

# Dick Turpin – From the Horse's Mouth!

By Jenny Gilbert

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# Dick Turpin – From the Horse’s Mouth!

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## Characters

Dick Turpin	Highwayman and Principal Boy
Tom King	Highwayman
Bob	Dick’s Fob watch dog
Chief	Elderly Member of Dick’s Gang; Irish.
Ralf	Young Member of Dick’s Gang
Angie Michelo	Young Member of Dick’s Gang; on work experience exchange from Italy, and a constable
Lucy	Member of Dick’s Gang
Walter	Elderly Member of Dick’s Gang
Mrs Where Turpin	Dick’s Mum – Dame
Swiftkick	Boy in Dick’s Gang
Dan	Blacksmith
Black Bess	Pantomime Horse
Skivvy	
CatNav	Young chorus, dressed as a cat. Non-speaking.
Ruby Mayor	Principal Girl, Sheriff’s daughter.
Fanfare Player	Non-speaking
The Twig	Non-speaking
Sheriff Mayor	
Lady Victoria Regent	Highway person/female – Villainess
Sergeant Fussbucket	(which he pronounces Foobouquet)
Constable Hans Freekit	
Constable Stan Dandy liver	
Constable Bill Darling	
Constable “Snack” Van Open	
Town Crier	
Frank Furter	Hot Food Stall owner
Mrs Higginbottom	Dan’s Mother
Chorus/Ensemble	Woods People/Villagers Puppies (young chorus) Woodland Animals Epping Cleaners

## Scenes and Suggested Songs

Act One, Scene One Epping Forest - Full Stage

Music 1: Theme from "Mission Impossible"

Song 1: "Stand and Deliver" - Adam and the Ants

Dick, His Gang, Chorus of Poor Woods People

Song 2: "Gold Fever" - from Paint Your Wagon

Dame and all on stage, including the Chorus

Act One, Scene Two Epping Forest – FOT

Song 3: "Money" - From "Cabaret"

Dick, His Gang, Tom, Dame

Song 4: "A Winter's Tale" - David Essex

Bob/Young Chorus of puppies

Act One, Scene Three A Blacksmith's Forge - Full Stage

Song 5: "Consider Yourself" - From "Oliver!"

Dick, with all on stage, including the Chorus

Music 2: Theme from "Black Beauty"

Music 3: Theme from "Top Gear"

Music 4: "The Chain" - Fleetwood Mac

Music 5: "Benny Hill Theme"

Act One, Scene Four Outside the Blacksmith's Forge – FOT

Song 6: "Policeman's Song" - From "The Pirates of Penzance"

Sergeant Fussbucket, with the Constables

Act One, Scene Five Ye Olde Jobcentre – Full Stage

Song 7: "Ruby" - Kaiser Chiefs

Dick, with all on stage

Song 8: "I Want It All" - Queen

Lady, with all on stage

Act Two, Scene One Epping Village Green - Full Stage

Song 9: "Let's Twist Again" – Chubby Checker

All on stage

Song 10: "Friendship" – written by Cole Porter

Bob and Swiftkick, with all on stage

Act Two, Scene Two In The Forest – FOT

Song 11: "I Feel Pretty" – from West Side Story

Ruby and Chorus of Woodland Animals

Act Two, Scene Three Ye Olde Police Station - Full Stage

Song 12: "I Could Be So Good For You" - Dennis Waterman

Sergeant, with Sheriff joining in

Song 13: "I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Outa My Hair" – from South Pacific

Use *Highwayman*, instead of *man*

Chorus of Epping Cleaners, plus Constables Hans Freekit and Snack Van Open

Act Two, Scene Four The Forest – FOT

Song 14: "That Don't Impress Me Much" – Shania Twain

Lady Victoria Regent

Song 15: Suggest the chorus only from "Money, Money, Money" – Abba

Audience Participation song.

Dame and Swiftkick

Song 16: "Something Better" – from Muppet Treasure Island

Dame and Swiftkick

Act Two, Scene Five The Epping Village Green - Full Stage

Song 17: "I predict a Riot" – Kaiser Chiefs

All on stage

Song 18: "Suddenly" – from Les Miserables

Dick

Act Two, Scene Six    Near The Village Green – FOT

Song 19: “I would walk 500 miles” – The Proclaimers  
The Police

Act Two, Scene Seven The Walkdown

Song 20: “Congratulations” – Cliff Richard

## The Year is 1737

### Act One, Scene One

Set: A clearing in the middle of Epping Forest at night.

Centre is a fire, barely alight. There are scattered logs around, and using one as a pillow is Tom King, lying on his left side. His back is to the audience. Upstage centre is a tree with a large trunk. There are several others around the perimeter of the clearing.

Sticking out of his right jacket pocket is a large bag of gold. There is also a bag in his other pocket containing "gold" chocolate money. Unseen by the audience he has a pistol in his right hand.

Downstage left is a large bundle of small logs and leaves, underneath which Swiftkick is sleeping, unseen by the audience.

The stage should have a general low light, but with a small spotlight on the bag of gold.

(As the tabs open, Music 1: Suggest "Mission Impossible" begins.

Dick Turpin slowly begins to descend in a harness, lying horizontally, above Tom. He's reaching for the bag of gold. Creeping on from stage right is Bob on four legs, nose pointing at the gold.

Just as Dick is about to succeed, Tom rolls on his back and points his pistol at Dick.)

Tom: Hold it!

(Points pistol at Band) You lot, too!

(Music stops.)

Dick: Oh, horse brasses! What gave me away?

Tom: (carefully gets up, and indicates The Band) Well, your music for a start. (He helps Dick to the ground and to remove his harness; Dick is now stage left of Tom)

Dick: (to Bob) I said it was overkill, Bob!

(Bob sits down folding his front legs, grumpily.)

Tom: (to Dick) May I know the name of the person who nearly robbed Tom King?

Dick: I'm Dick Turpin.

Tom: Dick Turpin? What is this, dog eat dog?

(Bob howls)

Sorry, no offence intended. I meant that I'm also a Highwayman!

