

FIRST DRAFT

THE PIED PIPER

An Original Screenplay

by

ANDREW BIRKIN

Based on the Poem

by

ROBERT BROWNING

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NOTE:

Most of the Scene-headings in this Screenplay relate to specific locations in Rothenburg-ob-der-Tauber, West Germany.

The majority are simply the names of streets and markets in Rothenburg, and as a rough guide, they can be interpreted as follows :

Marketplatz	=	Market Place
Rathaus	=	Town Hall
-strasse	=	Main Street
-gasse	=	Street; Road
-platz	=	Place, Square
-steig	=	Alley, Lane
-kirche	=	Church
-brucker	=	Bridge
-tor	=	Tower

In addition, the following story places are followed by the actual location in brackets:

Hamelin	=	(Rothenburg)
River Weser	=	(River Tauber)
Rosenheim	=	(Neuschwanstein)
Koppelberg	=	(Bavarian Alps)

* * *

For reference purposes, Robert Browning's poem "The Pied Piper of Hamelin" is reproduced in full at the end of this script.

The poem is based on the story by the Brothers Grimm ("Der Rattenfänger Von Hameln"), which is in turn based on the actual event which took place in Hamelin on June 26th, 1284.

"Of our troubles we must seek some other cause than God, and there will be no end to the troubles of States, or indeed of humanity itself, till the Seekers of Truth become kings in this world, or until those we now call kings and rulers really and truly become Seekers of Truth. "

Plato, quoting Socrates:

"THE REPUBLIC" - Book 5, Para. 474.

FADE INTO:

1. EXT. BAVARIAN MOUNTAINS - DAWN 1.

(MONTAGE OF 10" X 8" STILL DISSOLVES) A vast range of grey-cragged mountains rise before us, their valleys steeped in the shades of dawn. The Sun swims low behind their razored peaks, while the great mass of timeless rock to the West remains obscured by night. These heights seem lost in desolation; nothing breathes, nothing stirs, nothing moves.

DISSOLVE INTO:

2. EXT. BAVARIAN MOUNTAINS - DAY 2.

A wall of rock rises sheer from the valley beneath, a granite cliff towering above the surrounding landscape. For a while it seems as lifeless as before.

Then something appears round the corner of the precipice, like a speck of black dust clinging to the edge of the cliff. As it approaches, we see that it is a WAGON, painted black, and hauled by an ageing horse along the thin path carved into the cliff-face.

3. EXT. BAVARIAN MOUNTAIN PATH - DAY 3.

The WAGON moves towards us, its' black canvas top billowing from side to side. The path is so narrow that in parts the DRIVER is obliged to go at walking pace to avoid catastrophe. He is seated on the deck next to his wife, HELGA, and although they say little to each other, they seem a kindly pair, and treat their sagging horse with patience.

The outside of the wagon is hung with various theatrical props in addition to the assortment of pots and pans which continually bang together above the wind.

The Driver, MATTIO, looks back behind him into the wagon.

4. INT. BLACK WAGON (TRAVELLING) - DAY 4.

MATTIO'S POV - The occupants are a mixed collection of TRAVELLING PLAYERS, though only MATTIO is a professional. The others have been recruited en route, and form an unlikely team of questionable talent. They are surrounded by an incredible assortment of costumes, wigs and other props. The canvas roof on the inside is painted with a scene of Hell from Dante's "Inferno", and forms a back-drop for their production. In addition to the

4 (Cont'd)

4.

PLAYERS, a PIG has found its way to the back of the wagon.

The PIG belongs to MAD OTTO, a former truffle-hunter who has been forced to abandon his trade from lack of success. His pig is a close friend, and he accords it the same friendship as others would to a dog. He acquired the prefix "mad" because of his belief that he is Diogenes the Greek, reincarnate. He is presently writing a play, a voluminous affair in 104 acts, which he hopes one day to perform with the help of his friends. Needless to say, it is entitled "Diogenes", and he sees himself in the title role. His obsession with the Greek cynic is such that he has recently taken to living in a barrel, much to the humour of the others.

He is surrounded by books of reference, mostly written in Greek and Latin. Unfortunately he is unable to read any of them, having never acquired a learning for these tongues. His PIG finds company in two HENS, a one-eyed CAT, a three-legged DOG, and a FROG. This latter creature lives in a cage, and is kept on account of its' remarkable ability to forecast changes in the weather.

