

**"THE PIED PIPER"**  
**( OF HAMELIN )**

ADAPTED FOR PANTOMIME

Written by

**PETER LONG & KEITH RAWNSLEY**





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**LIST OF CHARACTERS**

KARL (PIED PIPER).....A VISITOR TO HAMELIN & PRINCIPAL BOY

MAYOR STRUDEL.....THE MAYOR OF HAMELIN

HEIDI STRUDEL.....THE MAYOR'S DAUGHTER & PRINCIPAL GIRL

HANS STRUDEL     }  
   }.....THE MAYOR'S YOUNGER CHILDREN  
 MARTA STRUDEL  }

GIRDA BERGER.....OWNER OF THE INN & DAME

GRETCHEN BERGER.....DAME'S DAUGHTER

HEINZ.....THE HAPLESS CHEF AT THE INN

HERMAN FESTER.....THE "SO CALLED" RAT CATCHER

BORIS.....HERMAN'S ASSISTANT

COUNTESS BADDANVILLE OF BRUNSWICK

THE STORY WRITER

DANCERS

SUNBEAMS

CHORUS

## **Character Descriptions**

**1: Karl:** (Female) Karl is the Pied Piper and is the principal boy role. He is a street musician visiting the town of Hamelin. A young dashing principal boy, he not only charms the daughter of the local Mayor but with his haunting pipe charms the rat population out of town.

**2: Heidi Strudel:** (Female) This is the principal girl role, she is the Mayor's pretty daughter who catches the eye of Karl early in the story. Heidi is delighted to find romance at last but is worried when her father disapproves.

**3: Mayor Strudel:** (Male) Mayor of Hamelin. He is a bumbling 'know all' sort of character. He is widowed and lives with his daughter Heidi and his 2 younger children. The Mayor's biggest problem is the growing rat population in Hamelin.

**4 & 5: Hans & Marta Strudel:** (Boy & Girl) The Mayor's younger children. Ideally 8 to 10 year olds, they lead their father a merry dance with their squabbling with each other and their older sister.

**6: Girda Berger:** (Male) This is the Dame role. Girda is the inn keeper of the local hostelry "The Rat and Drainpipe" which she runs with the help of her daughter. Girda is down at the heel but ever the optimist.

**7: Gretchen Berger:** (Female) Gretchen is the slightly 'dotty' daughter of Girda. She is very much 'put upon' and longs for the lifestyle of her friend Heidi. When her mother employs a new chef Gretchen can at last see the possibility of romance.

**8: Heinz:** (Male) This is the comic lead. Heinz is the newly appointed young chef at "The Rat and Drainpipe". His culinary skills immediately leave a lot to be desired, but his daft and naïve ways soon attract the daughter of his boss.

**9 & 10: Herman Fester and Boris:** (Both Male) These are the two 'Brokers Men' roles. Herman is the local rat catcher and Boris is his assistant. The plague of rats in Hamelin is proof of how useless the pair are at their jobs. Herman is more dominant than the downtrodden Boris.

**11: Countess Baddanvile:** (Female) She is the 'baddie' of the piece. As her name implies the Countess is a nasty piece of work who from her 'lair' at Baddanvile Castle plots the downfall of the town of Hamelin. She recruits Herman and Boris to help her with her nasty work.

**12: The Story Writer:** (Male) This character is on stage throughout the pantomime whilst there is action on stage. The Story Writer is seated at his tall writing desk situated front stage right in front of the house tabs. During the show he walks on stage and speaks to the audience as if creating the story as it is enacted.

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## SCENES

### ACT 1

SCENE 1:....."THE MARKET SQUARE IN HAMELIN"

SCENE 2:....."INSIDE THE KITCHEN OF THE "RAT & DRAINPIPE"

SCENE 3:....."THE MAYOR'S CHAMBER"

SCENE 4:....."BADDANVILE CASTLE"

SCENE 5:....."THE MARKET SQUARE IN HAMELIN"

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### ACT 2

SCENE 1:....."THE MARKET SQUARE IN HAMELIN"

SCENE 2:....."THE BADDANVILE CASTLE DUNGEON"

SCENE 3:....."THE SCHOOLROOM OF THE DESERTED VILLAGE"