(Bob snarls)

Steady, there, fella! Your fob watch dog, is he?

Dick: Only the best! He's pedigree, you know.

Tom: Really!

Dick: Oh, yes! Had him since he was a pup; off a bloke in a coach, who didn't have any money.

Tom: What's his name?

Dick: Bob.

Tom: Doesn't sound very pedigree to me.  
(Bob looks embarrassed, begging Dick not to tell Tom)

Dick: Well . . . it's . . . Bugaboo Robertson's Candy Kisses . . . but Bob, for short.

Tom: (laughing) Good grief, I'm not surprised!

Ralf: (from off stage left) Have you done it yet, Dick?

Chief: (from off stage right) He better had! It's freezing in this Epping Forest!

Dick: (to Tom, looking at his pistol) Okay if I call my men in, Tom?

Tom: (lowering his pistol) As long as they don't expect to be fed. I've only enough for me!

Dick: No worries, Tom. All right, lads; to me!  
(Ralf, Walter and Chief run on, the latter two quickly out of breath. Lucy runs on behind Chief. Lucy has a rather revealing Highwayman's costume on, and as Tom spots her he can't help but stare. Dick takes advantage of this, drawers his own pistol and knocks Tom to the ground. Dick points his pistol at Tom)  
If you'll excuse the phrase . . . stand and deliver!

(As the song starts, Tom carefully stands and puts up his hands, and a Chorus of poor Woods People enter, to join in.)

#### SONG 1: Suggest "Stand and Deliver" - Adam and The Ants

(During the song, Dick hands out most of the gold coins from one bag to The Chorus, who are very grateful. He keeps back the other bag, which contains chocolate money. Tom slowly puts his hands down, and becomes more and more amused as he looks at Dick's Gang. As the song finishes he is laughing.)

Chief: What's he got to laugh at?

Lucy: Yes, I thought that was a great song (points at audience) and so did they.  
(To audience) Didn't you!  
I said, didn't you!

Tom: I'm not laughing at that, just at you lot!

Dick: What?

Tom: Well, I mean! Look at what you call your "lads"! Two old men, who can barely fight for breath, a young boy, and a girl!

Lucy: Hey!

Tom: Well, you are a girl aren't you? I thought that was rather obvious!

Dick: That's actually the point, you see. She's useless at fighting, but an excellent distraction . . . as I believe you noticed.

Tom: Yes, I must admit, that did work rather well.

Dick: Chief, here, might be elderly . . .

Chief: Agely challenged!

Dick: . . . agely challenged, but he has a huge amount of experience from many skirmishes in Ireland, where he grew up.

Chief: Oh, ay! We Jacobites didn't see off William at the Siege of Limerick by spouting fancy rhymes at him, I can tell you! I'm a fightin' machine, me!

Dick: Walter may also be . . . agely challenged, but he makes up for lack of brawn with a huge amount of brain. He was the one who worked out the scam to get your gold.

Walter: We knew you were good, Mr King, Sir, so I reckoned we had to be crafty.

Tom: I admit, it worked well. But if I'd decided to put up a fight . . .

Dick: . . . what are you talking about, you. . ?

Tom: . . . put up a fight, says I, you'd never have won.

Ralf: I'd have stopped you!

Chief: Well said, Ralf!

Tom: A mere boy!

Lucy: (putting up her fists, boxing fashion) And I could have done you some damage!

Tom: Mmmm!

Dick: (pointing his pistol at Tom) I don't think you can afford to talk like that, not when you're looking down the barrel of a pistol.

Tom: Now there you do, indeed, have me.

Dick: So what are you driving at, with all this insulting talk?

Dame: (rushing on from stage left, with Angie) Insulting talk? What's all this, may I ask? You all know that if there's insulting to be done, then it's me what should be doing it! No-one's allowed to be rude to my son, except me!  
(She sees Bob, and tussles his ears.)  
Hallo there, Buggie!  
(Bob growls.)

Dick: Not now, Mother! And you know he prefers Bob!  
(To Angie) And where did you get to at Roll Call?

Angie: Your mother needed help with some painting.

Tom: (to Dick)  
Another of your "men"?

Dick: Angie's a foreign exchange work experience person, from Italy.

Angie: (fiercely) And a lot tougher than I look!



Tom: Ok, ok! . . . . I just thought it might be a good idea if we joined forces, so to speak. Myself and my pistol, with you and your . . . Lads.

Dick: Well, I don't . . .

Tom: It really makes a lot of sense, you know.

Dick: But I think we are . . .

Tom: I'm sure Walter is wise enough to reason it out for you. And perhaps you could lower your pistol, just a little? Accidents can happen, you know.

Dick: Walter? Well, I suppose . . . well . . . what say you, Walter? Merger or no merger?

Walter: Merger or no merger?

Dame: Come on, come on! It's a fifty-fifty decision.

Walter: Well . . .

Dame: Look, you don't have any friends to speak of, so why not ask the audience?

Walter: Okay.

Dame: (to audience) Oi, you lot! Oh, hang about, how rude of moi. Let me introduce myself, as my son's forgotten his manners. I'm Mrs Turpin, mother of Richard, otherwise known as Dick. I've always been a good girl, and I thought I'd brought my youngster up well, but he goes and becomes a Highwayman. A Highwayman, I mean, I ask you! What sort of job is that?

Dick: A well paid one.

Dame: Working odd hours . . .

Dick: A very well paid one.

Dame: Meeting lots of strange strangers . . .

Dick: Strange strangers with money . . .

Dame: In all sorts of weather . . .

Dick: And, sometimes, gold! (Dick jingles what's left in the bag)

Dame: Catching his death of . . . gold? Really? Really gold? Oh, well, let's not be too hasty. I mean to say, a son's got to look after his poor old Mum somehow, hasn't he? And me with my weak . . . Oh, no!

Lucy: Your weak "Oh no"?

Dame: Stand back, Lucy . . . everyone! It's taking hold of me again!

