

# Dick Whittington and King Rat

By Dr. John R. M. Gledhill, Erfurt

Cast

**Tinker Belle Bells - Fairy**

**King Rat - Villain**

**Alice Fitzwarren - Heroine**

**Alderman Fitzwarren - Rich Merchant**

**Bill - Kitchen Boy**

**Ben - Kitchen Boy**

**The Cook - Dame**

**Dick Whittington - Hero**

**Moggie - A Cool Tabby Cat**

**Tommy Cat - Moggie's future husband**

**King Neptune - Ruler of the Oceans**

**Sultan of Morocco - Ruler of Morocco**

**Chief Guard**

**Ensemble - Choir Bells of London, Rats and Mermaids, Servants and Slaves at the Sultan's court**

## Act I Scene 1

**Narrator:** This tragi-comedy concerns the primal conflict between good and evil.

Evil is embodied by King Rat – the rats brought disease and death to England, sometimes called the Black Death (clash of cymbals). King Rat wants to wipe out the citizens of London so that he can take over the city and not only be King Rat but also Mayor of London.

Tinker Belle Bells, however, aims to thwart the evil rodent's plans so that good may triumph.

Alas, King Rat comes hither and I must hence

So, let the drama now commence:

### Front Stage

*The scene opens with flash and a loud bang. At the moment of shock enters King Rat looking as evil as possible.*

**King Rat:** I am King Rat, ha ha ha (*Very evil laugh*)

And I am all that is bad

Good makes me sad

But bad makes me glad

Ha ha ha (*Very evil laugh*)

**Audience:** Hiss, boo.

You may hiss and boo as much as you like

**Audience:** Hiss, boo.

*King Rat stares defiantly back at the audience while shaking his fist.*

You may hiss and boo as much as you like

But you'll be sorry when I strike.

In the end I'll be the one who's winning

You'll see, but this is only the beginning.

*Exit K.R. with a flash,*

*The tune of Oranges and Lemons ideally played on a xylophone or synthesiser with a bell-like effect.*

*Snowdust. Enter Tinker Belle Bells. She is all that is bright and beautiful.*

**Tinker Belle Bells:** I am Tinker Belle Bells,

But have no fear now that I'm here  
Be happy and friendly, full of good cheer.  
That bad rat is all talk and hot air.  
He lies and he cheats and he never plays fair,  
But in the end, good will win  
Just wait and see  
And now let the play begin.

## Act I Scene 2

A street in London

**Narrator:** Dick Whittington, our stolid hero, has had to leave home because his parents are so poor that they cannot afford to feed him. He goes to London because he literally believes in the saying: 'The streets of London are paved with gold'. On his arrival, however, he can only find streets paved with paving stones and as he has no money, these are his bed for the night until he is awoken by the London bells.

*Dick is asleep on the pavement with a stick to which a small bundle is tied in traditional tramp style.*

*The tune of Oranges and Lemons is played and then the (hidden) choir sings the words to the tune:*

"Oranges and lemons" say the Bells of St. Clement's

"You owe me five farthings" say the Bells of St. Martin's

"When will you pay me?" say the Bells of Old Bailey

"When I grow rich" say the Bells of Shoreditch

"When will that be?" say the Bells of Stepney

"I do not know" say the Great Bells of Bow.

*Dick slowly wakes up and rubs his eyes.*

**Dick:** The bells must have woken me up.

*First two lines of Oranges and Lemons are repeated.*

**Choir:** "Oranges and lemons" say the Bells of St. Clement's

"You owe me five farthings" say the Bells of St. Martin's.

**Dick:** They seem to speaking, but I can't make out the words.

Oh I'm so tired, thirsty, hungry and cold

Where, oh where are the streets paved with gold?

**Narrator:** Bill and Ben are two servants of the Fitzwarren household.

*A door opens and out pop Bill and Ben who empty their buckets of slops on to the pavement. Horrible ingredients can be used to comic effect such as pigs' heads, dead rats, skull etc.*

**Bill:** (To Dick) You look thirsty, hungry and cold.

**Dick:** I'm looking for the streets paved with gold.

**Ben:** Don't be a silly billy. There aren't any streets paved with gold.

**Bill:** It's just a saying. It means that if you work hard, you will make a lot of money.

**Dick:** Oh, I'm willing to work hard.

**Ben:** Where do come from?

**Dick:** Bristol.

**Bill:** Why did you come here?

**Dick:** My parents are so poor that they can't feed me any more. So, I came to London to see the streets paved.... Er, I mean to work hard and make a lot of money.

**Ben:** That's better. I know what. You seem like a good fellow – just down and out.

**Bill:** But there is a way out.

**Ben:** We will take you to our master Alderman Fitzwarren.

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