The frog's owner is Hans Mors, a young man nick-named LONG-SHANKS for obvious physical reasons. He is spotty and bald, and used to be a flagellant, though when the daily whipping became too painful, he turned it in and joined the Players.

Finally, a young boy of 12 makes up their company. KARL has been blind and dumb since birth, though his eyes seem quite normal, and indeed the casual observer would be unaware of his blindness but for the occasional staying of eyes from their target. KARL spends most of his time playing on a hand-carved flute, for which he has a singular talent. He has been "adopted" by MATTIO and HELGA, and takes an occasional part in their plays, notably the speechless, sightless fallen angel at the feet of Dante.

5. EXT. BAVARIAN MOUNTAIN PATH - DAY

5.

The WAGON journeys along the thin pathway. Suddenly the HORSE whinneys in fright, and for a perilous moment the WAGON shudders near the edge of the precipice. MATTIO manages to control his nag, then peers ahead in amazement.

Coming the other way is a PILGRIM carrying a heavy bag. He is clad with souvenir medals from all the shrines he has visited, and as he hurries towards the WAGON, the medals jump up and down, jingling together like so many bells.

MATTIO pulls the WAGON to one side of the path, and LONGSHANKS

peers round the canvas flap to witness the new arrival.

The PILGRIM runs up to the WAGON, then flops down on the ground, puffing and wheezing for breath. He looks up at MATTIO, and speaks out between gasps in an impeccable English accent.

PILGRIM

(with clasped hands)

Oh Sir ! Thank God !

(he crosses himself)

Sir, I've been walking for two weeks now, and I can go no further.

MATTIO

(cautiously)

Who are you ? Where are you going ?

PILGRIM

I'm a Pilgrim Sir, bound for the Holy City.

MATTIO

(surprised)

Jerusalem ! You're going in the wrong direction I'm sorry we're due at Rosenheim Castle by tomorrow, and we're late as it is.

PILGRIM

(very quickly)

Oh, that would be fine Sir, just fine ! The Baron is a personal friend of my Lord, the Earl of Richmond.

MATTIO looks at him doubtfully.

MATTIO

Richmond ?

PILGRIM

Yes Sir, Richmond England. Yorkshire to be precise.

MATTIO

(puzzled)

But what are you doing here ? Where's your horse ? Where are the other pilgrims ?

PILGRIM

(sadly)

I got left behind . . . someone stole my horse.

The PILGRIM senses that MATTIO is uneasy about a decision. He quickly starts pulling relics out of his bag.

PILGRIM

(verbal diarrhoea)

Oh Sir, I beg of you, don't leave me here to die ! Look, I'll protect you ... I have relics from all the great Shrines ! Look, a sock ... it belonged to St. Thomas a Becket himself. And see here, a toe-nail, St. Augustine's of course, and a rabbit's tail from St. Francis. Bless me yes, and more besides - look here, a woodworm from the very cross of our dear Lord !

(pause)

With this lot ... I mean with these Blessed Relics, why, with these in your company, you'll be well covered for your travels !

(pause)

Well ?

MATTIO

If you're so well protected, why do you need us ?

PILGRIM

(quickly)

Oh, I do Sir, oh yes !

(he produces a key)

St. Peter's key to the Gates of Heaven

(sadly)

But you can't ride home on a key.

LONGSHANKS has been listening from the back of the wagon, and is now standing behind the PILGRIM.

LONGSHANKS

(suspiciously)

Have you seen the Black Plague ?

PILGRIM

(looking round in surprise)

Plague ? What Plague ?

LONGSHANKS

(laughing)

You say you've come from England, yet you don't know the Plague ? The place is alive with it ! The streets of London are piled

LONGSHANKS (cont'd)
with bodies . . . I've even heard that King
Edward's own daughter is dead !

PILGRIM

(hotly)
I assure you not Sir ! Only last week I was
speaking to King Teddy myself ! He was in
the best of health, and as for his lovely daughter,
why, she never looked lovelier !

LONGSHANKS

(shrugging)
Well, that's not what we've heard.

The PILGRIM looks up at MATTIO imploringly. MATTIO turns to
HELGA for her opinion.

MATTIO

(whispering)
What do you think ?

HELGA

Does he eat much ? You know the English !

PILGRIM

(over-hearing)
Oh, no I assure you, Sir ! - Only the Bread
of Sorrow.