SONG 2: Suggest "Gold Fever" - from Paint Your Wagon

(Dick lowers his gun during the song, and then quickly points it at Tom again, as Tom begins to speak.)

Tom: Excuse me, I don't wish to complain, but . . .

Dame Then don't! And having sung all that, I STILL wish my son would get a good, honest job! I'm having to pretend to all and sundry that it's a HUGE coincidence that our surnames are the same, or else the authorities would just follow me and nick him! (To the audience) Anyway, where was I? Oh, yes. Me! Well, I was married in a church, all proper like, although having to explain to the vicar how I came by my Christian name was, to say the least, embarrassing. It's Where, short for: Where Do You Think You're Going With The Church Silver? I may be a good girl, but the congregation at my christening left a lot to be desired, and caught the poor vicar out right at the crucial moment! Sadly, I'm now all on my own, with just my darling boy to comfort me.  
(The Band calls "Ahh!")  
Oh, it's a lot sadder than that!  
(The Band calls "Ahh!" more loudly)  
You know, Dick has grown into the spitting image of his dear, departed father.

Tom: Your husband died?  
Dame: No, he just departed.  
Dick: Mother, Walter still has a decision to make, and it's starting to grow dark.  
Dame: Oh, sorry, yes. (To the audience) Now then, just to remind you, the question is: merger or no merger, and let me say, very hastily at this point, that if you don't all shout merger, this will be an extremely short pantomime! So what's it to be? All shout after three. One, two, three.  
I'm sorry, what was that?  
I should think so, too! Actually, Dick, when you were talking about your gang, I think you missed someone out. Where is he?

Dick: Who do you . . . Oh, Swiftkick, you mean?  
Dame: Who else?  
Dick: Well, he's probably curled up somewhere, asleep as usual.  
Dame: I'll help you find him.  
Tom: Look, I really don't wish to complain (quickly speaking the rest of the sentence, as the Dame opens her mouth) but if you're agreed to merger can Dick stop pointing that pistol at me, and who the hell is Swiftkick?

Dick: (putting his pistol away) Oh, sorry. Well, Swiftkick is an excellent scavenger, couldn't be without him, but he's named well.  
Dame: Yes, it takes a Swift kick to get him going. But first we need to find him. (To the audience) Can you help? Let's all shout out his name, and hopefully he'll wake up.  
Ok, after three. One, two, three.  
Nothing. Once more, and this time really loudly. One, two, three.  
(Dame looks around. Slowly the pile of small logs and leaves move, and Swiftkick stands up, blinking and rubbing his eyes.)

Swiftkick: (yawns) Oh nauseous napkins! Is it teatime yet?  
All: No!  
Swiftkick: (yawns) Shame!  
Dame: Oh, Swiftkick!  
Swiftkick: Yes, Mrs Turpin?  
(Business of Dame pointing in front of her, Swiftkick bends over, Dame asking audience: "shall I?" and finally kicking him.)  
Dame: Better?  
Swiftkick: I suppose so. And I presume you want something scavenged?  
Dame: How did you guess?  
Swiftkick: (rubbing his behind) I just sensed it!  
Dame: Now then, I need a new bra. Something more . . . mmm . . . sporty! (Produces something tatty/humorous) Forget cross-your heart; this bra has become more of a cross-your-waist!  
Swiftkick: (taking old bra) Will do, Mrs T!  
Dame: Actually, Dick, I didn't just come looking for you for a chat and a song.  
Dick: No?  
Dame: No. I was after some dinner money.  
Dick: Oh, right, well, you'd better have this, then.  
(Dick hands the Dame the bag of chocolate money.)  
Dame: Thanks, my boy! You're such a good son to his poor old Mum. Now then, what have we here?  
(She holds a large coin up to the light.)  
Looks good.  
Smells good.  
(She takes a bite.)  
Tastes good. And I bet it does me good, too!  
(Moves downstage to the audience, with All except The Chorus. Tabs close.)  
Anyone out there need any dinner money?  
(Business of throwing all the coins to the audience)

## Act One, Scene Two

Dick: That was very well done, Mother!  
Dame: Why, thank you, kind Sir!  
Dick: Now all we have left is this! (Takes out the remaining few coins from the bag)  
Dame: Oh.  
Dick: Quite.  
Lucy: Well, what do we need money for, anyway?  
Angie: Don't forget I bring a little bit extra in from my "other" job!  
Lucy: Oh, have they finally got around to paying you?  
Angie: Well, no, but . . .  
Walter: Exactly. So Nature will provide!  
Chief: We can always find food in the forest.  
Swiftkick: And water from the stream.  
Ralf: It's not as if we haven't done it before.  
Swiftkick: But . . . but . . . !  
Tom: I know, Swiftkick. There's more to life than that!

### SONG 3: Suggest "Money, Money, Money" - From "Cabaret"

Lucy: Ok, so we do need money.  
Chief: No getting away from it.  
Dame: Well I never said we didn't!  
Tom: So what are we waiting for?  
Dick: (moving to exit) Only my transport.  
Lucy: (moving to follow) Oh no! Where did you leave her this time?  
Walter: (as they all move to follow Dick) If you've got another parking ticket . . .  
Dame: (moving to exit) And I'd better fetch the transport's cover. Looks like rain, just for a change!  
Tom: (as they all exit) Who are we talking about exactly?

(Bob is at the back of the group. He leaves on four legs, and then quickly returns on two.)

Bob: They're going on about poor old Black Bess, Dick's long suffering horse. Oh, yes, I can speak. I just choose not to. And walking upright is far more comfortable, I can tell you! I don't want anyone to know, you see. Don't want them thinking I'm weird or something. So do you promise not to tell? Sorry, I didn't hear that, and I've got great hearing, I'll have you know! Do you promise not to tell? That's better. You know, I'm having a great time with young Master Turpin, but there is something I miss dreadfully from my old life. My girl, Carrie. Well, it's actually Kingston Sweet Carolina 'cos she's pedigree, too. I still have lovely memories, though.