SCENE 4:....."BADDANVILE CASTLE"

SCENE 5:....."THE MARKET SQUARE IN HAMELIN"

SCENE 6:....."HAMELIN'S CIVIC HALL"

WALK DOWN  
&  
FINALE



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## OVERTURE

## CURTAIN

### ACT 1...SCENE 1...."THE MARKET SQUARE IN HAMELIN"

SET:...A GERMAN TOWNSHIP WITH CLOTH DEPICTING A MEDIEVAL PERIOD WITH PERHAPS A CASTLE IN THE BACKGROUND....FLATS DEPICTING BUILDINGS ETC...WITH ONE TO STAGE LEFT BEING AN INN WITH A SIGN THAT READS "THE RAT & DRAINPIPE" AND A PRACTICAL DOOR

THERE IS A SMALL PERMANENT SET STAGE RIGHT IN FRONT OF HOUSE TABS...THIS IS THE STORY WRITER'S STUDY AND COMPRISES A TALL WRITING DESK AND STOOL WITH A "BOOKCASE" BEHIND....THE STORY WRITER WILL BE SITTING AT HIS DESK WITH QUILL IN HAND...THIS SET WILL BE LIT WHEN THE STORY WRITER FEATURES

...MUSICAL ITEM No 1....STRAIGHT INTO COMPANY NUMBER....AFTER ROUTINE ALL STAY ON STAGE AS IF BUYING AND SELLING THEIR WARES...THEY MIME THEIR CONVERSATION

LIGHT STORY WRITER WHO IS SITTING AT HIS DESK

### STORY WRITER:

Welcome all to Hamelin town...  
As you see it's a happy place.  
But as the story unfolds as I write it...  
It will take on a much gloomier face.

As I create the story, you'll see it enacted...  
A tale that I'm sure you will relish.  
As we meet the characters both good and bad...

This story of truth I'll embellish.

Every story I write has a villain...  
Countess Baddanvile in this is the one.

ENTER THE COUNTESS INTO THE MARKET SQUARE AND THE  
TOWNS PEOPLE LOOK THREATENED AND WARY OF HER AS SHE  
MINGLES WITH THEM ALL

The people of Hamelin now shun her demands...  
It's their right when all's said and done!

As the Countess of Brunswick she lords o'er them all...  
And wants their taxes for the Brunswick coffers.  
But the people around here have dug in their heels...  
And refuse to make any such offers.

I think it's time to change the mood...  
In a way that I've yet to determine.  
What awful event can I bring to this town?..  
I know!!..I'll over-run it with vermin!!

LIGHTS DOWN ON STORY WRITER BUT WE STILL SEE HIM IN THE  
GLOOM AS IF WRITING THE STORY WE ARE SEEING ENACTED

**VILLAGER 1:**..(SCREAMS LOUDLY AND SHOUTS)...There's a rat!!

**VILLAGER 2:** (ALSO TERRIFIED)...There's *two* rats over here!!!

A PANIC ENSUES WHEREBY THE WOMEN ARE SCREAMING AND  
THE MEN ARE FEIGNING BRAVERY BUT ALL SCURRY OFF LEAVING  
HERMAN AND BORIS AND THE COUNTESS WHO LAUGHS AND RUBS  
HER HAND IN GLEE

**COUNTESS:** Rats!..what an excellent idea of mine...a *plague* of rats!  
...this will teach the Mayor and the townsfolk of Hamelin to pay their taxes!

**BORIS:** I thought the townsfolk *did* pay their taxes Countess?

**COUNTESS:** (SNAPPING BACK)...Not to *me* they don't!..they would rather  
pay some council run by the Mayor!...*I* own all the land around here....*I* want  
their money.

**HERMAN**: Quite right Countess Baddanville....don't worry...we'll continue with the infestation!!

**COUNTESS**: See that you do!..I want you both to collect the rotting rubbish from the outlying areas and dump it in the streets of Hamelin...that will encourage the rodent population to visit this fair town!

EXIT COUNTESS WITH AN EVIL LAUGH

**HERMAN**: (CHECKS TO SEE IF THE COUNTESS IS OUT OF EARSHOT...THEN TO BORIS)...Our *trained* rats have even fooled Countess Baddanville, she thinks they're from the sewers...come on now Boris, get them all back in their cages...(BORIS LOOKS PUZZLED)... come on Boris!...be quick about it!

