

The Pied Piper of Hamelin

A Pantomime by

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THE PIED PIPER

CHARACTERS

THE RODENT LORD	
LORELEI	(The good witch of the mountain)
PIED PIPER	
KARL	
LIESL	
BURGOMASTER	
FRIEDA VON FROTH	(Owner of the Beer Garden)
CARROTS	(Karl's lame younger brother)
WILLY	(Frieda's Son)
GRETCHEN	(His girlfriend)
THE MOUNTAIN KING	

CHORUS OF CITIZEN OF HAMELIN, CHILDREN AND PEOPLE OF THE MOUNTAIN

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT ONE

SCENE 1	THE COUNTRYSIDE
SCENE 2	THE CITY OF HAMELIN
SCENE 3	THE RIVER WESER
SCENE 4	FRIEDA'S BOUDOIR
SCENE 5	THE BEER GARDEN
SCENE 6	THE COUNTRYSIDE
SCENE 7	KOPPELBERG MOUNTAIN
SCENE 8	THE HALL OF THE MOUNTAIN KING

ACT TWO

SCENE 1	THE BEER GARDEN
SCENE 2	THE COUNTRYSIDE
SCENE 3	KOPPELBERG MOUNTAIN
SCENE 4	THE CITY OF HAMELIN
SCENE 5	THE COUNTRYSIDE (SONG SHEET)
SCENE 6	BURGOMASTER'S HALL

ACT ONE

SCENE 1	THE COUNTRYSIDE	Front Cloth
SCENE 2	THE CITY OF HAMELIN	Full stage. Beer Garden entrance right. Burgomaster's house left. A pump upstage with sliding top.
SCENE 3	THE RIVER WESER	Front cloth with river bank cut out on stage left.
SCENE 4	FRIEDA'S BOUDOIR	Cloth or inset. Screen on Stage.
SCENE 5	THE BEER GARDEN	Full stage with trees, light etc Outdoor bar to one side.
SCENE 6	THE COUNTRYSIDE	As scene 1
SCENE 7	KOPPELBERG MOUNTAIN	Front cloth/Gauze with rock covered entrance to one side.
SCENE 8	THE HALL OF THE MOUNTAIN KING	Full set. Brightly coloured scene with whatever the transformation ballet Requires.

ACT TWO

SCENE 1	THE BEER GARDEN	As 1 . 5
SCENE 2	THE COUNTRYSIDE	As 1 . 1
SCENE 3	KOPPELBERG MOUNTAIN	As 1 . 7
SCENE 4	THE CITY OF HAMELIN	As 1 . 2
SCENE 5	THE COUNTRYSIDE (SONG SHEET)	As 1 . 1
SCENE 6	BURGOMASTER'S HALL	Full set with Tudor woodwork and decoration. Banners hanging with various coat of arms etc.

CHARACTERS

THE RODENT LORD	Voice only except for an appearance in the final scene. Should be of a good build to fight with the Principle Boy. (Double Mountain King & Chorus.) <i>See note.</i>
LORELEI	The good witch of the mountain. Not the 'Fairy' type. Young to middle-aged. Good, clear speaking voice . non singing.
PIED PIPER	Young in appearance. Agile, likable and quick-witted with an ability to charm and amuse. Small amount of singing.
KARL	Principle Boy. Good looking, charming with a good singing voice. Age mid 20's . mid 30's.
LIESL	Principle Girl. Pretty and likable. She is strong willed as well as romantic. Good singing voice required. Age mid 20's.
BURGOMASTER	Pompous, authoritative and full of his own importance. Also under the control of the Rodent Lord. Singing required with company.
FRIEDA VON FROTH	Owner of the Beer Garden and panto Dame.
CARROTS	Karl's lame younger brother. Age approx 15. Singing with Company
WILLY	Frieda's Son. Energetic and comic. Good singing voice. Age mid 20's . mid 30's.
GRETCHEN	His son sometimes+girlfriend. Full of life and a bit of a man eater. She wants to snare Willy at whatever the cost! Great comic timing. Good singing voice. Age mid 20's . mid 30's.
THE MOUNTAIN KING	Larger than life and jovial. Can double with the Rodent Lord & Chorus.

The age ranges are for the characters and just a guide.

NOTE:

The Rodent Lord can be an actual character throughout the pantomime if you so wish. With small adjustments to the script he can appear in a single light down stage left until his final entrance.

The placing of the musical numbers and who sings them is suggested in the script, but it is up to the director to decide what to use. A word of advice: Pantomime audiences . particularly the younger members . like the story to keep moving, so don't make the musical sequences too long, especially the ballads.

I hope you enjoy doing this version of The Pied Piper of Hamelin and have a great success with your production.

Stephen Duckham

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN

ACT ONE

SCENE 1 THE COUNTRYSIDE

[During the Overture the silhouette of rats is seen on the house tabs or show curtain. After the overture, down stage right the lights pick up LORELEI, THE WHITE WITCH of Koppelberg Mountain.]

- LORELEI Dear people of . *[Place where panto is playing.]* I am Lorelei, the white witch of Koppelberg Mountain. There's no need to be afraid because I'm a good witch! At the foot of the mountain is the ancient city of Hamelin. Normally everything is peaceful and calm there, but recently the city has been overrun with rats. They're eating everything and causing chaos. They want to drive to people out so their leader, the Rodent Lord, can take control of the city.
- [The voice of the RODENT LORD is heard.]*
- RODENT That is correct.
- LORELEI *[Surprised.]* You are here?
- RODENT I am everywhere. Especially in the minds of the weak or susceptible. The Burgomaster is one such person. I can play on his greed to get him to work for me.
- LORELEI How is that?
- RODENT In return for his helping me to take over the city I have said I will assist him in becoming Chancellor of the country. Just watch. Come here my willing subject. *[Down left of the stage the BURGOMASTER enters. It appears as if he is in a trance.]* Anything I want this puny mortal to do he does. *[Calling to the BURGOMASTER.]* What is happening in the city?
- BURGOMASTER Everything is progressing well.
- RODENT Make sure no-one interferes with my plans.
- BURGOMASTER They won't. I assure you. Very soon the people will have had enough and leave.
- RODENT And then I will assume my rightful position. Go now. I will call on you later.
- BURGOMASTER Yes, my lord. *[HE exits.]*
- RODENT See. I am all powerful, so don't waste your time trying to defeat me.
- LORELEI You are right. I am no match for you powers.

- RODENT And you will do well to remember that. I am invincible. I am the Rodent Lord!
[With an echoing laugh the voice ends.]
- LORELEI I may not be able to help those poor people of Hamelin, but I know someone who might.

[She exits as the lights come up on a front cloth with the Pied Piper's Wagon set right of centre. A magical tune is heard and suddenly the PIPER appears playing his pipe. Over his waistcoat and trousers he wears a coat of red and yellow.]
- PIPER *[To the audience.]* Hello! I am the Pied Piper. How nice to see you. Have you come far? Did my tune make you stop and listen? I have many more. Tunes for every occasion. I can play a happy one for birthdays or anniversaries. Do any of you have a birthday soon?
[Reaction.] Well this is for you. *[HE plays a snatch of a happy tune.]* Or I can play you a sad tune for when you are feeling down or under the weather. *[Play a mournful tune.]* But you don't want to hear one of those, do you? Not today while the sun is shining and everyone is feeling on top of the world.

[LORELEI enters.]
- LORELEI Not everyone is feeling on top of the world my friend.
- PIPER Hello! I've not seen you in a while. What brings you looking for me?
- LORELEI There is a problem in the town of Hamelin. They are preparing for their annual festival but the whole place has been overrun by rats.
- PIPER Rats? Not my favourite animal. I don't mind white mice. They can be very friendly. A young girl I once met called Cinderella found them very useful . but that's another story!
- LORELEI I thought you might be able to help them out.
- PIPER That may be a possibility. Hamelin you say? Mmm, I've never been there. Maybe I should pay them a visit.
- LORELEI I think it could be to your advantage.
- PIPER Then visit them I shall. *[The PIPER pulls his wagon off left. With a wink at the audience.]* I shall see you all later.
- LORELEI Good luck my friend.

[The lights fade and the scene changes to.....

SCENE 2 THE CITY OF HAMELIN

[The Square with the Burgomaster's House to one side and the entrance to Freida Von Froth's Beer Garden on the other. The CHORUS of Townspeople are getting ready for the beer festival. KARL enters during the number.]

OPENING NUMBER . COMPANY AND KARL

[At the end of the number a large rat runs across the stage. Some of the GIRLS scream.]

KARL What's the matter.