SONG 4: Suggest "A Winter's Tale" - David Essex

(Young Chorus enter, dressed as puppies, to dance/sing with Bob. Bob and Chorus exit at end of song. Tabs open.)

## Act One, Scene Three

Set: In A Blacksmith's forge.

Centre is an anvil and bench. Upstage flat to include concealed Blankety Blank Supermatch type board.

Black Bess is waiting to one side up stage, and Dick the other, with Angie. Dan the blacksmith is working on a shoe. Swiftkick is asleep under a pile of horse blankets and saddlery, and has a "superbra" for the Dame with him.

Dan: So when did you last visit a Blacksmith? These shoes are in a dreadful state.  
 Dick: At the 100 mile service, like I'm supposed to.  
 Dan: Well all I can say is, you must be very heavy on the brakes!  
 (Black Bess whinnies loudly.)  
 Dick: Oh, I wouldn't say that . . .  
 (Black Bess whinnies even more loudly.)  
 All right, all right! I'm sorry, ok?  
 Dan: No need to apologise, young Sir.  
 Dick: I was talking to my horse!  
 Dan: Of course you were!  
 Dame: (enters with Ralf, talking to him. He's carrying a grotty-looking horse blanket. Bob follows on, sitting by Dame)  
 Well, it's been a year since Black Bess has had this blanket, so I reckons it ought to be washed, whether it needs it or not.  
 Dan: Look out for the . . .!  
 (Ralf slips over, throwing the blanket high, which is caught dramatically by the Dame. She then slips, landing at Dick's feet.)  
 Dick: (wearily) Hallo, Mother.  
 Dame: (aside) Ssshh, don't let on to the Blacksmith that we're related!  
 Dan: Sorry about that. (Ralf and the Dame get up, with the Dame dumping the blanket back into Ralf's arms) Any damage done?  
 Dame: No more than normal after someone's slipped up in a load of . . . (pointing at the shoes Dan is working on for Black Bess) are those the best shoes you can provide, Blacksmith? I work for this young man, and don't want to see him come a cropper, not when he's paying my wages!  
 Dan: These are individually crafted by a very individual craftsman, namely me, as you can see!  
 Ralf: Bespoke?  
 Dan: No, be horseshoe. Spoke be on a wheel, horseshoe be on a hoof.  
 Ralf: I mean, are they made to measure?  
 Dame: Made to measure what? And what on earth would Black Bess want to measure things with her hooves for?

Ralf: Oh, forget it. What shall I do with this blanket?

Dan: We clean it. All part of the valet service, free with each set of shoes, this month only. (Dan indicates the pile Swiftkick is under) Just chuck it there, (Ralf does so) and I'll get my skivvy to sort it in a minute. He's just getting your other special offer of the week for you: a free CatNav with every full set of shoes.

Dame: Really?

Dick: It's why I came to this Blacksmith, Mother, I mean Mrs Turpin, instead of going to Horseshoes-R-Us, like you suggested.

Dan: (shouts to off-stage) Skivvy, the CatNav! (Skivvy brings on CatNav: basically a cat wearing antenna) Ah, here we go!  
(Skivvy has hold of a lead attached to CatNav's collar, but it's pointless. CatNav goes where it wants, roams around the stage, then settles down to go to sleep centre)

Dame: It doesn't look very efficient to me. How's it supposed to work?

Dan: Well, it has the strong homing instincts of a cat, so can lead you back home, even in the dark.

Ralf: Via hedges and bushes?

Dan: I suppose there is that, yes.

Dame: (as Bob moves to sniff at CatNav) Are there any other drawbacks?

Dan: Well, now you come to mention it . . .  
(CatNav sits up, yowls and spits at Bob, and Bob chases CatNav briefly around the stage, before they exit. Skivvy is still hanging on to the lead all the while, so exits, too.)

Dick: Somehow I don't think I'll be taking up your special offer, Dan.  
(Bob returns on two legs, looking very pleased with himself. Punches a "yes!" into the air, before realising he should be on all fours, and quickly returns to the Dame.)

Dame: Well done, Buggie!  
(Bob snarls, but quietly. A brief fanfare is heard off stage. )

Dan: (walking away from his work, and wiping his hands) Ah, that'll be someone coming to visit from Ye Olde Jobcentre. I've asked them to call round as my skivvy has to leave at the end of the month, so I'll need a replacement.  
(The Fanfare Player walks on. The trumpet's banner is opened to reveal an advert. The brief fanfare is played again, and Ruby enters, carrying a note book.)

Ruby: (to Dick, who shakes his head) Dan?  
(to Ralf, who shakes his head) Dan?

Dan: (putting out his hand to shake Ruby's) The Blacksmith man. Ay, that's me. And you are?

Ruby: Ruby Mayor, Adviser at Ye Olde Jobcentre. I understand you need a new skivvy?

Dan: Well met, Ruby. Yes, I do, to do the standard stuff (Ruby makes notes). Ruby Mayor? Not related to Sheriff Mayor, by any chance?

Ruby: Unfortunately, yes. But he doesn't know I work, let alone where. He wouldn't approve, so I'd be very grateful if you didn't let on.

Dan: Oh, no worries there.

Ruby: It's also the reason I have to be preceded by this Fanfare Player; Father insists. But at least it has its advertising uses.

Dan: So I see. (indicates Black Bess) Do you mind if I get on and finish this job? I shouldn't be long.

Ruby: No, that's fine, I'll just wait over here. (moves downstage)

Dame: (as she follows) Our Angie also does a job she doesn't want anyone to know about.  
(The rest follow, now out of ear shot of Dan)

Ruby: And you are?

Dame: I'm Mrs Where Turpin . . .

Ruby: Where?

Ralf: Don't ask! We haven't got all night!

Dame: (indicating Angie) and this is Angie, the one what moonlights (to audience) that's does a second job for additional income . . . (glaring at Angie) although as yet she doesn't seem to have any dosh from either! (Angie looks ashamed)

Ruby: So, what does she . . . ?

Angie: (hurriedly, making a fuss of Bob) And this is Bob, our faithful fob watch dog.