**BORIS**: They're *not* our rats Mr. Fester...our rats are grey...the ones out here were big *black* ones...they must be wild sewer rats!

**HERMAN**: What!?!..*real* rats...(HE SHUDDERS)...Boris, we don't do *real* rats!...send for the rat catcher!

**BORIS**: Rightio Mr. Fester...(THEN REALISES)...but *you* are the rat catcher!!

**HERMAN**: Eh?..oh yes, so I am...but we only catch *our* rats...you know how it works Boris....we infest a house using our rats, then get paid for catching them...then we move on to another house and catch them again... that way everybody is happy....especially us!..now look Boris, I've promised the Countess a plague of rats...now how many have we got?

**BORIS**: (AS IF COUNTING ON HIS FINGERS)...Er...Three!

**HERMAN**: (DISBELIEF)....*Three*!!!?...is that it?

**BORIS**: Well no...actually there's only two!..you see one is a Guinea Pig!...(HERMAN REACTS)...it's all right Mr. Fester, I stuck a long tail on it...nobody will know!

**HERMAN**: (IN DESPAIR)...Two rats and a Guinea Pig which has a shoe lace sellotaped to its backside....hardly a *plague* is it Boris?...can't we get some more....quick like?

**BORIS**: Oh no....the man at the pet shop says he has a couple of Hamsters and a Gerbil and can we make use of them?

**HERMAN**: *Pet shop!!!*

**BORIS**: Yes and I've got to have 'em back by tea time...they're only on loan!

**HERMAN**: Look...we're going to have to encourage these wild sewer rats....it's the only way...in the meantime, where's *our* little menagerie?

**BORIS**: I saw them go through a hole into the inn Mr. Fester...(HE POINTS)...just over there.

**HERMAN**: Come on then...we'd better get in there and catch 'em.

**BORIS**: What about Girda the owner?

**HERMAN**: Oh she's out for her morning constitutional ramble in the foothills with some of the children....come on.

THEY EXIT INTO THE "RAT & DRAINPIPE"

ENTER GIRDA AND SUNBEAMS TO THE FOLLOWING MUSICAL ITEM

**♪...MUSICAL ITEM No 2....FEATURING GIRDA AND SUNBEAMS AS THEY ENTER.....AFTER ROUTINE....**

**GIRDA**: (TO SUNBEAMS)...Right you lot...off you go!...don't be late for school.....

EXIT SUNBEAMS WITH RATHER GLUM FACES

**GIRDA**: (CONT/D)...Oh well...I'd better see if Gretchen has finished cleaning the bedrooms...then I'll help her with the meals....

SUDDENLY HERMAN SNEAKS OUT OF THE "RAT & DRAINPIPE"  
TIP TOEING AND UNSEEN BY GIRDA

**GIRDA:** (CONT/D AND TO AUDIENCE)...There's what?...someone behind me?...("OH NO...OH YES" BIZ HERE.....THEN GIRDA SEES HERMAN).....oh it's you Fester...what may I ask are you doing on my premises?

**HERMAN:** It's the rat problem Girda...I've just been checking if you've got any.

**GIRDA:** Ooooh yes!...I've seen all sorts of creatures in there...there was one with black beady eyes...stubby whiskers...discoloured teeth and a flea ridden coat...(NOW BORIS SNEAKILY TIP TOES OUT OF THE INN)....and here he is now!!...how are you Boris?

**BORIS:** (POSSIBLE RAT DOWN TROUSER GAG HERE)....Oh hello Frau Berger....er...I was just....

**GIRDA:** (INTERRUPTING)...Just checking for rats...yes I know...well you two are going to have to do something quick!..they're frightening away my paying guests!...I had that chap that writes the "Good Food Guides" ....don't they call him *Ronay* or something?