MATTIO

(after a pause)
Oh, very well then . . . in the back.

PILGRIM

Bless me, thank you Sir ! A wise move if
I might say so.

The PILGRIM follows LONGSHANKS to the back.

MATTIO

(calling)
Can you act ?

PILGRIM

(turning)
Sir ?

MATTIO

(repeating)
I said can you act ?

5 (Cont'd)

5.

PILGRIM

(seriously)

Oh, yes Sir.

(pause)

I'd make a very good Pilgrim.

The PILGRIM returns to the back of the Wagon with LONGSHANKS, and as they move off, we see him huddling in the corner from the various animal noises that greet his arrival.

CUT TO:

6. EXT. BAVARIAN MOUNTAIN CROSS-ROADS - DAY

6.

The WAGON arrives at a cross-roads, and takes the narrow pathway leading off the Main track.

7. EXT. NEUSCHWANSTEIN CASTLE - DAY

7.

MCS (ZOOM) - The WAGON trundles up the steep driveway towards us. As it approaches, we PULL BACK into a staggering VISTA SHOT of Rosenheim (Neuschwanstein) Castle. The WAGON turns the sharp bend and crosses the draw-bridge.

8. EXT. ROSENHEIM CASTLE: COURTYARD - DAY

8.

LOW ANGLE LS - The rusted iron gates lie either side of the stone-walled Courtyard. Fallen leaves drift across the cobbled stones as we hear the Wagon (OFF) getting closer.

The WAGON enters the Court-yard, and we PAN ROUND as it comes to an abrupt halt outside the main doors. The PLAYERS pile out of the back, while MATTIO and HELGA remain fixed like frozen statues, staring at the desolation around them. Only the HORSE seems unaffected by the sight, and with a whinney of relief it sinks to the ground.

The Castle seems completely deserted. Thin strands of ivy twist up the rusted draw-bridge chains in front of the door, while the little guard house windows gape forlorn. The PLAYERS stare blankly at the Castle, then at each other. No-one speaks. Only the wind breaks total silence, as it moves among the decaying battlements.

KARL has sensed that something is wrong, and he tugs at the PILGRIM's arm, murmuring sounds but unable to speak. MATTIO takes him by the hand.

MATTIO

(to KARL)

It's alright Karl, it'll be alright.

(to the PILGRIM)

What's wrong ? Never seen a blind-mute before ?

8 (Cont'd)

8.

The PILGRIM looks awkwardly at KARL, feeling a little foolish at not having realised earlier. MATTIO walks forward to the draw-bridge, taking KARL by the hand to guide him.

A grunt from behind indicates that MAD OTTO and his PIG have surfaced from the depths of the wagon. The PILGRIM watches in surprise as OTTO pauses to light a candle in his lantern.

LONGSHANKS

(to the PILGRIM)

Don't mind him . . . he thinks he's
Diogenes the Greek !

OTTO

(with great solemnity)

I am seeking a Man !

PILGRIM

(nodding gloomily)

Aren't we all.

The PILGRIM follows MAD OTTO and his PIG as they walk towards the Castle Drawbridge.

CUT TO:

9. INT. ROSENHEIM CASTLE: BANQUET HALL - DAY

9.

LOW ANGLE UPSHOT - The room is in almost total darkness, and all we can see are dim shapes rising up in MCS. In LS a heavy oak door remains bolted shut. As we hear the approaching voices and footsteps of the PLAYERS (off), little white eyes flash out from various corners of the darkened screen (S/FX)

The MAIN TITLE THEME starts very slowly in the background, gradually building up to a crescendo for the Main Title itself.

The foot-steps echo loudly (off), and we hear MATTIO.

MATTIO (off)

What could have happened ?

PILGRIM (off)

The Angel of Death assuredly . . . I'd
better go and get my relics !

LONGSHANKS (off)

We'll try this one . . .

9 (Cont'd)

We hear him try and force the lock. More white eyes flash up in CS.

MATTIO (Off)

Try using this

The sound of something being dragged across the passage, then silence. Suddenly a resounding CRASH sends the white eyes scurrying across the SCREEN.

TITLE: SAGITTARIUS PRODUCTIONS PRESENT.....(etc)

Silence

A few seconds later a second CRASH brings up the FIRST ARTIST CREDIT, followed by a third, then a fourth. On each CRASH, another ARTIST CREDIT APPEARS.