1st GIRL Karl, didn't you see it?

MAN *[Small measurement with his hands.]* It was only that big.

[GRETCHEN, a typical fraulein with a larger than life comic personality, enters from the Beer Garden.]

GRETCHEN No it wasn't. It was that big. *[Arms wide]* I just chased it out of the Beer Garden.

KARL Hello Gretchen.

2nd GIRL The rat problem is getting worse.

KARL They do seem to be bolder. Venturing out in broad daylight!

GRETCHEN Something has to be done you know. The whole town is overrun with them.

KARL The Burgomaster doesn't seem to care. Every time the problem is mentioned by the Town Council he ignores it and says there are more . *[Imitating the BURGOMASTER]* – important things to worry about.

MAN More important?

GRETCHEN This plague will ruin the Annual Festival.

MAN Can't you talk to him? You work in the council offices.

KARL I'm only a simple book clerk. I have no influence.

GRETCHEN What about the Burgomaster's daughter? *[Giving KARL a nudge.]* You must have a bit of influence there!

[ALL agree.]

KARL Liesl and I are just good friends. *[HE doesn't see LIESL enter behind him.]* We've know each other since we were kids.

GRETCHEN But you'd like to be a bit more than 'just' friends, wouldn't you?

KARL Well . yes . I suppose so.

GRETCHEN And what about her?

KARL Oh, I don't know.

GRETCHEN I think she'd like to be.

KARL Do you?

LIESL Oh yes please.

KARL *[Looking at GRETCHEN.]* Your voice just changed. *[GRETCHEN turns him round to face LIESL.]* Oh, hello!

LIESL Hello!

GRETCHEN We were just talking about this problem with the rats. What is your father going to do about it?
[ALL ad lib questioning Liesl.]

KARL Now wait a minute. Liesl can't answer for her father.

LIESL I'm sorry everyone. I've tried talking to him, but he just won't listen. He's changed so recently and is convinced the rats will just go away.

CROWD That'll never happen. They're eating us out of house and home. Etc.

LIESL I wish there was something I could do.

KARL Don't worry. We'll get through this.

[There is a crash off stage and WILLY is heard shouting. The CHORUS run off.]

WILLY *[Off.]* Owwww! Help! Gerroff!

KARL Willy?

[WILLY enters running around the stage with a rat attached to his rear.]

WILLY Help. Get this thing off me.

KARL Stand still.

WILLY *[Still running round.]* I can't. He's chomping away at me. He's finished his starter and soon he'll be moving on to his main course!

KARL *[To GRETCHEN and LIESL.]* Hold him steady. *[The two girls hold WILLY whose legs are still 'running'. KARL pulls the rat off WILLY'S behind and throws it off stage.]* There. All gone.

WILLY *[Hiding behind LIESL.]* Are you sure he's not coming back for dessert?

KARL Quite sure.

- WILLY *[Rubbing his backside.]* I hope that rat's got a nasty taste in its mouth! Do you think it has done any permanent damage?
- GRETCHEN *[Advancing on him.]* Would you like me to look?
- WILLY 'Ere, gerroff!
- GRETCHEN Why are you so shy, my little Willy.
- WILLY Not so little!
- KARL Come on Liesl, I think these two want to be alone. *[THEY exit.]*
- WILLY Here, hang about. Don't leave me.
- GRETCHEN What is the matter with you? Everyone knows you and I are going steady!
- WILLY Everyone might . but I don't.
- GRETCHEN Oh don't be so bashful my little pumpernickel!
- WILLY Stop saying 'little'! Haven't you got work to do? My mother will get mad if things aren't ready for the festival.
- GRETCHEN Don't worry my lit--- *[HE looks and SHE stops herself.]* --- my big knockwurst sausage. Everything is going fine. As long as these awful rats don't ruin the day. *[Seductively.]* I will see you later. *[SHE exits into beer garden.]*
- WILLY Ohh! I don't know what to do. Gretchen is always chasing after me - and I'm a young man. I don't want to settle down yet. *[CHORUS girls now start entering from various parts of the stage.]* I mean there are plenty of fish in the sea so to speak. *[Looking at the girls.]* Hello girls.
- GIRLS Hello Willy. *[THEY gather round him.]*
- WILLY See what I mean!
- NUMBER . WILLY and CHORUS
- [During the number the MEN enter and join in. At the end of the number the BURGOMASTER enters from his office. HE is an irritable man.]*
- BURGOMASTER What's going on here? Why aren't you all working? Don't you know the festival is tomorrow? We'll never be ready at this rate.
- WILLY We'll never be ready unless you do something about this rat problem.
- [ALL agree.]*
- BURGOMASTER The Town Council and myself have the matter in hand. The rats will be exterminated.

WILLY He sounds like a Dalek!

CHORUS But when? They are worse than ever. Etc.

BURGOMASTER Already a lot of treasury money has been spent on the problem.

[KARL has entered followed by LIESL. KARL'S lame brother, CARROTS, also enters. HE is a likeable and, if possible, red-haired lad of about 15.]

KARL That's not true. Hardly anything has been spent.

BURGOMASTER *[In a rage.]* Mind what you are saying or else you will be looking for alternative employment.

CARROTS My brother Karl is right. I've just come from the children's playground and it's overrun by rats.

BURGOMASTER Children's playground! Children should be in school or working to help with festival arrangements.

LIESL Father!

KARL Why can't more money be spent to eradicate these rats.....

[At this point the lights change and the stage freezes. We hear the RODENT LORD'S voice.]

RODENT Be careful Burgomaster. Don't let this young upstart ruin our arrangement.

BURGOMASTER *[In a trance.]* No. I will keep avoiding the question of ridding the town of rats.

RODENT Good. You will have your reward when I once more materialise in human form.

BURGOMASTER My reward! To become Chancellor of all Germany?

RODENT Of course. Just let my rats keep working for me.

BURGOMASTER I will do as you ask.

[The lights return and the stage unfreezes. The BURGOMASTER stops KARL from speaking further.]

 Hold your tongue. Unless you remember who you are speaking to the consequences will be severe. Now all of you go about your business.

[The CHORUS, WILLY and GRETCHEN exit, grumbling. The BURGOMASTER turns to go and finds CARROTS in his way.] Out of my way boy. *[HE pushes CARROTS, who falls over, then exits.]*

LEISL *[Going to CARROTS.]* Oh my goodness. Are you all right?

CARROTS Yes thank you, miss. *[LEISL and KARL help him up.]*

KARL Carrots will be fine, won't you?

CARROTS Of course I will. I'm tough!

LEISL *[Laughing.]* I'm sure you are.

KARL This is my younger brother who has been away at school in Dresden. Carrots, this is Leisl.

CARROTS Pleased to meet you.

LEISL Likewise. *[Pointing to his crutch.]* But whatever happened to you.

CARROTS I've been like this since birth.

LEISL Oh I am sorry.

KARL *[Making light of it.]* We hardly notice it now, do we old chap?
[The BURGOMASTER appears from the House.]

BURGOMASTER Leisl. What are you doing fraternising with the hoi polloi? *[To KARL.]* Get about your business and leave my daughter alone.

KARL But sir.....

BURGOMASTER Did you hear me?

KARL *[Defeated.]* Yes sir. Come on, Carrots. *[HE and CARROTS exit.]*

LEISL Father, why are you behaving like that? Karl is a good and kind man.

BURGOMASTER *[With disdain.]* Good and kind. All he's after is a way of bettering himself. He's a book-keeper and that's all he'll ever be.

LEISL That's not true.

BURGOMASTER Leisl, I won't hear another word. Come in at once.

LEISL Yes father.
[SHE exits with the BURGOMASTER. Some shouting is heard off.]

MAN *[Off.]* Mind your backs. Special delivery.
[Two MEN bring on a large beer barrel and place it centre stage. They are about to exit when then there is some shouting from inside the barrel. It is FRIEDA VON FROTH.]

FRIEDA Will someone get me out of here? Can you hear me? Get me out of here.

[The MEN open the barrel. NB. It is split in two and hinged at the back. FRIEDA staggers out.]