**HERMAN:** *Egon*?

**GIRDA:** *Gone*?!..he never took his coat off!..*and* he didn't pay his bill!

ENTER GRETCHEN FROM INN IN A PANIC

**GRETCHEN:** Mother, Mother...there are rats in the laundry....and they're chewing your bloomers!!

**HERMAN:** Just calm down Gretchen...(SHE DOES)...now...can you remember what colour they were?

**GRETCHEN:** (MISUNDERSTANDING)...Er...they were red spotted ones with lace around the edge!

**BORIS:** (ASIDE TO HERMAN)...It's all right Mr. Fester...they're not ours....*our* rats are grey!

**HERMAN:** Shut up!..she's talking about the bloomers you fool!

**GIRDA**: Hey!..hang on a minute...do you mind not discussing my... (MIS-PRONOUNCES)...*lingerie* in public!

**HERMAN**: Will you excuse Boris and me ladies...we are very busy at the moment...come along Boris.

**GRETCHEN**: (TO HERMAN AND BORIS AS THEY MAKE TO EXIT)...What about our rats?

**HERMAN**: Yes, yes...all in due course my dear.

HERMAN AND BORIS EXIT

**GRETCHEN**: What are we going to do Mother?..as if we haven't enough problems, now the inn is teeming with rats...*and* we're both behind with our work!

**GIRDA**: Oh yes...I forgot to tell you....you know that advert I put in the "Hamelin Observer"?

**GRETCHEN**: What...the one for a qualified chef?

**GIRDA**: Yes...well we've had an application...he passed out at catering college last week....anyway, he's coming for an interview later today...so I've just got time to go and make myself presentable!

**GRETCHEN**: (CHEEKILY)...I thought you said he was coming *today*!

**GIRDA**: Yer cheeky young madam!!...I'll see you later...I'll see if I can get back into the inn for them rats!!

EXIT GIRDA INTO INN AS IF KICKING BACK THE RATS

ENTER HEIDI (PRINCIPAL GIRL)

**GRETCHEN**: Oh hello Heidi....how are you coping with the rats?

**HEIDI**: Yes Gretchen, aren't they awful?!..Father is trying to come up with an answer to the problem...he's meeting with the Councillors today.

**GRETCHEN**: Poor man!..who'd be the Mayor of Hamelin at a time like this?

**HEIDI:** Exactly!...anyway, I'm glad you're on your own...(SHE PRODUCES A LETTER WITH A BROKEN SEAL)...Look what I got this morning.

**GRETCHEN:** Who is it from?

**HEIDI:** Well...do you remember me telling you about that boy I met at music school in Vienna?...you know, his name is Karl!

**GRETCHEN:** (EXCITED)...Yes...yes!

**HEIDI:** Well, the letter is from him....*and* he's coming to visit me....I'm to expect him at any time...oh please say he can have lodgings at the inn.

**GRETCHEN:** Of course he can...(ASIDE)...so long as he doesn't mind rats!

**HEIDI:** What?

**GRETCHEN:** Oh nothing...does your Father know about Karl?

**HEIDI:** No...and I think it's best left that way...at least for the time being.

ENTER MAYOR STRUDEL WITH HANS AND MARTA HIS YOUNGER CHILDREN

**MAYOR:** Ah...there you are Heidi...we wondered where you'd got to...we couldn't keep up with you.

**HEIDI:** Er...yes I...er...I needed to speak to Gretchen...she was getting me some silks for my tapestry...(NUDGES GRETCHEN)...weren't you Gretchen?

**GRETCHEN:** Was I?...(REALISES)...oh yes, I was...but they...er...they didn't have the colour you needed!

**MARTA:** Are you still coming to the park with us Heidi?

**HANS:** We don't need our big Sister with us Marta...*I* can push you on the swings.

**HEIDI:** Yes you can Hans...but don't push Marta too high...and *don't* push Father into the lake again!

**MARTA:** Come on then Hans...I'll race you to the park.

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**MAYOR:** (AS HANS & MARTA SCURRY OFF)...Don't go too far on your own...remember there are rats all over the place!

EXIT HANS AND MARTA WHO ALMOST BUMP INTO KARL AS HE ENTERS

**MAYOR:** (TO KARL)...Sorry about that young sir...just children's high spirits....you seem to be a new face in our fair town of Hamelin....well our *usually* fair town!

**KARL:** Oh you mean the rats!..yes it looks as if you have a problem... anyway, I've just been given directions to the hostelry here...I hope to stay for a while.