Ruby: Oh, he's a darling! (Bob preens himself) Is he house trained?

Dame: Oh yes: House, pub, carriage, forest, stage coach . . .

Dick: (hastily) And I'm Dick, her son (Dame mimes ssh and indicates Dan)  
(To Dame) It's ok, he can't hear us!  
(To Ruby) We have to pretend we're not related; long story. And this is Ralf, my apprentice.

Ruby: Good to meet you, Dick. Dick? Dick Turpin? Oh!

Dick: Oh, please don't worry. I'm not like the gossip-mongers make out.

Ruby: No?

Dick: No. Honest!

Dame: But then he would say that, wouldn't he?

Dick: Mother!

Dame: Only joshing!

Ruby: That's okay. In reality, I wish I was allowed to be more like you all, and not have to hide my work from Father, and be preceded everywhere by a Fanfare Player.  
(Fanfare Player looks downcast) But an excellent one, though!  
(Fanfare Player cheers up)

Dame: Well, a lovely lady like you need not worry. Whenever you're with us we promise to treat you like muck!

Dick: (hastily) What Mother means, is . . .



SONG 5: Suggest "Consider Yourself" - From "Oliver!"

(Dick, with all on stage. Chorus of Woods People enter, to join in.)

Dame: (as a Chorus person nearly knocks over a bucket of manure, having established it's fresh and pungent, puts it down near Black Bess) Watch out she doesn't kick the bucket!

Dan: I'm not that careless! I ain't lost an 'orse whilst shoeing it yet! Whilst worming it, possibly, you've got me there.

Dame: You know, all that jiggling around has reminded me about something. I need Swiftkick. Has anyone seen him?  
(Bob shakes his head)

Dick/Ralf/Angie: No.

Dan/Ruby: Who?

Dame: Allow me to demonstrate. (To audience) Ready, everyone? After three. One, two, three.

Oh, you need to be much louder than that. (To the Band) Come on, you lot, wake up! One, two, three.

Swiftkick: (emerging from the pile) Oh ballistic bananas! Is it morning already?

Dame: We've not even had night yet! Get here, now!

(Business of Dame pointing in front of her, Swiftkick bends over, Dame asking audience: "shall I?" and finally kicking him.)

So, Swiftkick, my lad. Any result in the bra department?

Swiftkick: (holding up superbra) Just this!

(Business of seeing how it works, without trying it on. All on stage react variously.)

Dame: As always, Swiftkick, you have proved yourself to be a champion scrounger.

What I want now . . .

Swiftkick: Oh, I'm beginning to hate those words!

Dame: Well, I could . . .

Swiftkick: They're starting to creep into my dreams . . .

Dame: If I . . .

Swiftkick: Well, nightmares, really.

Dame: I need . . .

Swiftkick: Over, and over again! "What I want now. . . What I want now!"

Dame: Swiftkick! If you have something to say, raise your hand and place it over your mouth! (He does so) What I want now . . . as I was trying to say is I need new shoes. Something a little jazzier, I reckon. Okay?

(Swiftkick just nods, hand still over his mouth.)

I said, Okay?

(Swiftkick nods more vigorously, so Dame drags his hand away.)

Swiftkick: Okay!

Dan: Right, then. Horse shoes all done. (Puts out his hand to Dick) That'll be . . .

Dame: Hold on, hold on. He'll need to test them, first.

Dan: What?

Dame: Well, if they come unstuck . . .

Dan: Unstuck?

Dame: . . . as he's doing a fancy bit of cornering. And what if they aren't very fast? Eh? Eh?

Dan: I assure you they're the best!

Dick: She has a point. We only have your word for it. How about if I take Black Bess for a quick once-around-the-block?

Dan: Well . . .

Dick: Mrs Turpin, Ralf, Angie and Swiftkick. . (Bob snarls) and Bob can stay here, to ensure I don't do a runner without paying.

Dan: Oh, all right, then. I'll fetch a mounting block.

Dick: No, that's okay. (Pointing off stage) I left my portable mounting block over there.

Dame: (tussling Swiftkick's hair) as scavenged by young Swiftkick, here.  
(Dick leads Black Bess off stage)  
She's quite awkward, when she wants to be. Better to view his attempts to get in the saddle from a distance.  
(They all watch off stage.)  
So it's left foot into stirrup, hands on saddle, pull and jump and . . . Oh.  
(All on stage say "OOOOOoooo", to indicate a nasty fall.)  
She's obviously having a bad horsehair day. So, yet again, it's left foot into stirrup, hands on saddle, pull and jump and . . .  
(All on stage say "hurray!")  
Now, he's under starters orders. Just check this for speed. (Dame gets out fob watch and checked hanky) Another two lovely items from Swiftkick! (Looks at watch, raises hanky) Ready, steady, go!

Music 2: Suggest Theme from "Black Beauty" begins  
(All on stage slowly look from off stage, around the auditorium, and finally back to off stage, where Dick started from. Ad-lib from all to encourage Dick.)

Dick: (running on from off stage) How was that?

Dame: (looking at watch) Well, it was good, but I'm sure it could have been faster.

Dick: But I gave it my best!

Dame: Well . . . really she needs to go with the wind.

Dan: That's like the wind, I think you'll find.

Dame: I know what I mean!

Ralf: So what sort of things would ensure Black Bess had enough wind?

Dame: (indicating audience) Well, I expect there are enough upright citizens amongst that lot who could come up with the answers, don't you?

Dick: Absolutely. (To audience, whilst Dame moves upstage, assisted by Dan, if necessary, to reveal the Supermatch board as Band Play/Sing "Supermatch Game" from Blankety Blank)  
Now then. This may come as a surprise to you all, but as we've been sticking to the script, we came across this problem last night, too. So, we did a survey amongst the audience . . .

Dame: Oh, a rough lot they were, an' all!

Dick: . . . and asked them to suggest what to feed Black Bess to give her more chance to go with the wind.