FRIEDA Finally! You two idiots. Didn't you hear me shouting? *[The MEN shake their heads.]* You must be drunk! Get out of here. *[The two MEN exit laughing.]* And don't think you'll get served again in my beer garden. You're barred! It'll be the Rover's Return from now on for you. *[FRIEDA moves to look out at the audience.]* Hello there. Have you all come for the festival? *[Audience reaction.]* Well I better introduce myself. I'm Frieda Von Froth and I am the proprietor, owner and head cook and bottle washer of the local *hostility!* *[SHE points to the beer garden.]* Well that's what they call it after a Saturday night! I used to run the place with my late husband, Fredrich Von Froth, but he was taken from me. It was very sad. We were having our evening meal and he just keeled over stiff as a board. A chill went right through my marrow. And it didn't do much for my Brussels sprouts. So here I am. A widow with one son to help me run this place. You've met Willy, have you? *[Reaction.]* Not the sharpest knife in the box but he's a good boy but one of these days he'll get himself married and leave me and then I'll be on my own. A lonely old woman. Years ago we used to compare age to different parts of the world. When you're in your 20's you're like the plains of Africa. Fresh and unspoiled. Your 40's are like America. Rich and exciting. But when you get to your 60's you're like Leicester. *[Or local town.]* You know where it is but you don't want to go there!

NUMBER . FRIEDA

[At the end of the number KARL and CARROTS enter.]

KARL Hello Frieda. How are you?

FRIEDA Oh Karl, I've just had the most awful experience. I'd just popped round to the wine merchant to make sure my order for the festival would be delivered on time and I noticed this keg of beer just standing there minding its own business. It was a new brand, so I thought I just have a taste to see if my customers would like it. Well there was only a few pints at the bottom of the barrel so I had to lean in to get at it. Well the next thing I'd fallen in head first and some big brute of a store man had nailed the top on! The next thing I'm being whisked off.

KARL *[Looking in the barrel.]* A few pints you say? But the barrel's empty.

FRIEDA Well I had to have something to steady my nerves! *[SHE staggers.]* Oh it was such a shock! My whole life flashed before me . . . all twenty-five years of it! *[CARROTS falls about laughing.]* And who might this be?

KARL Carrots, my brother. *[Introducing FRIEDA.]* This is Frieda Von Froth. She runs the beer garden where we hold the Hamelin Festival.

CARROTS Very pleased to meet you, ma'am.

FRIEDA *[An attempt at being posh.]* Lukeways I'm sure! Well I better get on. Have you seen Willy?

KARL He's around somewhere. Hiding from Gretchen I expect!

FRIEDA Oh that boy. He's just like his father. Never knew when a good woman was staring him in the face! See you all later. *[With a wave SHE exits into the beer garden. The music for the PIPER'S entrance starts. The CHORUS and CHILDREN run on excitedly. WILLY and GRETCHEN join KARL and CARROTS. The PIPER enters with his wagon.]*

PIPER Good day my friends. Come gather round and see what I can do to entertain you. *[To a CHILD.]* Would you like to hear a tune? *[The CHILD nods and the PIPER plays a happy tune. One CHILD is standing apart from the CROWD looking sad.]* What's the matter with you? You don't look very happy.

CHILD She never does.

PIPER I bet I could make her smile. *[The CHILD looks away as the PIPER starts to play. Then SHE starts to smile. ALL react. HE speaks to another CHILD.]* Can you dance? *[The CHILD shakes his/her head.]* Oh yes you can. *[HE plays again and the CHILD starts to dance. ALL applaud.]* Would you like to see a magic trick?

ALL Oh yes please. Etc.

[The PIPER performs a trick to which they all applaud.]

CARROTS Can you do any kind of magic trick?

PIPER Any magic trick you like.

CARROTS I bet you can't magic these awful rats away.

PIPER I bet I can! *[ALL react.]*

KARL *[Smiling.]* Now Mr Piper. Don't go filling the children's heads with promises you can't keep.

PIPER But I can get rid of the rats for you. If the price is right.

GRETCHEN How?

PIPER You saw how I got that child to smile and that one to dance. There is a tune for everything.

WILLY You mean you can rid Hamelin of this plague of rats . just by tooting on your flute?

PIPER From the very smallest to the very biggest rat.

WILLY Talking of big rats . look who's coming.

[The BURGOMASTER enters followed by LEISL.]

BURGOMASTER Are you people still hanging around here? Be off with you at once.

KARL Burgomaster, we may have solved the rat problem.

BURGOMASTER What do you mean?

KARL Our friend here says he has a way of ridding Hamelin of the rats.

BURGOMASTER Oh he has has he? *[Looking at the PIPER.]* And how can a mere street entertainer do what no-one else can?

CARROTS He plays a tune on his pipe.

BURGOMASTER *[Incredulously.]* Plays a tune? Be off with you, you charlatan . *[HE moves towards the PIPER backing him towards the beer garden.]* - or I'll have you arrested for inciting a disturbance.

[The PIPER is backing off as FRIEDA enters and HE almost ends up in her arms.]

FRIEDA Oh I say it's James Galway! *[Or a pop star.]* And who might you be you fine figure or a man?

PIPER *[With a bow.]* I am the Pied Piper at your service.

FRIEDA Ohhhh, you can be at my service any time!

WILLY Mother, have you no scruples?

FRIEDA No, but I've got a selection of pork scratchings!

CARROTS He says he can get rid of all the rats.

FRIEDA Really?

PIPER Indeed.

BURGOMASTER Poppycock.

FRIEDA How do you do it.

PIPER By playing a tune with a secret formula of transcendental perpleximism mixed with a basic form of mesmerism.

FRIEDA *[Bewildered.]* Oh!

PIPER You know what I mean?

FRIEDA *[First nodding and then shaking her head.]* No . but I'm all yours to demonstrate on!

PIPER Well first, before I evoke the occult, I have to know if you are a hypnotic subject.

FRIEDA No, I was born in Nuneaton. *[Or nearby town.]*

BURGOMASTER I've heard enough of this rubbish.

FRIEDA But it's a big problem. Do you know the other day I found a rat in the drawer where I keep my unmentionables.

WILLY You didn't *mention* it!

FRIEDA It was unmentionable! And do you know it was nibbling on everything. My stays are shattered and my corset's collapsed!

KARL Well I think we should give the Piper a chance?

[ALL agree. Suddenly the lights change and the stage freezes. The RODENT

LORD is heard speaking to the BURGOMASTER.]

RODENT Be careful Burgomaster. I don't want anything to disrupt my plan.

BURGOMASTER Don't worry. I will put a stop to this.

RODENT See that you do.

[The lights change back and the stage unfreezes.]

BURGOMASTER Playing a tune to entice the rats away? I've never heard anything so absurd.

PIPER I have tunes that can make anything happen.

BURGOMASTER Like what?

PIPER I can play a tune to make you dance.

BURGOMASTER I don't dance.

PIPER Oh yes you do. *[HE plays and the BURGOMASTER starts to dance.]*

BURGOMASTER'S DANCE

[EVERYONE laughs as the dance gets wilder. Finally the BURGOMASTER drops to his knees.]

BURGOMASTER Enough! *[HE gets up and looks at the PIPER.]* I expect you will require a fee for this work?

PIPER A thousand guilders is my price.

BURGOMASTER A thousand..... impossible. The town treasury doesn't have that sort of money.

- KARL As book-keeper to the town I think we can afford it. Besides, think of the money the festival will generate . as long as there are no rats to keep the people away.
- [ALL agree.]*
- BURGOMASTER It's throwing money away. He'll never do what he says. *[At this moment a group of rats run across the front of the stage. They stop centre as everyone backs upstage. The PIPER moves down to the rats and starts to play. The rats follow him and he leads them off stage. ALL applaud as HE returns.]* Oh very well. I'll pay you five hundred guilders now and the rest when the job is done - if it gets done.
- PIPER It'll be done all right, I assure you.
- [ALL cheer. The BURGOMASTER exits as the next number start.]*
- CHORUS NUMBER
- [During the number the PIPER plays as more rats appear. The BURGOMASTER enters with a bag of money which he gives to the PIPER. At the end of the number the lights fade to black out and the scene changes to...]*
- SCENE 3 THE BANKS OF THE RIVER WESER
- [The scene is a front cloth with a cut out of a river bank stage left. During the scene change recorded voices are heard chanting.]*
- VOICES *[Off.]* Great rats, small rats, lean rats brawny rats,
Brown rats, black rats, grey rats, tawny rats,
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers
Cocking tails and pricking whiskers.
Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Follow the Piper in your dozens.
- [The lights come up and the PIPER enters right playing his pipe and followed by an army of rats. They all pour into the River Weser stage left.]*
- PIPER Whew! That's the lot. Good riddance.
- [LORELEI appears down right.]*
- LORELEI You have done well my friend.
- PIPER All in a days work.
- LORELEI I hope you get your reward.
- PIPER Never fear on that account. I know the Burgomaster is a slippery customer, but he will regret it if he crosses me.
- LORELEI What plan have you got up your sleeve?

PIPER One that I hope I don't have to use.