**MAYOR:** (SHAKES HANDS WITH KARL)...I'm Mayor Strudel, and I bid you welcome.

MAYOR AND KARL GO INTO MIMED CONVERSATION WHILE THE DIALOGUE NOW SWITCHES TO HEIDI AND GRETCHEN

**HEIDI:** (EXCITED)...Oh Gretchen!..it's *him*!

**GRETCHEN:** Who?

**HEIDI:** It's Karl, *and* he's talking to Father!..I hope he doesn't tell him that he's come to see me!...(SHE TURNS HER BACK TO THEM)...what's happening now Gretchen?..(GRETCHEN IS GAZING STARRY EYED)...*Gretchen!*

**GRETCHEN:** What?...oh...er...nothing...they're just talking....oh, but Karl is rather handsome!

GRETCHEN AND HEIDI GO INTO MIMED CONVERSATION WHILE THE DIALOGUE SWITCHES BACK TO MAYOR AND KARL

**MAYOR:** Oh, so you are a street musician?..Well, you're very welcome here because Hamelin does need cheering up at the moment!

**KARL:** I would love to play my pipe for the townsfolk....but would I need a permit?



**MAYOR:** No problem young sir...come to my chambers tomorrow and my Councillors and I will soon sort that out....and now you must excuse me, I must catch up with my young children...I'm afraid Hamelin isn't the safe place it was, what with these confounded rats!!...(HE MAKES TO LEAVE)...Oh, by the way, the tavern owner's daughter is the girl over there with (DESCRIBES GRETCHEN'S CLOTHES)...her name is Gretchen....and now I must go.

EXIT MAYOR

KARL APPROACHES GRETCHEN AS HEIDI TURNS AWAY

**KARL:** Gretchen?..(GRETCHEN GOES TOWARDS KARL LOOKING ALL STARRY EYED)...I understand your mother owns the tavern here, my name is Karl...there should be a room reserved for me.

**GRETCHEN:** It is!..er...I mean is it?..oh yes Mr. Karl...I'll...er...go and check if the room is ready.

**KARL:** Before you go...do you know where I can find Heidi Strudel?

**HEIDI:** (TURNS)...Just over here!!

KARL GOES TO HEIDI

GRETCHEN EXITS INTO TAVERN BUT NOT BEFORE BUMPING INTO SOMETHING AS SHE GAZES STARRY EYED AT KARL

**KARL:** My dearest Heidi!..how lovely to see you again...and just as pretty as I remember.

**HEIDI:** I hope you realise you were just talking to my Father!

**KARL:** Oh yes...I remembered you telling me that he was the Mayor...but I thought it better to get him on my side before telling him the *real* reason for my visit!..I said I was a street musician

**HEIDI:** Why?

**KARL:** Well, that's what I've been doing on my journey to Hamelin...it gives me a chance to practise my music *and* make some money at the same time...some people can be quite generous.

**HEIDI:** A street musician eh...what a good idea...now I can see you whenever I want...(GRETCHEN ENTERS FROM TAVERN STILL STARRY EYED)...ah Gretchen...*is* there a room ready for Karl?

**GRETCHEN:** A room?...er...oh yes...Mother has given him a room overlooking the river Weser...(PRONOUNCED **VAZER**)...I'll just take your bag Mr. Karl...(SHE PICKS UP KARL'S LUGGAGE AND AS SHE MAKES TO EXIT SHE AGAIN BUMPS INTO SOMETHING)

EXIT GRETCHEN INTO TAVERN

**HEIDI:** (LAUGHS)...Well Karl...you've certainly won Gretchen's heart!

**KARL:** Yes, but I've come here to win *your* heart dear Heidi...just as you won mine in Vienna!

**♪....MUSICAL ITEM No 3....FEATURING KARL AND HEIDI AND THE DANCERS....AFTER ROUTINE TABS CLOSE**

ENTER HEINZ ON TABS....HE IS LOOKING AT A NEWSPAPER "THE HAMELIN OBSERVER"...IN THE OTHER HAND HE IS CARRYING A BATTERED SUITCASE WITH KITCHEN UTENSILS ATTACHED TO THE OUTSIDE...HE IS WEARING A **VERY TALL** DROLL CHEF'S HAT...HE LOOKS AROUND AS IF LOST

LIGHT THE STORY WRITER

**STORY WRITER:**

Now here's someone you'll learn to love...  
As my story I continue to write.  
He's wanting a job at Girda's hotel...  
And if he gets it he'll be frying tonight!