Dame: So, if you could just shout out your ideas, Dan will reveal if your answers are the same, and we'll feed Black Bess with whatever comes top.  
(Board to have the following, and ensure the Dame hears these; Band to shout them if the audience don't:  
Scarlet O'Hara  
My Mum's Onion Soup  
Brussels Sprouts  
Baked Beans  
Top of the Board: A quart of beer from [local pub/club])

Dan: Who's going to pay for the beer?

Dame: Fancy a quick scavenge, Swiftkick?

Swiftkick: Oh, all right.

Dame: (as Swiftkick exits) And take it straight to Black Bess!

Dan: In the meantime, there's also something, or rather someone else who could help.

Dick: Who's that, then?

Dan: (in the style of "Top Gear") I think it's time to produce my tame racing horse rider. (To the audience) Some say he eats all the ferns in Epping Forest for breakfast, and can jump the tallest trees from a standing start. Others say that he can go for a drink at [local pub/bar/] and come out without buying a round. All we know is he's called "The Twig".

Music 3: Suggest "Top Gear theme" begins.

(Follow spot/smoke effects where possible as The Twig slowly walks to the stage through the audience. His costume includes riding gloves, and an over-large hat of the period pulled down over his face.)

Dick: Good grief!

Dan: Exactly!

Dame: (looking off stage) Well, it looks like Swiftkick has filled her up, so if The Twig would like to see if he can get her to move any faster, I'll just reset my fob watch.  
(The Twig swaggers off stage.)  
(Looking off stage) Okay, he's on the . . . no! He's kicked away the mounting block, and has leapt into the saddle from a standing start!

Dan: Told you!

Dick: Show off!

Dame: Now, he's under starters orders. (Dame gets out fob watch and checked hanky) Ready, steady, go!

Music 4: Suggest "The Chain" - Fleetwood Mac, begins.

(All on stage slowly look from off stage, around the auditorium, and finally back to off stage, where The Twig started from. Ad-lib encouragement from all.

Ralf goes off stage and leads Black Bess back to Dan)

Dame: (looks at fob watch, then to the audience)  
Much better! So who here would like to see that lap?  
(Audience cheer; Dame puts her finger in her ear, as if receiving a message)  
Ah, unfortunately I'm just getting a message from our Stage Manager. There was a bit of an "ooh, nasty" with the filming, so sadly we can't show you.

Dan: Right then, I'll just give her a quick brush. (Moves to Black Bess) As you all seem to be finally satisfied with my work, who's paying for it?

Dick: (pats pockets, looks embarrassed) Mrs Turpin?

Dame: What?

Dick: Well, you gave away the money I'd intended to use on Black Bess.

Dame: Oh, so I did. Um, well, er, let me just peruse the William first, my good man!  
(Dan hands her the bill)  
How much? Good grief! Look, could you just check my balance?

Dan: No problem.  
(Dan pushes the Dame over)

Angie: (Helping the Dame up) That's no way to treat customers!

Ruby: I know I'm here because you need a new skivvy, but I can also help by finding you someone to handle that side of the business for you.

Dan: (brushing Black Bess) Really?

Ruby: (writing with quill and pad) Really. So, how many hours work can you offer?

Dan: Ah, now then, I'll have to think about . . .

Sheriff: (off stage) Stand back, I take long strides!

Ruby: Oh no, it's father! Please hide me!  
(Dick rushes and hides her, as they exchange shy smiles, and she mimes "thank you" and he mimes back "you're welcome". Fanfare Player also hides, and looks confused as Angie hides with them. Dick hastily reaches into his pocket for moustaches, sticks one on himself, and the other on Black Bess)

Sheriff: (enters, briskly) Dan, I need a word! The London mail carriage has just this minute been robbed by a Highwayman, and he could be heading this way. Oh, sorry, I didn't realise you had a client.

Dan: I'm sure this gentleman won't mind you talking to me whilst I work, Sheriff Mayor. As long as you can reassure him that I'm capable of being able to do both at the same time.

Sheriff: (to DICK) May I assure you, Sir, that Dan is the best . . . um . . . I'm sorry to stare, but you look awfully familiar. Do I know you?  
(Shakes DICK's hand.)  
Sheriff Mayor, in charge of law and order in these here parts. And you are?

Dick: (glancing around for inspiration) Er, Shoe. Richard Shoe. Just passing through.

Sheriff: Not a poet, by any chance, Mr Shoe?

Dick: (nervous laugh) No, no, I'm just a . . . (glancing around again for inspiration and sees Dan hitting the horseshoe hard) just a . . . Thresher.

Sheriff: A Thresher? Really? So you work one of those new-fangled steam-driven threshing machines, eh?

Dick: I do? I mean, I do!

Sheriff: It must be great to load all that wheat and barley in one end, and see the grain come out of the other! Very clever, indeed!

Dick: Oh, yes! Very!

Sheriff: And is this your horse?

Dick: Yes, that's b . . . b . . .

Sheriff: B . . . b . . . ?

Dick: Er, B-B-Beauty.

Sheriff: How unusual.

Dick: I was suffering from a stammer the day I named her.

Sheriff: I used to have a horse, just like yours, named Black Bess.

Dick: Yes, I know. I mean, really?

Sheriff: Oh, yes. (Moves to Black Bess) But she was stolen from me by Dick Turpin.

Dan: The Highwayman?

Sheriff: Do you know of any other? (swiftly grabs Black Bess's leg and looks at her hoof) Rats, it's been scratched out!

Dan: What has?

Sheriff: Her H I N number.