LORELEI You must take some care. There are great forces at work here. You're not invincible you know.

PIPER I know. But fear not dear lady, I have allies who will help me if the need arises.

LORELEI That is good to know. And see - there are some new-found friends coming now. I will no doubt see you again.

PIPER I look forward to it. *[LORELEI exits. The PIPER looks in the river.]*
Great rats, small rats, lean rats brawny rats,
Brown rats, black rats, grey rats, tawny rats.....

[WILLY enters right.]

WILLY Have they gone.

PIPER Yes. All despatched. You won't be troubled any more.

WILLY Well done Piper. The whole of Hamelin is in your debt.

PIPER And the debt is the rest of my fee!

WILLY Don't trust our Burgomaster. He's worse than . *[Name of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.]* - for breaking promises! Make sure you get your money while the town is celebrating what you have done.

PIPER Another five hundred guilders I am owed . and I intend to collect.

WILLY I know, claim it tonight at the opening of the festival. Everyone will be there so the Burgomaster will have to honour the agreement.

[GRETCHEN enters right.]

GRETCHEN I can't believe it. Not a rat in sight.

WILLY The Piper has been true to his word.

GRETCHEN The Burgomaster will be so pleased.

PIPER And pleased to pay up I hope. *[With a bow to them he exits right.]*

WILLY We I'd better be getting back to work.

GRETCHEN Oh not so fast. We could make the most no one else being around.

WILLY What do you mean 'make the most'?

GRETCHEN We get so little time to be alone my little apple strudel.

WILLY Why are you obsessed with comparing me to food?

GRETCHEN Because I would like to eat you up, you tantalising little trifle.

WILLY Trifle?

GRETCHEN Can't you see how perfectly we go together? Like sugar and spice, apples and pears, peaches and cream ò ..

WILLY You make me sound like a fruit salad!

GRETCHEN Oh Willy, why do you play so hard to get?

WILLY Who says I play at it?

GRETCHEN Aren't you driven wild by my feminine charms?

WILLY Feminine charms? *[Butch male celebrity.]* has got more feminine charms!

GRETCHEN Oh! *[Turning on the tears.]* How can you be so cruel? Treating a poor defenceless girl in such a heartless way.

WILLY Oh now don't cry. I didn't mean *all* those things really.

GRETCHEN You didn't?

WILLY Well not all!

[GRETCHEN cries loudly. KARL and LEISL enter right.]

KARL What's going on?

GRETCHEN *[Running to them.]* The man I love has stolen my heart and broken it into a million pieces.

LEISL *[Comforting her.]* Willy, how could you?

WILLY I haven't done anything. Honest! *[To GRETCHEN.]* Look of it makes you feel better I'll take you to MacDonalds and buy you a double cheeseburger and chips.

GRETCHEN *[Suddenly smiling.]* You will? *[To the others.]* Oh isn't he wonderful? *[SHE grabs WILLY and drags him off stage]* Come on my little wiener schnitzel.

WILLY Stop calling me little! *[And they are gone.]*

KARL *[Laughing.]* What a pair.

LEISL The Piper's tune rid the town of rats. I wonder if he has one for bring those two together.

KARL Maybe. He did say he has a tune for everything.

LEISL Do you think he would have one to make my father like you? Then we wouldn't have to sneak around behind his back.

KARL Don't worry Leisl. One of these days I'll make him understand how we feel about each other.

DUET . KARL AND LEISL

[At the end of the number the lights fade and the scene changes to

SCENE 4 FRIEDA'S BOUDIOR

[An inset or cloth with a clothes screen centre. FRIEDA enters excitedly.]

FRIEDA Oh what a day. Everyone is thrilled that we are finally rid of the rats thanks to that clever Piper. He's quite wonderful don't you think girls? Fancy having him serenade you to sleep every night. It would be like having your own personal version of . *[Name of latest male pop sensation.]* Oh he could top my chart any time!

GRETCHEN *[Off.]* Hello Frieda. Are you there?

FRIEDA Yes dear. Come in.

[GRETCHEN enters.]

GRETCHEN We've got the basket down from loft that you asked for.

FRIEDA Oh good. Bring it in here will you?

GRETCHEN *[Calling off.]* Bring it in here Willy.

[WILLY staggers in with a large wicker basket.]

WILLY I thought you were giving me a hand with this.

GRETCHEN But you are always telling me how big and strong you are. I assumed you could manage it all by yourself.

WILLY Mother what have you got in here?

FRIEDA Nothing special. Just a few odds and ends.

WILLY Well they're very heavy odds and ends.

FRIEDA Never mind the basket. Is everything ready for tonight's festivities?

GRETCHEN Yes. We have just finished putting out the extra tables in the garden.

FRIEDA Wonderful. This year's festival will be the best yet.

GRETCHEN I hope so. And perhaps we can restart that old Bavarian custom.

WILLY What custom is that?

GRETCHEN Where the young man takes the young girl for a stroll along the river bank. And under the twinkling stars you know what happens.

WILLY He pushes her in?

FRIEDA *[SHE chases HIM off.]*
Now they've gone I can show you what I've got in here. All my frocks for special occasions. I want something stunning for tonight.

[SHE takes out various dresses and comments on them which leads into a strip routine. At the end of the routine FRIEDA walks behind the screen and immediately emerges from the other side in a stunning outfit. The lightsblack out and the scene changes to....]

SCENE 5 THE BEER GARDEN

[A full set with tables and festival decorations. A bar is to one side containing bottles of beer. The COMPANY is on.]

CHORUS NUMBER

[Taking part are KARL, LEISL, WILLY, GRETCHEN and CARROTS. During the number the BURGOMASTER enters. At the end HE commands silence.]

BURGOMASTER Good citizens of Hamelin. This is a time for great celebration. Not only is it the start of the annual festival, but also we have managed to eradicate the vermin that have been plaguing out town. *[Cheers from the COMPANY. Then the lights change and the stage freezes as we hear the VOICE.]*

RODENT They may be cheering, but I am not. You have failed me Burgomaster. Letting that Piper deal with the rats has stopped me achieving my aim to take over the city.

BURGOMASTER *[In a trance.]* Only a temporary setback, my lord. I have a plan that will upset the Piper and then the rats will be able to return to the town and continue your work.

RODENT Make sure they do. My patience is running out.

[The lights return and the stage unfreezes. FRIEDA enters and greets everyone.]

FRIEDA Hello everyone. *[ALL greet FRIEDA.]* Hello Burgomaster. Why have you got that strange look on your face?

BURGOMASTER *[Defensive.]* What do you mean . strange? This is how I always look.

FRIEDA Yes, like a wet weekend in Weymouth! *[ALL laugh.]* Come on, it's a celebration. You should be laughing.

LEISL Yes, come on father, let's have a smile.

BURGOMASTER Oh don't be ridiculous.

FRIEDA Come on Burgy Worgy! *[SHE tickles him under the chin.]* Come on now. *[The BURGOMASTER attempts a pathetic smile.]* Well it's a start. What we need is the Piper to play another tune and get you dancing! *[ALL agree.]*

KARL Where is the Piper? I thought he would be back by now.

PIPER *[As if by magic the PIPER appears in the crowd.]*
Did somebody call?

WILLY Here he is. Three cheers for the Piper who has rid our town of the rats.

[ALL cheer and the PIPER bows with a great flourish.]

PIPER Thank you all for your kind words of appreciation. *[To the BURGOMASTER.]* And now sir, if you could show your appreciation.

BURGOMASTER I beg your pardon?

PIPER The rest of my fee as agreed . if you please.

BURGOMASTER Your fee? Oh well . I don't carry that sort of money around with me. You never know who's about. Come to my office in the morning.

PIPER But I õ ...

BURGOMASTER *[Trying to get away.]* Tonight is for celebrating. Come on everyone. Enjoy yourselves. *[He exits quickly. The PIPER goes to follow but is stopped by FRIEDA. During to following ALL exit except FRIEDA, PIPER and GRETCHEN.]*

FRIEDA Now then my good friend. How would you like to sample a little of what you fancy?

PIPER My dear lady, whatever are you suggesting?

FRIEDA A mellifluous mouth-watering malted melee to shove down your throat.

PIPER I'm sorry?

FRIEDA I have a new beer specially brewed for the festival just waiting to be tasted.

PIPER Oh I see. Your offer is almost too good to refuse, but I have some pressing business. Maybe later. *[HE exits after the BURGOMASTER.]*

FRIEDA What a strange fellow he is! *[SHE turns to GRETCHEN.]* Well my dear how are things going with you and Willy?

GRETCHEN They're going nowhere Frieda. I just can't get him interested in going out with me.

