cat here ... well he was here. Tommy? Where are you? Tommy? Oh botheration he's probably been distracted by a rat on the way.

*Turning to the audience*

I wonder my dears. Would you help me call him?

**AUDIENCE**

Yes.

**FAIRY BOWBELLS**

Well that's rather super and tickety boo! Would you just call out 'Tommy' very loudly after I count three? Ready? One ... two ... three

**AUDIENCE**

Tommy.

**FAIRY BOWBELLS**

Well that's all very well but on the other hand it's not all very well is it? I mean he's not going to come if he can't hear you is he? Let's try again? One ... two ... three.

**AUDIENCE**

Tommy!

**FAIRY BOWBELLS**

Well now if you can't be bothered to help I don't know why you've come. It's not easy doing this night after day after night you know! Come on let's give it your best shot. One ... two ... three.

**AUDIENCE**

Tommy!!

*Music and TOMMY appears. He is an all-action cat and his arrival is spectacular. Tumbles, flips etc etc. He arrives next to DICK and they are immediately best buddies.*

**FAIRY BOWBELLS**

Tommy may I present Master Richard Whittington

*DICK bows a deep bow*

And Master Whittington this is Thomas Xavier Pusseus of Abyssinia. But we just call him Tommy!

*TOMMY bows a deep bow*

He likes nothing better than to chase mice and rats. So he'll protect you as you walk the dark and dangerous streets of London. Goodbye my dears and good luck.

*She vanishes*

**DICK WHITTINGTON**

Well we'd better get going.

*TOMMY rubs his stomach.*

What's the matter.

*TOMMY rubs his stomach again*

You're hungry?

*TOMMY nods*

Hmm. I wonder what I can give you. What do you like?

*TOMMY does an impersonation of a scuttling rat*

Of course. Rats! Well we'd better go to London and find you some grub then! Come on Tommy, let's go!

*And they begin to move off. DICK goes in the wrong direction and TOMMY puts him right.*