Suddenly the immense door caves in and thunders to the ground, sending up a cloud of dust. Shafts of light pour through the doorway, silhoueting the PLAYERS as they stare in front of them.

The PLAYER'S POV - The Banquet Room.

MAIN TITLE CREDIT: "THE PIED PIPER"

The Room is a still-life in desolation. Hundreds of RATS stare into CAMERA, their white eyes blinking in the sunlight. They freeze for a moment, then dive for the safety of their holes, leaving a vast Banquet Table laden with rotting food.

REMAINDER OF CREDITS OVER:

MATTIO is first into the room. He walks slowly towards the table, and picks up a loaf of bread. He gives it a quick sniff, then drops it on the floor. The loaf hits the ground with a thud which echoes round the room. The RATS peer out from their holes in the wall, their eyes twinkling like stars in the night.

LOW ANGLE - We TRACK with MATTIO as he walks the length of the table. Great piles of rotting food drift past us in CS f.g. At the end of the table we HOLD on the huge rib-cage of a garnished peacock, its' bleached bones framing MATTIO behind it.

LONGSHANKS crosses the room in MLS, and walks over to one of the large velvet curtains drawn across the window. He puts his hand on it, and without further movement it crumbles to the floor, enveloping him in dust. He moves on to the second, then the third. As each curtain collapses, a further burst of sunlight spills into the room, until finally the whole scene is lit by daylight. He turns back towards the others, then notices something ahead of him.

LAST CREDIT OVER: A small door bears the faded words: "LORD HAVE MERCY UPON US".

THE PILGRIM stands timidly behind MAD OTTO and his PIG. HELGA holds onto KARL, who searches the room with vacant gaze. The PIG starts grunting at one of the RATS that has ventured from its' hole. OTTO hurries into the room after it, his lantern swinging from its' pole. The PILGRIM follows at a cautious pace, then picks up a musty volume lying on a side table. It is entitled "Galen's Remedies" - he glances at the title page.

PILGRIM

(reading)

"Certain and tried physik against God's Pestilence"

MATTIO

(also reading)

". . . . and I, Krippen the Friar, called the Fat, have buried my wife and eight children with mine own hands, and now I too wait upon the Will of the Lord. And lest these writings should perish with the writer, I leave parchment for another to continue my work, if perchance any man should survive this Black Death.

(his voice tails off)

PILGRIM

(moving to the door)

I personally feel that the sooner we get under way the

The PILGRIM's hand shoots to his mouth in fright, followed by a sign of the cross. Standing silhoueted in the doorway is a BEAK DOCTOR. His face is masked by a crow-like beak covering all but his eyes; the remainder of his body is wrapped in a cloak, while his hands are gloved by claws. At first sight he is an alarming creature; even the PIG bristles his hair and throws in a snort of surprise. The BEAK DOCTOR enters the room as the PILGRIM backs away.

BEAK DOCTOR

(slowly)

What are you doing here? What do you want?

The PILGRIM trembles in terror, his hundred medals ginging with vibration. He forces a smile.

PILGRIM

Oh, just ...just passing through you
knowjust off actually -

MATTO

(coming forward)

We are the Travelling Players, we had
an appointment to perform Dante's "Inferno"
for the Baron.

BEAK DOCTOR

There's no one here. Only the rats.

LONGSHANKS

(gaining courage)

We gathered that. And who are you?

BEAK DOCTOR

I am the Alchemist Dzouy Yen, by appoint-
ment to the late Baron Rosenheim. I too
would have joined the others, but for my
Elixir.

(pause)

Where are you going now?

MATTIO has moved a little closer to DZOUY YEN, and from
where he stands we can see the Alchemist's eyes moving within
the mask.

MATTIO

Well our next production is in Nuremburg....

DZOUY YEN

(Interrupting)

Too late. The Death arrived there a few
weeks ago.

HELGA

(sighing)

So much for that! What about Hannover?

DZOUY YEN nods without reply. LONGSHANKS eases forward.

9. (Cont'd)

9.

LONGSHANKS

(Cautiously)
You mentioned an elixir?

DZOUY YEN

(coldly)
I did.

LONGSHANKS

The Philosopher's Stone?

DZOUY YEN

The same.

LONGSHANKS

(Very interested)
Have you have you managed to change
lead into Gold?

DZOUY YEN

(after a pause)
I have.