Dan: Her Horse Identification Number? Why are you looking for that?  
Sheriff: I'm the Sheriff! It's my job to be naturally suspicious.  
(Lady Victoria Regent enters)  
Lady: (dashing on and up to Dan, from opposite side to Sheriff, carrying a large bag)  
Quick, I need to hide my loot!  
Sheriff: Your loot?  
Lady: (aghast, and hiding bag behind her back) My. . lute . . yes! Um, I play in a  
local. . local . .  
Dan: (trying to help hide the bag). . local folk band.  
Sheriff: Really? I thought there was only one, and I'm sure I'd have remembered you  
in it!  
Lady: Oh, well it's only just started up.  
Sheriff: I see. But that still doesn't explain your urgent need to hide your lute.  
Dan: Jealousy.  
Sheriff: Jealousy?  
Lady: Yes! Um, there's another lute player whose instrument is badly. . worn. . and  
wants to steal mine.  
Sheriff: And what's it called?  
Lady: Called?  
Sheriff: The name of your band, what is it?  
Lady: Er, Bad. . Bad. .  
Dan: Badly. .  
Lady: Worn . .  
Dan: Toy!  
(Lady looks at Dan, appalled)  
Sheriff: Badly Worn Toy, mm. Well I shall look forward to seeing you perform.  
Sergeant: (dashing on from the same side as Lady entered from) Sheriff Mayor!  
Sheriff: Correct, Sergeant Fussbucket.  
Sergeant: It's pronounced Foobouquet, sir.  
Sheriff: So you keep telling me.  
Sergeant: The London Mail Carriage has been held up, Sheriff!  
Sheriff: Do try and keep up, Fussbucket, that's why I'm here. The highwayman was  
running in this direction.  
Sergeant: Yes, Sheriff, that's why the men and I are here, too.  
(Shouting off) Men!  
(Constables Freekit, Dandylover, Van Open and Darling run on)  
And I've brought a posse!  
(Chorus run on)

Dan: (to the Chorus) Oh no, I thought I'd got rid of you lot!  
Sheriff: (as he exits) Right, well you seem to have plenty of help, Fussbucket. .  
Sergeant: Foobouquet. .  
Sheriff: . . so I'll leave you all to carry out the search. (exits)  
Sergeant: Yes, sir! Right, you lot, you heard what he said. Let's search!

Music 5: Suggest "Benny Hill Theme", begins.

(Lady and Angie dash down stage in different directions, and off into the auditorium. This confuses the police as they are taken by surprise by two of them. They're followed by the Chorus who chase them around the auditorium and then all exit. They're egged on by the police from the stage, who in turn try to encourage each other to follow but mime they have a bad back/leg/etc so can't run.

Angie needs to get her constable's uniform on and run back into the auditorium.

The curtains close behind the police, leaving them front of tabs.)

## Act One, Scene Four

Sergeant: Well that was a mess, and no mistake. Line up lads!  
 (The constables shuffle into a line)  
 Ok, I need to check you're all here, so reply "here" and come to attention when I call your name. Constable Hans Freekit.

Hans: Here!

Sergeant: Constable Stan Dandy liver.

Stan: Here!

Sergeant: Constable Bill Darling.

Bill: (sticking his chest out, as he come to attention) Here!

Sergeant: Nicely done, Darling. Constable Snack Van Open.

Snack: Here!

Sergeant: (to audience)  
 His name's actually Sandy, but that's not so funny.  
 (To constables)  
 Constable Angie Michelo. (Pause) Constable Michelo? (Pause) Where's she gone?

Angie: (from the auditorium) Here, Sarge (gets on the stage)

Sergeant: Oh well done, that Constable. The only one who actually gave chase? Any luck?

Angie: Sorry, Sarge, he was too quick for me.

Sergeant: Did you get a look at his face?

Angie: No, Sarge.

Sergeant: Pity! Do you know what, lads?

Constables: No, what sarge?

Sergeant: I'm fed up with all this running around after criminals stuff. We all try SO hard, don't we?

Constables: Oh we do, we do, sarge!

Sergeant: But no matter how hard we try, we just don't seem to get the breaks!

SONG 6: Suggest "Policeman's Song" - From "The Pirates of Penzance"

Sergeant: Well that's enough self-indulgence for this scene, back to the station to think this situation through, lads. Left face!  
 (All turn left, but Hans turns right)  
 No, Hans, your other left!  
 (Hans turns left)  
 Quick march!



## Act One, Scene Five

Set: Ye Olde Jobcentre.

Desk, chair either side.

Tin of petty cash under desk.

Quill, ink pot and name plate on desk: Ruby Major, Ye Old Job Centre Adviser.

Large board, going down to the floor (Swiftkick behind it): Heading "Ye Olde Jobcentre – Vacancies". Large adverts on the board [see Production Notes]

Dick: (leading on Tom, Chief, Ralf, Lucy and Walter) This looks like the place.  
Tom: Remind me again what we're doing here?  
Dick: I gave my last coins to the blacksmith, and I've just realised that Christmas is fast approaching.  
Chief: So?  
Dick: So I need to get a job . . . .  
(All start coughing and spluttering in surprise)  
. . . . as I did promise me poor old Mum to.  
Ralf: Since when have you ever . . . . ?  
Dick: . . . . done what she told me to do?  
Lucy: Yes!  
Dick: Since I remembered I badly need to buy her a good present after last year's fiasco.  
Walter: You bought her a fiasco?  
Chief: Is that something you cook with?  
Lucy: No, she wouldn't have liked that. Needed to be more personal.  
Ralf: That's what I'd have thought, too.  
Walter: No wonder she wasn't happy!  
Dick: No! The whole present giving thing was a fiasco . . . you know, a humiliating failure!  
Lucy: Humiliating?  
Dick: Yes.  
Tom: What did you get her?  
Dick: A load of rubbish.  
Tom: Oh, I'm sure it wasn't as bad as . . .  
Dick: No, really a load of rubbish . . . literally.  
Tom: Eh?  
Dick: I was conned. I thought I'd bought her a bag of expensive chocolates . . .  
Walter: She'd have liked that!  
Dick: . . . but the bag must have been switched as I was checking my change . . .  
Ralf: . . . embarrassing!

Dick: . . . and when she opened it on Christmas morning, it was . . .