FRIEDA You need to get him relaxed. Make him laugh.

GRETCHEN Do you think so?

FRIEDA Oh yes. Try him on my new beer. I'm sure that will soften him up a bit!

GRETCHEN That's a good idea. After all it is a party.

FRIEDA *[Looking off.]* Here he comes now. Good luck.

[FRIEDA exits. GRETCHEN goes up to the bar and pours a glass of beer. WILLY enters.]

GRETCHEN Hello Willy.

WILLY Oh it's you.

GRETCHEN Won't you join me?

WILLY What for?

GRETCHEN I've just been trying this new beer. It's very nice.

WILLY New beer?

GRETCHEN Yes. Try it.

WILLY Well, maybe just a sip. *[HE takes the glass and downs it in one.]* Mmm. Not bad.

GRETCHEN Have another. *[SHE starts to refill his glass.]*

WILLY Oh no. I have to keep a clear head.

GRETCHEN Just half a glass then.

WILLY Oh go on then. It is nice. *[GRETCHEN pours half a glass.]* Aren't you having one?

GRETCHEN Why not . just to be sociable. *[SHE pours herself a drink but only pretends to drink. During the following when WILLY isn't looking SHE keeps topping his glass up.]* The festival seems to be going well.

WILLY Yes.

GRETCHEN You know it's always a romantic time of the year. A lot of couples get together.

WILLY Really?

GRETCHEN I met my first boyfriend at a festival when I was sweet sixteen.

WILLY You can remember that far back?

GRETCHEN *[Ignoring him and filling his glass.]* I've had many boyfriends from all over the country.

WILLY Really? How did they find you?

GRETCHEN Very easy.

WILLY I'll bet!

GRETCHEN One of them said when he was with me time stood still.

WILLY That's 'cos you've got a face that would stop a clock!

GRETCHEN *[Ignoring the remark.]* You know we should make the most of the time we have. Tomorrow I could be run over by a bus.

WILLY They'd have to jack it up first! *[HE drinks.]* You know this beer is good. *[SHE pours more into his glass.]*

GRETCHEN One of my boyfriends died drinking.

WILLY Beer?

GRETCHEN No milk.

WILLY Milk? How did that happen?

GRETCHEN The cow fell on him! *[WILLY has a mouthful of beer which spurts out as he laughs.]* The Burgomaster wanted to marry me once.

WILLY Gerroff!!

GRETCHEN It's true. I went to this posh party wearing a low cut dress . *[SHE indicates her cleavage which WILLY becomes interested in. When SHE can she tops up his drink.]* - with a rose in the cleavage. The Burgomaster walked over to me and said %I kissed your rose would you blush?+So I said %I pull your chain would you flush?+

[Now rather tipsy WILLY falls about laughing.]

WILLY You know you're not a bad sort really.

GRETCHEN Thank you for the compliment. *[HE staggers a little and SHE grabs hold of him.]*

WILLY 'Ere don't squeeze me too hard.

GRETCHEN Why not?

WILLY You'll push all the blood up to my head. *[THEY look at each other and burst out laughing again.]*

GRETCHEN Come on Willy, how about a little kiss? You won't be disappointed. *[SHE puckers up.]*

WILLY Where did you learn to kiss?

GRETCHEN I used to siphon petrol out of the neighbour's car!

[THEY fall about laughing again and go into a song.]

DUET . WILLY AND GRETCHEN

[At the end of the number they exit as the BURGOMASTER enters followed by the PIPER. During the following the rest of the COMPANY enter.]

- BURGOMASTER Will you stop bothering me?
- PIPER Certainly I will if you pay me what I am owed. And then I can be on my way.
- BURGOMASTER Pay you what you are owed? I think you have had enough.
- PIPER For an agreed fee I cleared the city of rats.
- BURGOMASTER You say the rats are gone. Can we be sure? The rest of your fee is held by the treasury until the city council is sure the plague is over. Come back in six months time and don't bother me any further.
- [KARL and LEISL hear the last part of the BURGOMASTER'S dialogue.]*
- KARL What's going on?
- BURGOMASTER Nothing to concern you.
- PIPER I am just waiting for the rest of my fee.
- LEISL Of course you must have you fee. You have freed the city of its plague.
- BURGOMASTER *[To LEISL.]* This has nothing to do with you.
- KARL It has to do with all of us. We were all suffering with the rats.
- BURGOMASTER I will hear no more. This is a council matter. *[To ALL.]* The festival will continue. Where is our hostess?
- FRIEDA *[Off.]* I'm coming. *[SHE enters in another outrageous dress to the applause of all.]* What do you think of the outfit? This is my festival frock. It used to be called my golfing dress but the nibblits fell out! Come on then everyone let's start the dancing. Who's going to be first to whirl me around and get down and dirty! *[SHE crosses to the BURGOMASTER.]* Come on you big burger. Show me what your beef is made of!

FESTIVAL DANCE

[SHE forces the BURGOMASTER to dance and ALL cheer. Celebrations continue as the PIPER moves away from the crowd.]

PIPER *[To HIMSELF.]* Very well Burgomaster, have it your way. Let the music start .
but I will be playing a different tune.

[The PIPER begins to play and slowly the CHILDREN start to leave the main dance and gather round him. The rest of the COMPANY don't see what is happening. The PIPER and the CHILDREN dance to an exit. CARROTS comes out from the crowd and starts to follow. The lights fade and the scene changes to.....]

SCENE 6 THE COUNTRYSIDE

[Front cloth. The PIPER leads on the CHILDREN who are laughing and dancing not realising where they are going.]

PIPER Well now children can you hear what my tune is saying?

CHILD 1 Yes I can. It says there is a place where everyone is happy.

CHILD 2 Where there are toys to play with and trees are full of lovely things to eat! *[CARROTS enters out of breath.]*

CARROTS I heard it too. It sort of sang to me.

PIPER And what did it say?

CARROTS It said there is a place where -
Cats don't scratch
And bees don't sting
Where monkeys dance
And elephants sing!

[They ALL laugh at that.]

CHILD 3 I'd like to hear an elephant sing.

ALL Yes. So would I. And me. And me etc.

CHILD 1 Can we go there?

ALL Oh yes Mr Piper. Please.

PIPER Of course.

CARROTS Where is this place?

PIPER *[Pointing out.]* Up there in the heart of Koppelberg Mountain. In the Palace of the Mountain King.

ALL Wow! Ohhh! Etc.

PIPER When I was a young boy that's where I was given this magical pipe.

CARROTS Will the Mountain King be pleased to see us?

PIPER Why yes. He's waiting for you now. Are you ready?

ALL Yes.

PIPER Well come along then.

SONG - PIPER AND CHILDREN

[HE starts to play again and the CHILDREN follow him. If possible through the auditorium. CARROTS in struggling to catch up. When they are out of sight KARL and LEISL enter.]

LEISL *[Pointing to where the PIPER has gone.]* Look Karl, I knew I was right. I saw all the children dancing and laughing and one by one they started to follow the Piper.

KARL Are you sure it was all of the children?

LEISL Well certainly all of the ones at the garden. *[SHE points in another direction.]* And look. More of them from the city going up that mountain path.

KARL But where can they be going? That path leads nowhere. Just to the top of the mountain. They're just having a bit of fun with the Piper. They'll be back.

LEISL I'm not so sure. He was pretty mad at father for not honouring his fee.

KARL Maybe we better go after them and make sure they get back safely.

LEISL Yes. Let's hurry and catch up with them.

[THEY exit as the lights fade and the scene changes to.....]

SCENE 7 THE ENTRANCE TO KOPPLEBERG MOUNTAIN

[A mountain front cloth with a cave entrance to one side. A rock covers the entrance. The PIPER enters followed by the CHILDREN. HE gets to the rock and plays a special tune. The rock slowly opens and a bright light shines through. The CHILDREN are open-mouthed with delight as the PIPER leads them into the cave. The light starts to fade and the rock slowly closes just as CARROTS hobbles on.]

CARROTS Hey, wait for me. Don't close. I'm coming. *[By the time HE reaches the cave entrance to rock has closed.]* Hey, it's me Carrots. Let me in. I couldn't keep up with you. Please let me in. *[HE bangs on the rock and then sinks to the floor in despair. KARL and LEISL run on.]*

KARL Carrots. What's happened?

LEISL Where are the children?

CARROTS In there.