At this, there is a murmur of excitement among the PLAYERS,
and one by one they crowd round the strange personage of
DZOUY YEN.

LONGSHANKS

(Calculating)
Could you tell us something, about it?

A Pause. They look at each other in anticipation.

DZOUY YEN

I will make you a bargain. If you will
take me to Hanover, I will reveal to you
the secret of my elixir.

(Pause)
Well?

MATTIO thinks a moment.

MATTIO

Before I make a bargain with a man, I
like to see his face.

9. (Cont'd)

9.

DZOUY YEN

(Laughing)
With pleasure.

He removes a button from under his neck, and lifts back the Beaked hood. He reveals himself as a young man in his early thirties, though his slanted oriental eyes give him a somewhat sinister appearance.

DZOUY YEN

(smiling)
Well?

MATTIO looks at the others. LONGSHANKS nods, so does the PILGRIM. His wife, HELGA, hesitates a moment, then shows her approval. Only MAD OTTO is silent. He remains in the background, scowling at the group. MATTIO takes DZOUY YEN by his clawed hand.

MATTIO

Let me introduce you...this is Helga,
my wife. Longshanks - an ex-flagellant,
happily reformed. Karl
(he indicates blind and dumb)
....this is....I'm sorry?

The PILGRIM steps forward, quick to supply the words.

PILGRIM

(Eagerly)
Arthur Cecil Forbes-Ponsonby Jones, Pilgrim
to his Grace the Earl of Richmond.

MATTIO

(nodding)
Yes...Pilgrim.
(Pause)
Well, perhaps we should....

DZOUY YEN

(Pointing to Otto)
And Him?

MATTIO

Ah yes, Otto. Professional Truffle Hunter.

9. (Cont'd)

9.

LONGSHANKS

(Scornfully)

Twenty years a truffle hunter, and not
a truffle to his name!

A few sniggers, and the PLAYERS file out of the room. OTTO watches them go, then gives a grunt of contempt, emulating his PIG which snuffles round the floor in search of truffles - and rats. We HOLD a BEAT as OTTO leads his SOW from the room.

10. EXT. ROSENHEIM CASTLE: COURTYARD - DAY

10.

The last of DZOUY YEN's alchemical apparatus is being loaded into the already overfilled waggon. OTTO is hemmed in his barrel at the back as usual, surrounded by fresh supplies of food and a portable furnace. His PIG airs it's snout at one of the alchemical beakers wedged between a volume on Galen's 'Remedies' and Jabir's 'Investigations in Perfection'. OTTO watches as the PILGRIM stacks several jars of cinnibar, turquoise and quick-silver beside him. The three legged DOG growls at the invasion.

OTTO

(to the Pilgrim)

As a dog returns to his vomit, so does a
fool return to his folly!

PILGRIM

(Condescendingly)

Quite so. Diogenes?

OTTO

(shaking his head)

The Bible, Pilgrim. You should know.

The PILGRIM grants a weak smile and continues his work.

Outside the waggon, DZOUY YEN satisfies himself that all is aboard. As he climbs in the back he notices one of the Player's props: a signboard from the 'Inferno' which reads 'ABANDON HOPE ALL YE WHO ENTER HERE'. LONGSHANKS gives him a reassuring wink, but DZOUY YEN is not altogether comforted. MATTIO takes his seat alongside HELGA, and we

10. (Cont'd) 10.

HOLD in LOW ANGLE as the waggon wheels round and disappears through the gates.

SLOW DISSOLVE INTO

11. EXT. RIDGE OVERLOOKING WESER VALLEY - DUSK 11.

The WAGGON lumbers on along the narrow road. The road forks East and West and the waggon turns to the latter then starts the long descent to the Weser Valley.

12. EXT. WESER VALLEY - DUSK 12.

The WAGGON journeys in L.S. along the edge of the meandering Weser River. Behind them, the great mountains of the Southern lands tower against the evening sky.

13. EXT. DESERTED VILLAGE - EVENING 13.

An abandoned village, already overgrown and in the first stage of decay. In f.g. the bleached skeleton of a man lies in the rotting stocks, no doubt left to his Fate in the general panic when the Plague attacked. The signboard over the deserted Beer Tavern creaks in the Evening breeze; a lame dog scratches around the Green for worms. We PAN off the stocks as the WAGGON rumbles into the village and pulls up outside the Tavern.