All: A load of rubbish.  
Tom: But you can't go straight, mate, we've only just merged!  
Dick: Perhaps we could postpone it?  
Walter: What sort of job were you thinking of? (Walks to board)  
Dick: Not sure. (The rest of the gang join Walter looking at the board)  
Walter: Here's one: HERMIT: Looking for an escape from the hectic pace of 18th-century living?  
Dick: Hardly.  
Ralf: What about: PUGGER: Fancy spending your days stamping up and down in troughs in your bare feet, mixing tons of slippery clay for brick manufacture?  
Dick: No!  
Lucy: Or there's: BATH ATTENDANT: Fancy helping wrinkly old folks into the baths, and pulling even more wrinkly ones out?  
Dick: Yuck, no!  
Tom: Well I still think it's a rotten idea (joins the rest)  
Dick: Oh I don't know, I'm just confused.  
(Picks up name plate off desk)  
I seem to have come over all unnecessarily emotional, and it's clouding my judgement. Something, or someone, has affected me.

#### SONG 7: Suggest "Ruby" - Kaiser Chiefs

(Dick, with all on stage doing the "ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah" bit)

(A brief fanfare is heard off stage. The Fanfare Player walks on. The trumpet's banner is opened to reveal an advert. The brief fanfare is played again, and Ruby enters, carrying her note book.)

Ruby: Oh I'm sorry, I didn't realise I had clients. (Sees Dick; shy) Oh, hallo again.  
Dick: (shy) Hallo.  
Chief: (walking to Dick) Oh for goodness sake, you've just been singing about . . .  
Dick: (clamping hand over Chief's mouth, still gazing at Ruby) . . . the weather . . . it's rather mild, don't you think? (Removes hand and wipes it on Chief's sleeve)  
Ruby: (sitting, and gesturing Dick to sit) So how can I help you?  
Dick: I need a job.  
Ruby: (picks up quill, dips in pot) Really? Well first I need . . . Oh . . . first I need some ink! But I forgot to buy any more.

Ralf: Just one minute, your Ye Old Jobcentre Advisership, I think we know someone who may help.  
 (To audience)  
 Can you help us call for Swiftkick, please?  
 Ok, one, two, three.  
 You can do better than that! One, two, three!  
 (Swiftkick emerges, yawning, from behind the board)

Swiftkick: Oh windy wombats! (He shuffles over to Ralf and presents his bottom)

Ralf: No, no, no! That's ok, Swiftkick, Mrs Turpin isn't here.

Swiftkick: (punching the air) Yay!

Dick: Swiftkick, do you think you could scavenge some more ink for Ruby, here?

Swiftkick: (walking to one side of the board) Well it just so happens . . . (walks behind it, walks out the other side carrying a bottle of ink) . . . that I have some in my stock (hands it to Dick, who lovingly hands it to Ruby)

Lucy: Are we back to cooking again, 'cos that's sounds a disgusting thing to have in your stock!  
 (all rolls their eyes and ignore her)

Ruby: Now then, what sort of work are you looking for?

Dick: I'm not sure.

Ruby: Outdoor work? Manual?

Dick: Possibly.

Ruby: (looking through her notebook) There's a vacancy here for a Topman.

Dick: Sounds ideal! What is it, and where?

Ruby: Working on the main top sail of the war ship, HMS Victory.

Dick: Really? Um . . . (pulls out fob watch) good grief, is that that time? You see . . .  
 (Lady Victoria Regent enters, with her mask on)

Lady: (she aims her pistol at Dick) Stand, and deliver!

Tom: Good grief, this isn't a stage coach!

Walter: (to audience) Should have gone to Specsavers!

Lady: I'm perfectly well aware of that, matey, but times are hard.

Dick: Tell me about it!

Lady: Watch!

Chief: We're watching, is it a good trick?

Lady: (aims at Chief) Don't get clever with me, matey!

Chief: Ooo, no, I can't! It's Walter who's the clever one!

Lady: (takes watch from Dick, then aims at Ruby) Now you! I believe you have cash here.

Ralf: (as Ruby stands with the petty cash tin) Do you realise just who you're holding up?

Lady: (gesturing Ruby to bring the tin to her) Not really, why should I care?

Ralf: She's the Sheriff's daughter! Her dad will be furious!  
 (all groan)

Dick: Oh well done, Ralf!  
Lady: (grabbing Ruby) In that case, he'll be happy to pay to get her back!  
Dick: No!  
Lady: No, he won't pay?  
Dick: I mean leave her alone! You have the cash, adding kidnapping is pure greed!  
Lady: That's a wager you'd win!

SONG 8: Suggest "I Want It All" - Queen

(Lady, with all on stage doing a chorus of "she wants it all" etc. During the song, Lady tries to move to take Ruby out of the door, but everyone else manoeuvres to prevent her, whilst ducking away from her pistol)

Lady: Enough of all this! (Aims pistol at Ruby's head) One more move to try to prevent me from leaving, and the girl gets it!  
Swiftkick: (To Walter) I don't know why she didn't think of that earlier.  
Walter: Because we wouldn't have all got to have a sing, that's why!  
Swiftkick: Ah!  
Lady: (As she drags Ruby off stage) And don't even think about trying to follow me! (Fanfare Player goes to follow, but is restrained. Looks very upset, comforted by Lucy)  
Tom: Well that's twice in this pantomime that I've been on the wrong end of a robbery! This isn't doing my reputation any good, I can tell you!  
Lucy: What are we going to do, Dick?  
(pause)  
Ralf: How about . . . ?  
Dick: No.  
(pause)  
Chief: Well we could always . . . ?  
Dick: No!  
(pause)  
Walter: Maybe we could try . . . ?  
Dick: No!! All those ideas, although good ones, are too risky. (All look confused)  
Tom: Well what, then?  
Dick: We need help from the police.  
Tom: No!!  
Dick: It's ok, we have an insider. Angie is moon lighting as a constable, to earn a bit for the gang, plus keeps us one step ahead of them; Walter's idea.  
Tom: I must admit, I'd never have thought of that.

Dick: (leading them off stage, as the curtains close) Right, we need to find Bob, to get a message to her.

Tom: How . . .? Don't tell me, he's doubling as a police dog!

Dick: How did you guess?

**End of Act One**