- KARL Where?
- CARROTS In the mountain. The Piper played a tune and it opened up so the others could go inside. I saw it from the path, but I couldn't keep up. They've gone without me. *[HE sobs.]*
- LEISL This is all fathers fault. He's not kept his word with the Piper and this is the result.
- KARL Come on. We have to get back to Hamelin and tell everyone what has happened. *[THEY help CARROTS up and start to exit.]*
- CARROTS I wanted to go with them. The tune made me want to go with them.
- [As they all exit the lights fade to black out and then a single spot picks up LORELEI.]*
- LORELEI Fear not good friends, the children of Hamelin are quite safe and will come to no harm. The Piper is just teaching the Burgomaster a lesson that greed and dishonesty will never succeed. So let us see what delights the Mountain King has in store.
- [The lights fade and the scene transforms to.....]*

SCENE 8 THE HALL OF THE MOUNTAIN KING

[The scene opens on the wonders of the inside of the mountain. Large sweets, games and toys are seen everywhere. The older members of the chorus are ATTENDANTS and are seen holding various items. The PIPER, still playing his tune, leads the CHILDREN on. THEY stand wide-eyed at all that they see. The ATTENDANTS welcome the CHILDREN and offer them the sweets and toys. This is done choreographically with the ATTENDANTS and CHILDREN. The PIPER sits crossed legged on a rock watching them. If it is possible - various parts of the set open up to reveal even more things to delight a child. Maybe a life-sized puppet or a musical box with a ballerina. After this section there is a FANFARE. The PIPER calls the children to him and all the ATTENDANTS prepare to welcome the MOUNTAIN KING. HE enters, resplendent in costume and large crown, and crosses to the centre of the stage. The PIPER jumps off the rock and moves in front of the KING with a flourish and low bow.]

- KING Welcome, my friend. *[To all the CHILDREN.]* Welcome all to my Kingdom.
- [The CHILDREN cheer and run to him. The ATTENDANTS continue a welcome dance which incorporates everyone and builds to a picture for the end of act one.]*

ACT TWOSCENE 1 THE BEER GARDEN

[The introduction music becomes sinister sounding and before the lights come up on the scene the RODENT'S voice is heard.]

RODENT Burgomaster you have failed me.

[A light picks up the BURGOMASTER down left.]

BURGOMASTER No my lord.

RODENT You have failed me I say. You let that Piper drive all of the rats from the city and now I am still no nearer fulfilling my ambition.

BURGOMASTER But they will be back.

RODENT You can be sure of that. I intend to reform my army of rats. This time they will be bigger and stronger. The one thing stopping them returning is that wretched pipe belonging to the Piper. You must get it from him and destroy it.

BURGOMASTER I will my lord.

RODENT See that you do, or else prepare to forfeit your own life.

BURGOMASTER I won't fail you my lord.

[The VOICE has gone and the light fades on the BURGOMASTER. A light on stage right picks up LORELEI.]

LORELEI The Rodent Lord will not give up until he has achieved his aim. I must try and warn the people of Hamelin of what could happen. The festival is still going on and no one has yet realised the children are missing. Because of what the Burgomaster has done I'm afraid the festival celebrations will come to an abrupt end.

[SHE exits as the lights come up on the main scene with the COMPANY still in high spirits.]

CHORUS NUMBER

[WILLY and GRETCHEN are part of the number. At the end FRIEDA enters.]

FRIEDA Hello you two. How are things going?

GRETCHEN Very well thank you Frieda. Willy and me are going for a moonlight walk along the River Weser.

WILLY She's got friends there who have asked her to drop in!

GRETCHEN Now Willy you promised.

WILLY So you say, but everything recently has seemed a little hazy.

FRIEDA How was the new beer?

WILLY Very nice, but I only had half a glass! Mind you it felt like I'd had a dozen pints!

[GRETCHEN stifles a laugh.]

FRIEDA Well everyone seems to be enjoying themselves.

WILLY Yes, now that all the rats have gone.

[KARL and LEISL enter followed by CARROTS.]

KARL And not only the rats.

FRIEDA What do you mean?

LEISL Haven't you noticed anything?

GRETCHEN Like what?

KARL The children.

WILLY What about the children. Where are they?

LEISL Exactly. Where are they?

FRIEDA I'm sure they're enjoying themselves somewhere. Carrots will know.

CARROTS They're gone. The Piper played a tune and we all followed him. Just like the rats.

GRETCHEN You don't mean he's.....

KARL No, nothing like that! He's taken then to Koppleberg mountain.

WILLY Why?

LEISL I think it's because my father refused to pay him what he was owed.

FRIEDA Why that no good, blooming, blighter, blackguard of a Burgomaster!

[The BURGOMASTER enters. By now the COMPANY is listening to what has happened.]

BURGOMASTER Did somebody call me?

LEISL Father what have you done?

BURGOMASTER What do you mean?

KARL Because you refused to pay the Piper he has taken all the children away from Hamelin.

[Reaction from everyone.]

BURGOMASTER Nonsense.

CARROTS It's true. They have all gone to a wonderful place inside the mountain. I tried to keep up with them but they left me outside.

MAN All our children gone?

KARL I'm sure we can get them back if the Burgomaster honours his agreement.

WOMAN *[To the BURGOMASTER.]* This is all your fault.

WILLY You're to blame.

[ALL agree.]

BURGOMASTER *[In a panic.]* But it's just a misunderstanding. Of course I'll pay him. He just didn't wait around long enough.

KARL We need to find him.

LEISL But where is he?

[LORELEI enters.]

LORELEI I think I may be able to help you there.

[Reaction from ALL.]

FRIEDA Who are you?

LORELEI I am Lorelei.

WILLY The Witch of the Mountain? *[Hides behind GRETCHEN.]* Ohhhh!

LORELEI The *good* Witch of the Mountain . yes. I only come down to the city when there is a dire need.

WILLY And it can't get more *dire here* than now! *[ALL look at WILLY who realises what he has just said.]* Oops!

LORELEI You will need to find the Piper and plead with him to return the children. I believe he will be at the outskirts of the city tomorrow morning.

GRETCHEN Who will speak to him?

BURGOMASTER Well as Burgomaster.....

FRIEDA ō ..you got us into this mess. I think Karl should speak on behalf of the whole city.

[ALL agree.]

BURGOMASTER I don't know about that.....

FRIEDA Oh stop whinging you weather-beaten, wizened old windbag. *[ALL laugh.]* I propose Karl. *[ALL agree.]*

LEISL And I'll go with you.

KARL Very well. Tomorrow we'll try to put right everything that has happened. *[The BURGOMASTER exits in a huff.]*

SONG and CHORUS . KARL and COMPANY

[At the end of the number the lights fade and the scene changes to.....

SCENE 2 THE COUNTRYSIDE

[A front cloth as before. The PIPER is sitting on his wagon. HE is playing a tune on his pipe.]

PIPER *[Stopping and listening.]* Hello. I do believe someone is coming this way. Now who is it I wonder? One of the people of Hamelin or it might be the Burgomaster, finally deciding to pay me the rest of my fee. *[HE smiles to himself.]* I think there's more chance of . *[Name of local football team.]* - winning the F A Cup than that happening! *[He looks off.]* Ah, here they come.

[HE hides behind the wagon. KARL and LEISL enter.]

KARL Look Leisl, that's his wagon. He must be around here somewhere. *[HE calls.]* Hello.

PIPER *[Acting like an echo.]* Hellooooo!

LEISL Is that an echo?

PIPER Is that an echo . o . o?

KARL There can't be an echo here. I used to do come up here withō .

LEISL *[Slightly jealous.]* You used to come up here withō .?

KARL Oh just some of the lads. I'd have known if there was an echo. I'd have had twice as much fun.

LEISL How are you-ooo?

PIPER How are you-oo?

KARL Fish and chips.

PIPER Sausage and mash!

LEISL Oompa, oompa.

PIPER Stick it up your Jumper

KARL Um tiddle um tum.

PIPER Stick it up your õ ..

KARL *[Cutting in.]* No, no

PIPER No, No

LEISL Well that echo has got a very strange voice! Try it one more time.

[THEY have been looking away from the wagon. The PIPER moves from behind it to sit on it.]

PIPER *[There as if by magic.]* Are you looking for me?

KARL *[Turning round.]* There you are.

PIPER Yes, here I are!

LEISL *[Crossing to him.]* Piper, I'm so pleased to see you. Please come back to Hamelin. Everyone is so worried about the children.

PIPER There's no need to be. The children are having a whale of a time.

KARL Where are they?

PIPER Wherever they want to be.

LEISL I don't understand.

PIPER They are in a place where happiness and kindness is all around them. Where corruption and avarice are nowhere to be found.

KARL What do you mean?