CUT TO :

14. INT. TAVERN - EVENING 14.

Through the broken windows of the Tavern, we see the PLAYERS jump down from the back of the waggon. MATTIO and HELGA start gathering wood for a fire.

DISSOLVE INTO:

15. EXT. DESERTED VILLAGE: CAMP FIRE - NIGHT(DAY FOR NIGHT)

Through the smouldering embers of the fire, we see LONGSHANKS and the PILGRIM lolled against a barrel, knocking back the last of the beer. LONGSHANKS is already snoring and the PILGRIM sings to himself.

PILGRIM

(drunken song)

Ohhhh ... Ye children of Man, whose life
is a span, / Protracted with sorrow from
day to day, / Naked and featherless, feeble
and querulous, / Sickly, calamitous creatures
of clay!

He laughs to himself, admires his polished medals, then eyes the snoring LONGSHANKS. As he launches into a drunken reprise, we hear the faint notes of KARL's flute (off). CAMERA starts TRACKING slowly away from the PILGRIM, past the sleeping bodies of DZOUY YEN and MATTIO, towards the waggon. KARL is seated with his back to CAMERA, against one of the waggon's wheels, his outline silhouetted in the moonlight.

As KARL's MUSIC becomes clearer, so the PILGRIM's cheerful dirge drifts into the background. The CAMERA continues TRACKING until we HOLD on KARL in MCS, his face half-inclined towards us. He starts again, but a second later stops. He hears some twigs snapping. Again he continues his theme, but now a second sound forms a descant. KARL hears it, but plays on. The notes of a mandolin combine with the flute to create a strange duet, as if each player knew what notes lay in the others mind.

As KARL plays, a shadow falls across his face. He stops slowly and looks up. He smiles.

From his POV (almost subjective) we see a YOUNG MAN, the PIED PIPER, looking down. The moon is behind him, so that in this opening glance we cannot see much detail, except that he smiles. He is dressed in a long, thin coat, half yellow and half red, and throughout the story he never changes clothes. He wears a snake-like cap, long shoes, and holds a mandolin under his arm.

He invites himself a place beside KARL, then the two start playing their duet again. Suddenly a voice blunders out from behind.

MATTIO (Off)

What are you doing here?

The PIPER looks up to where MATTIO is standing beside the waggon. KARL stops playing and the PIPER slowly lifts himself

15. (cont'd)

15.

to his feet.

MATTIO

(again)

What do you want? Who are you?

PIPER

(quietly)

Don't you listen ?

When the PIPER speaks, he has a hesitation before certain words, a sort of delayed-reaction. This is indicated by a line under the first letter of such words.

MATTIO seems puzzled. The PIPER has a disarming effect with his quiet voice, and he is at once both friendly, yet **strangely** removed. MATTIO eases his pace.

MATTIO

Where are you going?

PIPER

Hannover, but I think I'm too late.

The PILGRIM has tottered up behind them, beer-mug in hand.

PILGRIM

Come to join the party?

(singing)

Ohhhh! Ye children of man, whose
life is

MATTIO

(interrupting)

Keep quiet, you'll wake the others.

(to the Piper)

The plague?

The PILGRIM's face falls. He crosses himself rapidly and hurries off.

PILGRIM

(leaving)

Oh! My relics! Oh! Sweet Augustine....
your toe-nail will protect me

15. (Cont'd)

15.

MATTIO thinks a moment.

MATTIO

Where are you going now ?

PIPER

I've heard there's to be a wedding,
in Hamelin.

MATTIO

(Musing)

Hamelin? That's not far, maybe we
could try there.

(Cautiously)

Do you have any influence ?

PIPER

(Surprised)

Influence? I'm a Piper.

A pause.

MATTIO

Perhaps you'd like to join us? We
could use a musician.

The PIPER smiles without committment. KARL watches him
as he turns away and walks back to the waggon.

FADE INTO:

16. EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAY

16.

The WAGGON rumbles towards us, and as it passes, we PAN
ROUND, then slow ZOOM in on the PIPER and KARL sitting in
the back, their legs dangling over the edge. They are playing
their duet together, and the MUSIC continues over the next
few shots.

17. EXT. KOPPELBERG MOUNTAIN - DAY

17.

The WAGGON appears round a corner, and joins another road
leading to the lower mountain slopes.

MATTIO points excitedly into the distance and calls back to the
others.

