

# Dick Whittington Sample

## Script by David Barrett

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### Scene 6 Sir Edward's Drawing Room, Next Day

*The scene is a peaceful one as Sir Edward and Alice sit at opposite ends of the room, both engaged in writing, Sir Edward, his memoirs and Alice, a letter. Alice sits at the ivory table in the window and Sir Edward sits at his writing desk.*

ALICE Oh Daddy, I do so detest writing letters. Do I have to write yet another.

SIR EDWARD Do stop complaining, my dear. We only see our relatives once a year, at Christmas.

ALICE *(Aside)* That's once a year too often.

SIR EDWARD What's that, dear?

ALICE I said, that's not very often, Daddy.

SIR EDWARD Quite. We have to keep them acquainted with our news.

ALICE *(Stands up and crosses downstage. As she does so, King Rat appears briefly at the window and steals a ring from a ceramic pot on the ivory table. In his haste, he forgets to replace the lid.)*

I do find it difficult, communicating with people I have not seen for ages.

SIR EDWARD My dear, the sooner you finish it, the sooner you can go and fraternise with the servants, although I fear no good will come of it. The servants should stay downstairs and the gentry upstairs.

ALICE *(Returning to the table.)* But why, Father? They are as intelligent as we are. It's not their fault they were born into service. Take that young Dick, for example. I rather like him. In his own way he is a real gentleman.

SIR EDWARD Yes, he seems a decent enough fellow.

ALICE *(Noticing the lid off the pot.)* Why that's odd. I'm sure the lid was on this pot just now. *(She peers inside and then turns it upside down.)*

Father, the ring – it's gone!

SIR EDWARD *(Crossing to look for himself.)* This cannot be so. I check those pots every night for their precious contents. It was certainly there last night.

*(Turning the pot upside down)* Good gracious, you're right, Alice. Quick, go and fetch the Inspector from the police station at the end of the road. And be quick, the culprit may still be abroad.

ALICE Well if he's abroad, we won't catch him will we. *(She exits)*

SIR EDWARD I don't mean abroad as in France. I mean...oh never mind.

*(Aside)* My goodness, the other pots. What if?

*(He checks the pot on the writing desk and the one on the pedestal.)*

Thank goodness for that. Only the one ring is gone.

*(Enter Clousseau, wearing a raincoat, a ridiculous deer-stalker hat and carrying a magnifying glass, with Alice.)*

Ah Inspector. My, that was very quick.

INSPECTOR *(In an appalling French accent.)* Inspector Clousseau at your service, Sir John.

SIR EDWARD Edward!

INSPECTOR Missing persons a speciality, fingerprinting carried out as standard, quotations include use of dogs and carrying of firearms. Charges by the hour, including VAT....

SIR EDWARD Yes, yes, yes, never mind all that. Just get on with the job.

INSPECTOR Certainly sir, right away sir. Now, let me see, what do you believe was stolen.

ALICE We don't believe, we know a ring was stolen. It is of great sentimental value as it belonged to my late mother. It was in this pot right here. *(Shows the pot. He peers into it with the magnifying glass and then looks at the bottom.)*

INSPECTOR Hm! Interesting.

SIR EDWARD What is it, man? Have you found a clue.

INSPECTOR It says, 'made in Hong Kong'.

ALICE Are you just here to admire our antiques or are you going to help us find our ring?

INSPECTOR Certainly, miss. Can you describe the missing item?

ALICE It was a lady's gold ring with an emerald stud.

INSPECTOR And it was in this ceramic pot with the coat of arms?

SIR EDWARD Yes on the ancestral African ivory table. *(Looks at table.)*

INSPECTOR A gold ring with an emerald stud kept in the ceramic pot with the coat of arms on the ancestral ivory table. Now, do you have any other valuables in this room.

ALICE Well, there is the silver ring with the diamond heart.

SIR EDWARD It's kept in the pewter pot on the painted pedestal in the portico.  
*(Pointing to it.)*

INSPECTOR *(Already getting confused.)* The silver ring with the diamond heart that's kept in the pewter pot on the painted pedestal in the portico. And that's still there?

ALICE Yes.

SIR EDWARD And there's the copper ring with the sapphire moon.

ALICE That's kept in the glass jar in the Tuscany teak inlaid leather writing-desk. *(Gestures to it.)*

INSPECTOR *(Faltering)* The sapphire ring with copper moon...

SIR EDWARD The copper ring with the sapphire moon....

INSPECTOR The copper moon with the sapphire ring on the ceramic pedestal on the ivory coat of arms.

SIR EDWARD No, no, no, the missing gold ring with an emerald stud was kept in the ceramic pot with the coat of arms

ALICE On the ancestral African ivory table.

INSPECTOR The, the, the silver ring with the sapphire moon...

ALICE The diamond heart...

INSPECTOR The silver ring with the diamond heart is on the African pedestal in the ivory portico.

SIR EDWARD No, no, no. Let's try something else. We know one ring is missing.

INSPECTOR The gold ring with the emerald stud....

ALICE Kept in the ceramic pot with the coat of arms...

INSPECTOR On the Tuscany, inlaid, pewter, ancestral....

SIR EDWARD *(Raising his voice.)* Silence!! Stop this madness. *(Calming down)*  
Now let's try approaching this from a different angle. Sometime overnight the ring has been stolen. Who could possibly have taken it?

INSPECTOR May I suggest we search your servants, Sir Edward.

SIR EDWARD No you may not. My servants are all trustworthy.

ALICE But father, there is no-one else. The front and back doors were locked and there was a watchman in the yard.

INSPECTOR You see, sir, many crimes are not thought out in advance. They are committed by opportunist thieves who can't resist the temptation.

SIR EDWARD But none of the servants has been in this room overnight. Why would they?

INSPECTOR To steal a ring?

SIR EDWARD Oh very well, you may search the servants, but you are wasting your time. You'll find nothing.

INSPECTOR May I also suggest that you find a suitable hiding place for the sapphire ring with the copper moon and the...the...the other ring.

ALICE Certainly, I'll do that now. *(She takes the rings and hides them in her cleavage [or an alternative])*

INSPECTOR *(Coughs in embarrassment.)* Yes, quite. Now Sir George...

SIR EDWARD Edward!

INSPECTOR No, I'm not Edward, I'm Jacque, Jacque Clousseau.

SIR EDWARD I'm Edward, you fool.

INSPECTOR Pleased to meet you, Edward. *(He offers his hand.)*

ALICE Father, I'll go down and assemble the servants. You can follow in a moment.

SIR EDWARD Thank you, my dear. *(She exits.)*

Now Clousseau, if we find the culprit I don't want any trouble. I would just like the ring back quietly.

INSPECTOR As you wish, sir. I don't get paid extra if the job ends in a hanging, although I do like the sound of a villain's neck going crack on the gallows.

SIR EDWARD Inspector!

INSPECTOR Sorry sir. Just getting carried away with the enthusiasm for the job.

SIR EDWARD This way, Inspector. We'd better get this over with.

*(He shows the Inspector out. Exit Sir Edward and Inspector. Simultaneously enter King Rat.)*

KING RAT      Aha! Now I am controlling the plot of this play. *(He shows the ring.)*  
I can slip this ring into the pocket of any one of those servants and they will be found guilty of stealing it. Or I could plant it on him in the fourth row. And who do you think I will plant it on? That's right – the brat Whittington. I told you I would get even with him. And now, I must away to do the deed – before I am found out. *(To the person in the fourth row)* I'll deal with you later.

*End of Scene*