PIPER Hamelin has a Burgomaster who is greedy, selfish and dishonest. I'm sorry my dear, I know he is your father, but he reneged on our agreement and the people didn't really care so long as the rats were gone. What sort of a lesson are the children learning from that? That lies and trickery are the normal things to do.

KARL No of course not.

PIPER So I have removed them for the time being until all the wrongs are put right.

LEISL You mean until father pays you what you are owed?

PIPER Well that would be a start.

LEISL But he will. He has to. The people of Hamelin have demanded it.

KARL And as an employee of the treasury, I will see that it is done.

PIPER *[Pondering what has been said.]* Mmmm, and am I to believe you?

LEISL If course you can. Karl is one of the most honest people I know. You are able to do so many wonderful things; surely you can see the good in someone.

PIPER Well I thought I could, but I'm afraid the actions of the Burgomaster have given me cause to doubt myself.

KARL I promise you Piper, I will see you paid what you are owed.

LEISL My father has not always been like this. Only in recent months has he become irritable and unfeeling.

PIPER Maybe there are greater powers at work here.

KARL What are you saying?

PIPER Oh nothing. Just thinking aloud. *[He turns to face them.]* Very well, I will do what you ask.

LEISL *[Thrilled.]* You will?

PIPER On the condition that my fee is paid in full by noon today.

KARL It will be.

PIPER By the Burgomaster himself.

KARL You have my word.

PIPER Then goodbye for now.

KARL *[Taking LEISL by the hand.]* Thank you . thank you so much. Come on Leisl, there's no time to lose.

[THEY exit. The PIPER watches them go then takes out his pipe and starts to play. LORELEI enters.]

PIPER *[Without turning to see her.]* Hello Lorelei.

LORELEI You know, don't you?

PIPER About the hold our adversary has over the Burgomaster? Of course.

LORELEI What are you going to do about it?

PIPER I'm not sure yet.

LORELEI You must be careful. He knows you ruined his plans by luring the rats away.

PIPER *[Smiling to himself.]* Yes, quite upset wasn't he?

LORELEI He won't stop until he completes his mission.

PIPER Then we will have to keep one step ahead of him.

LORELEI Indeed.

PIPER But now I have an appointment to keep and some children to return to their parents.

[HE starts to play his pipe as the lights fade out and the scene changes to.....

SCENE 3 KOPPELBERG MOUNTAIN

[The scene is the same as in Act One. WILLY and GRETCHEN enter.]

GRETCHEN Willy, we should have stayed in the city.

WILLY But Karl may need us.

GRETCHEN Ah there, you see, my little Willy always rushing to help.

WILLY For the umpteenth time stop calling me little.

GRETCHEN So strong, so wise, so manly.

[WILLY preens himself at the flattery.]

WILLY Oh, do you think so?

GRETCHEN What would I do without you?

WILLY But you haven't got me!

GRETCHEN Oh Willy stop playing so hard to get. We were meant to be together. We're like two peas in a pod.

WILLY Yes. I'm young and tender and you're mushy!

[FRIEDA staggers on.]

FRIEDA Oh what a climb. Now I know how Julie Andrews felt!

WILLY Mother. What are you doing here?

FRIEDA I thought Karl could use some help. What are *you* doing?

WILLY The same thing.

GRETCHEN But you know we have taken the wrong path.

WILLY I think you're right. There's no sign of Karl or the Piper.

FRIEDA I've never been up here before. Do you think it's safe?

GRETCHEN My father used to tell me stories about a big hairy creature that lives on this mountain.

FRIEDA Oh no that's . *[Name of Prime Minister of public figure.]* He's got a holiday home here!

WILLY Gretchen is right. I heard it was a troll. Ohhh I'm getting scared.

GRETCHEN Do worry Willy. *[SHE puts her arms around him.]* I'll protect you.

WILLY *[Pulling away.]* I'm not that scared.

FRIEDA You know I've got a feeling that there are hundreds of eyes looking at us.

WILLY There are . and they're all out there. *[HE points to the audience.]*

FRIEDA Oh they're all my friends. I didn't know you had followed us up the mountain. Will you all keep a look-out for any trolls or scary creatures?

[Ad lib with audience into "behind you scene".]

SONG FRIEDA, WILLY and GRETCHEN

[They sing and the TROLL enters. It scares GRETCHEN off first and then WILLY. When it comes to FRIEDA she looks at it. SHE flirts with it, ad libbing. The TROLL looks at the audience, then back at FRIEDA and putting both hands up in defeat, backs off stage. WILLY and GRETCHEN run back on.]

WILLY Mom. Are you all right?

FRIEDA Of course. It takes more than a little troll to frighten me. Especially after living with your father for all those years!

[KARL and LEISL enter.]

KARL What are you doing here?

FRIEDA We came to help you look for the Piper.

KARL Well there's no need. We found him and he's agreed to return the children.

LEISL As long as father pays him what he is owed.

GRETCHEN Oh that's wonderful.

KARL So we better get back to Hamelin straight away. Come on.

[KARL, LEISL, WILLY and GRETCHEN all exit. FRIEDA goes to follow as the TROLL re-enters. FRIEDA takes a small card out of her bosom and hands it to him.]

FRIEDA That's my mobile number. Call me.

[SHE runs off. The TROLL looks at the card and scratches his head as the lights fade and the scene changes to.....]

SCENE 4 THE CITY OF HAMELIN

[Before the lights come up on the scene we hear the voice of the RODENT LORD.]

RODENT *[In a rage.]* Burgomaster! Burgomaster, answer me.

[The BURGOMASTER is in a light down left.]

BURGOMASTER Yes, my lord?

RODENT I have amassed my army of rats and we are lying in wait, hidden in a secret passage under the city.

BURGOMASTER A secret passage?

RODENT Yes. It emerges under that old water pump. You must get it moved so my army and myself can swarm in and drive everyone away.

BURGOMASTER I will need help.

RODENT Then find it. But quickly. I grow more impatient by the minute. And don't forget the Piper's pipe. If he starts to play again all will be lost.

BURGOMASTER I will do as you ask, my lord. And when you are Lord of the City, I will become Chancellor of all Germany.

RODENT As long as you don't fail me. Now go. Time is running out.

[The lights fade on the BURGOMASTER who exits, then the lights come up on the main scene. The CHORUS are on looking dejected. CARROTS is with them. KARL and LEISL enter.]

KARL Everyone. Great news. The children are coming home. *[Great jubilation from EVERYONE.]* I must find the Burgomaster. He has to pay the Piper. *[HE exits into the Burgomaster's House. The PIPER'S tune is heard.]*

LEISL Listen.

[ALL stop and listen.]

WOMAN It's the Piper.

MAN *[Pointing.]* Look! There they are.

[From the back of the auditorium the CHILDREN come running followed by the PIPER. They are greeted by the CHORUS. FRIEDA, WILLY and GRETCHEN enter and join the celebrations.]

COMPANY NUMBER

[At the end KARL enters with the BURGOMASTER.]

PIPER Well I have been true to my word.

KARL And I am true to mine. *[To the BURGOMASTER.]* Burgomaster.

BURGOMASTER Very well. *[HE hands a bag of money to the PIPER.]* I am sorry for the misunderstanding. I hope this put things right.

PIPER Thank you. And now I will take my leave.

FRIEDA Oh you can't go yet. After the way you have been treated the least we can do is offer you some hospitality.

PIPER Well perhaps one drink to whet my whistle so to speak.

FRIEDA Come along everyone. To celebrate the children's safe return . drinks on the house!

[Cheers and general exit to the Beer Garden. The BURGOMASTER is left alone and moves up to the old pump. HE tries to move it from its base. It won't move. The lights change and the voice of the RODENT is heard.]

RODENT Hurry man.

BURGOMASTER It's too heavy for me to move. I need help.

RODENT Use the children. Offer them a reward. They won't suspect anything.

BURGOMASTER *[Calling off.]* Children. Oh children. I have something for you.

[The CHILDREN run on.]

CARROTS Is anything wrong?

BURGOMASTER I have decided this old pump needs to go to make way for a new sweet stall. And all those who help will get a free bag of sweets every day for a month.

CARROTS Sweets every day for a month? *[To the others.]* Come on, we should all be able to do this.

[The CHILDREN try to move the pump. The PIPER enters.]

PIPER What is going on here?

CARROTS If we help move this he has promised us sweets every day for a month.

PIPER Another promise? *[Moving to the pump.]* Children, I don't think it would be wise to move that.

CARROTS But the sweets. We've been promised sweets.

PIPER Remember the promise that was made to me.

BURGOMASTER This has nothing to do with you.

PIPER Oh I think it has.

[LORELEI enters down right.]