18. EXT. HAMELIN (MODEL SHOT) - DAY 18.

As the WAGGON passes out of SHOT, we HOLD on an ELS of Hamelin. (Model 10" x 8" STILL Front-projected for b.g. LIVE ACTION in f.g.)

The Walled Town lies the other side of the Weser River, perched on a small plateau. The river runs at the foot of the plateau, with a moat encircling the walls. A Castle dominates the Southern side, with two Cathedral spires rising behind the rooftops to the North.

The PIPER/KARL MUSIC blends into FULL ORCHESTRA.

19. EXT. KOPPELBERG SLOPES - DAY 19.

The WAGGON descends the Koppelberg slopes with renewed speed.

20. EXT. DOPPELBRUCKER BRIDGE & WESER(TAUBER)RIVER
- DAY 20.

LOW ANGLE MS - The WAGGON rumbles onto the double-arched Doppelbrucker Bridge. As it crosses the river, we PULL BACK into ELS to include the River Weser (Tauber) flowing past in f.g., with the walls and spires of Hamelin (Rothenburg) beyond the bridge.

21. EXT. BURGTOR TOWER & CASTLE PARK - DAY 21.

The WAGGON speeds along the approach road to the Town, then halts abruptly outside the massive Burgtor Gates as the MUSIC FADES.

MATTIO and HELGA sit patiently on the waggon, waiting for someone to open the gates. A number of other WAGGONS are already parked on the grass verge by the moat wall, and some of them have shanty-like constructions, adjoining the carts. Several FAMILIES are grouped around little fires, cooking their evening meal. Suddenly A VOICE(OFF) Calls down to MATTIO.

VOICE (Off)

What do you want?

MATTIO looks around, then up.

22. EXT. BURGTOR TOWER - DAY

22.

A GARRISON SENTRY is leaning over the edge of the wall. He is dressed in a heavy sheepskin coat over his leather armour. He shouts down to MATTIO.

SENTRY

(Calling)

No one is allowed in the town without a pass.

He blows into his cupped hands. By the tone of his voice, he has been repeating the same message to a dozen other travellers.

23. EXT. BURGTOR GATE - DAY

23.

MATTIO gives HELGA a glance of concern, then calls up to the SENTRY.

MATTIO

(Shouting)

We've come for the wedding!

SENTRY

(Calling down)

Where's your pass?

MATTIO

Well we don't have one, but

SENTRY

(Interrupting)

Sorry, Baron's orders.....

24. EXT. BURGTOR TOWER - DAY

24.

SENTRY (cont'd)

....you'll have to park yourselves down there with the others, if you want to stay. Forty days quarantene, that's my orders !

In L.S. we can see MATTIO and HELGA exchange glances.

24. (Cont'd)

24.

MATTIO

(Calling)

But we've....

SENTRY

(Calling)

That's what they all say ...Sorry !

We HOLD on the SENTRY as he watches MATTIO start to wheel his horse round.

25. EXT. BURGTOR GATE & MOAT - DAY

25.

The WAGGON turns round and moves onto the strip of grass at the lower end of the small moat wall. The PIPER and KARL look down as they wind their way between the collection of hovels.

PIPER'S POV - TRACKING SHOT of a sea of expressionless FACES staring up into CAMERA.

The WAGGON finally halts by a broken section in the moat wall, and the PLAYERS clamber out. In LOW ANGLE we refocus onto a BOY's face staring through a small barred window set low in the town wall just above the water level of the moat.

A VOICE calls to him (off)

WART (Off)

Gavin! You're not paying attention are you?
What did I just say?

The BOY turns away from the window.

CUT TO :

26. INT. WART'S CELLAR - DAY

26.

The boy, GAVIN, looks up at his teacher, WART. The latter is an ancient specimen with a pronounced Jewish nose. He has a firm, but kindly face, and is at present trying to get GAVIN to concentrate on his work.

The Room is an incredible mixture of medical charts, alchemical apparatus, test-tubes, beakers, flasks, phials, brasiers, hammers, ladels, shears, tongs, sand-baths, alembics, crucibles, funnels, pestles, furnaces, bellows, pelican tubes, and a thousand other items.

26. (Cont'd)

26.