He wants to be Chef at the "Rat & Drainpipe"...  
And with Girda there'll be a meeting of minds.  
It's my quill that will decide the fate of this youth...  
This hapless young man they call Heinz!

FADE LIGHTS DOWN ON STORY WRITER AS HE CONTINUES TO SCRIBBLE

**HEINZ:** (LOOKING AT NEWSPAPER)... "The Rat & Drainpipe"??  
 ...(HE PEERS INTO WINGS AND POINTS)...there it is!..the very  
 place!...(TO HIMSELF)...now then Heinz...(ADJUSTS HIS HAT AND  
 CHECKS HIMSELF UP AND DOWN)...you'll get through this  
 interview....what did Mother tell me?..(AS HE QUOTES HIS MOTHER'S  
 ADVICE HE ADOPTS EACH POSE AND HOLDS ALL PREVIOUS  
 ONES).....she said..."Shoulder to the wheel" .... "Chin up" ... "Chest out" ... "Best  
 foot forward" ... "Eyes wide open" ... "Head held high" ... "Keep a straight  
 face" ...and "Put your back into it"....(HE ENDS UP IN TWISTED  
 GROTESQUE POSE)...but most importantly, she said "Look natural"!!..(HE  
 EXITS HOBBLING WITH HOLDING ALL THE POSES AND WITH A  
 SILLY EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE)

ENTER COUNTESS ON TABS QUICKLY FOLLOWED BY HERMAN  
 FESTER

**COUNTESS:** Right Fester.....what news of the infestation?

**HERMAN:** You mean the *creation* of the infestation?

**COUNTESS:** Well I need *information* on the creation of the infestation!

**HERMAN:** Well...any information in *relation* to the creation of the infestation  
 should be a sensation!!

**COUNTESS:** Look!..any sensation of information in relation to the creation  
 of the infestation will need quantification and *notification*!!

**HERMAN:** Indeed!..it's my estimation that the sensation in relation to the  
 creation of the infestation will need quantification for a generation with  
 ratification and no cessation but *determination*!!!!

**COUNTESS:** (LOSING PATIENCE)...Fester!!!..just tell me...how many rats  
 are there in Hamelin!?

**HERMAN:** Thousands!!

**COUNTESS:** And what about that load of rubbish you were going to dump?

**HERMAN:** Oh I decided not to dump him...in fact, here *is* Boris now

ENTER BORIS...HE IS SLOWLY EMPTYING A SMALL DUSTBIN ONTO THE FLOOR AS HE ENTERS

**COUNTESS:** That's no good!..what we need to attract the rats is a pile of stinking...putrid...rotting...maggot ridden food!!

**BORIS:** Oh....I know where there's *plenty* of stinking...putrid...maggot ridden food!...they're serving it at the "Rat & Drainpipe" ...it's today's *special*!!!

**COUNTESS:** (IGNORING HIM)...Now hear this you two...I want rats...more rats, and *still* more rats!!..the people of Hamelin will be begging to pay their taxes when I've finished with them!..now get to it!

EXIT COUNTESS WITH AN EVIL LAUGH

**BORIS:** She scares me Mr. Fester...in fact I think she would scare everybody...that is except my *Brother*!

**HERMAN:** Your Brother?..I didn't know you had a Brother.

**BORIS:** Oh yes...my Brother *Sylvest*!

♪....**MUSICAL ITEM No 4**....FEATURING HERMAN AND BORIS  
.....AFTER ROUTINE **THEY EXIT**

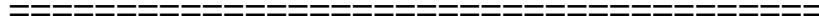
LIGHT THE STORY WRITER

**STORY WRITER:**

You've seen the Countess yet again...  
A really nasty piece of work.  
Herman and Boris are frightened of her...  
And her orders to them they won't shirk!

But enough of them for the moment...  
And back to the tavern we'll go.  
Girda's putting Heinz through his paces...  
What will happen from now...(THINKS)...yes I know!

FADE LIGHTS DOWN ON STORY WRITER AS HE CONTINUES TO SCRIBBLE.....**TABS OPEN FOR...**



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