LORELEI Piper, if that pump is moved all will be lost.

PIPER I know.

CARROTS It's moving.

BURGOMASTER Quickly, open it. *[The PIPER starts to play his pipe. The CHILDREN slowly stop what they are doing and look at him.]* What are you doing? Stop that. *[HE runs at the PIPER who jumps out of his way. As the PIPER continues to play the CHILDREN move towards him. CARROTS is drawn close to the PIPER and when HE is behind him the PIPER bumps into him knocking him over.]*

PIPER *[Stop playing and turns to help CARROTS.]* Oh I'm sorry. Are you all right?

[As the PIPER turns to help CARROTS the BURGOMASTER grabs to pipe from him.]

LORELEI *[Calling out.]* Piper!

PIPER *[Facing the BURGOMASTER.]* Give me that.

BURGOMASTER Ah ha! Not so clever now, are you? *[Looking at the pipe.]* So if I play this the children will follow me and do as I ask.

PIPER You don't know what you are doing. Give it back to me.

BURGOMASTER *[Ignoring him and turning to the CHILDREN.]* Come along children. *[HE now hears the RODENT'S voice.]*

RODENT Hurry Burgomaster. My army awaits.

LORELEI Piper we must do something before it's too late.

PIPER I need my pipe.

[KARL, LEISL, WILLY, GRETCHEN and FRIEDA enter.]

KARL What's happening?

LORELEI The Burgomaster has taken the pipe. Without it the Piper won't be able to save the city from another invasion of rats.

FRIEDA Oh no. They'll be chomping into my soft centres again!

LEISL Father stop this.

BURGOMASTER I must do it. I have been commanded. *[ALL start to advance on the BURGOMASTER.]* Stand back I warn you. The master is coming. *[HE starts to play the pipe. The CHILDREN move back to the pump and slide the top off.]*

WILLY The master? We need Dr Who!

LORELEI Can't you do something?

PIPER Not without my pipe.

[The lighting effects start as rats come out of the pump. The rest of the COMPANY enter to see what is happening. Then, dressed in black, the RODENT LORD emerges. ALL retreat in terror.]

RODENT At last.

BURGOMASTER I did as you asked. Now I claim my reward.

RODENT Reward? There is no reward. I have no further need of a puny human like you.

BURGOMASTER What?

PIPER Karl I must have the pipe.

[KARL grabs for the pipe but the RODENT LORD intercepts. FIGHT.]

FRIEDA *[Getting an idea.]* Willy, come with me quickly. *[SHE and WILLY run off stage. The fight between the RODENT LORD and KARL continues and KARL is knocked to the ground.]*

LEISL Karl!

[Just as the RODENT LORD is about to pounce FRIEDA returns with a large cheese dish followed by WILLY with an enormous mallet.]

FRIEDA Dinner time. *[SHE opens the cheese dish. The RODENT LORD looks up and smells the cheese. HE moves towards it and WILLY knocks him out. ALL cheer. The PIPER gets the pipe back.]*

LORELEI Piper, you must do something about the rest of the rats.

[The PIPER plays his tune and the rats return to the pump. The CHILDREN put the top back on. ALL cheer again. LEISL goes to KARL and GRETCHEN to WILLY.]

GRETCHEN Oh Willy, you were wonderful.

FRIEDA He's not such a little Willy now!

GRETCHEN No he's my big, brave, bold, butch Bavarian bratwurst!!

WILLY All right. Don't overdo it!

LEISL *[To KARL.]* And you were very brave too.

KARL He was so strong. But who is he.

LORELEI The Rodent Lord. He possesses great powers and wanted to take over the whole city.

PIPER We have encountered him many times but never managed to get the better of him - until now.

FRIEDA So what do we do with him?

PIPER I think a tune from my pipe might do the trick. Just watch. *[HE starts to play as the RODENT LORD comes round. HE becomes very meek and afraid of everyone. HE runs around the stage squeaking in a high pitch, finally coming face to face with the PIPER.]* Boo!

[The RODENT LORD squeaks in terror and runs away. ALL cheer.]

KARL That is a most remarkable instrument.

PIPER It only works for good in the right hands.

LEISL Well it's certainly in the right ones.

[During this the BURGOMASTER has tried to slip away unnoticed.]

FRIEDA And where do you think you are going?

BURGOMASTER *[Trying to act innocently.]* Oh just back to my office . continue working for the good of the city.

FRIEDA For the good of yourself you mean.

BURGOMASTER But I didn't do those things on purpose. I was taken over and made to work for that rotten rat.

PIPER That's partly true. He did have the ability to take control of someone's mind. But only if they were weak in the first place.

WILLY And a weak minded person is not someone who should hold the office of Burgomaster.

BURGOMASTER What?

FRIEDA Quite right. I think the people of Hamelin deserve a change. *[ALL agree.]* And my vote goes to Karl.

[EVERYONE says "And mine".]

LEISL *[Hugging KARL.]* And mine.

BURGOMASTER What?

LEISL Father, what you need is a long rest.

BURGOMASTER Oh very well. *[HE takes off his chain of office and hands it to the PIPER who puts it around KARL'S neck. ALL cheer. During the next part the PIPER slips away into the crowd and exits without anyone noticing.]*

KARL I promise to fulfil the duties of this office to the best of my ability. *[Another cheer.]*

GRETCHEN And the Burgomaster should have a wife by his side.

[ALL agree and KARL embraces LEISL.]

FRIEDA Oh I'm filling up with emulsion!

KARL But we mustn't forget the one person who came to our rescue in the first place. Our friend the Piper.

ALL The Piper.

LEISL But where is he?

LORELEI He vanishes as quickly as he appears.

[The PIPER'S voice is heard.]

PIPER *[V.O.]* Don't worry my friends. I'll be back for the wedding. Maybe a double wedding!

[ALL look at WILLY and GRETCHEN.]

GRETCHEN What a brilliant idea.

WILLY Oh no! *[The PIPER'S tune is heard and WILLY starts to change. HE smiles, HE swaggers around and becomes the "ladykiller" type. HE grabs hold of GRETCHEN and holds her in a dip.]* Well my little bowl of sauerkraut, what do you say?

GRETCHEN *[Almost speechless.]* Thank you, Piper.

[ALL laugh as the music comes in for a reprise.]

COMPANY NUMBER - REPRISE

[At the end of the number the lights fade and the scene changes to ...

SCENE 5 THE COUNTRYSIDE

[FRIEDA walks down stage from the previous scene and addresses the audience.]

FRIEDA Well there we are. Hamelin is finally free from rats and everyone can get back to living a normal life.

WILLY *[Off stage.]* Mom. Mom, where are you.

FRIEDA Oh dear, I spoke too soon.

[WILLY enters.]

WILLY Mom, I've had this fantastic idea.

FRIEDA Now be careful. You don't want to give yourself an injury!

WILLY I was wondering what to get Karl and Leisl for a wedding present. And then it hit me!

FRIEDA *[Looking him over.]* I don't think it's done any permanent damage?

WILLY Why don't I sing them one of my songs?

FRIEDA One of your songs? When did you start writing songs?

WILLY Oh I often dash off a little ditty!

FRIEDA I don't think our friends out there want to know that!

WILLY *[To the audience.]* You'd like to hear one of my songs, wouldn't you?
[Audience reaction.] There you see!

FRIEDA Oh, go on then. Let's hear it.

[THEY ad lib into the song sheet.]

SONG SHEET

[At the end of the sequence the lights fade and the scene changes to.....

SCENE 6 BURGOMASTER'S HALL

[A grand scene with a staircase leading from an upper level. Colourful banners and shields hang from the walls.]

FINALE

[As the scene opens the CHORUS take their bow then move into position for the principals' entrance in the following order.]

LORELEI
 CARROTS
 BURGOMASTER
 GRETCHEN
 WILLY
 FRIEDA VON FROTH
 PIED PIPER

PIPER *[After his bow.]* My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen, the new Burgomaster of Hamelin and his wife.

KARL & LIESL

LORELEI Hamelin is once more free from rats

CARROTS Who chased the dogs and who bit the cats.

BURGOMASTER My selfish plans turned to disaster.

FRIEDA Oh what a silly Burgo-master!

WILLY I fancy a bowl of pumpernickel,

GRETCHEN *[Seductively.]* But first a little slap and tickle!

LIESL *[To KARL.]* You beat the Rodent Lord in the end,

KARL But only with the help of our musical friend.

PIPER So listen hard and one day soon
 You may hear the Piper's tune.

FINAL NUMBER

[ALL wave 'goodnight' as the curtain falls.]

End Of Act Two