The walls are lined with shelves containing the works of Aristotle ('Politics' in 14 Volumes, 'Ethics' in 5), Galen's 'Remedies', Plato's 'Republic' (36 Volumes) and 'The Last days of Socrates', St. Augustine's 'Confessions', Bede's 'History of the English Church', Thomas a Kempis' 'Imitations of Christ' and Langland's 'Vision of Piers Plowman', in addition to other works by Geber, Aquinas, Ptolemy, Anaxagoras, Aristophanes, Avicenna, Hipparchus, Archimedes, Xenophanes, Hippocrates and Pythagoras. Many of the titles are in Greek, Latin and Arabic, but a few English ones include 'An End to the Search', 'The Book of the Seven Idols', and 'The New Pearl of Great Price'.

The stone stairs leading up to the main street are lined with bottles labelled: Lapis Lazuli, Gypsum, Gold Pellets, Alum, Cinnabar, Arsenic, Sulphur, Borax, 'Chinese' Iron, Mercury, Orpiment and Red Quicksilver. Such normal necessities as a bed, clothes and food have taken second place to this Alchemist's paradise. The occasional loaf of stale bread has found its way among the clutter of bubbling crucibles and reacting chemicals which transmute themselves in every direction.

For the moment, WART's activities are centered on GAVIN.

WART

You weren't listening, were you?

GAVIN

(Innocently)

Yes Sir, you were saying about Aristotle.

WART

(with a sigh)

You were meant to be writing it down...
Now once again.... 'Democracy arose from
men's thinking that if they are equal in any
respect, then they are equal absolutely. "

GAVIN is twiddling his thumbs. His pen lies across an exercise book where we can see his efforts at writing.

GAVIN

I've got that

WART

(annoyed)

I was repeating it for your benefit.

26. (Cont'd)

26.

WART (cont'd)

(pause)

Now this represents the key to Aristotle's philosophy, and if Gavin!

GAVIN has day-dreamed his mind towards the window again.

WART

Would you please listen...I'm doing this for your benefit. Lord knows I could be doing a hundred other things.

GAVIN

(Flatly)

Then why don't you?

WART

(for the 100th time)

'The educated are to the uneducated as the

GAVIN

(Parrot-fashion)

. . . . living are to the dead'. It was alright for him, he only wrote it . . . he didn't have to learn it!

WART

(Angrily)

The only child in Hamelin who can read and write, and you talk like that! Great God ! Don't you know there are grown men out there who'd give their right arm just to have a scrap of the learning you've had!

GAVIN looks at him coldly.

GAVIN

(Bitterly)

Just give me a new leg, and you can keep all the rest. What's the difference to me if the Earth is round or flat, when I can't even walk from here to the Market . . . without this.

WART picks up GAVIN's crutch, and holds it thoughtfully.

26. (Cont'd)

26.

WART

(Quietly)

Gavin To be crippled in the
mind, that's worse.

GAVIN looks at him with a cynical smile.

GAVIN

(Sarcastically)

Yes?

WART pauses, then lifts himself slowly from beside GAVIN.
The boy watches him as he gathers up his medical books and bag.

GAVIN

Can I come with you ?

WART

(Without turning)

You know you can't.

(Pause)

I'm sorry.

As the Old Man starts to climb the stairs, we resume on GAVIN
staring out of the window. The voice of a PRIEST is lapped over.

PRIEST (Off)

'For ever the Silver Cord be loosed, or the
Golden Bowl be broken, then shall the dust
return to the Earth as it was, and the Spirit
shall return unto God who gave it

CUT TO :

27. INT. BURGERMEISTER' STAIRCASE & LANDING - DAY

27.

HIGH ANGLE - SHOOTING DOWN through the Circular staircase
bannisters. WART climbs up towards us, and we hear the PRIEST
continuing (Off)

PRIEST (Off)

. . . This day our sister Lisa goeth the Way
of all the World, even unto the Grave, that she may
rest from her labours and pain. And God shall
wipe away all tears from her eyes, and there. . . .

27. (Cont'd)

27.

BURGERMEISTER (Off)

(Interrupting)

For Christ's sake give her a chance
she's not dead yet !

WART walks across to a small door on the landing. It bears the words "LORD, HAVE MERCY UPON US", with the familiar blood-red cross painted underneath. WART opens the door and enters.

28. INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - DAY

28.

WART enters the room, and all eyes turn to him. A dozen or more SPECTATORS are grouped round a large four-poster bed. They include the sizeable BURGERMEISTER POPPENDICK, (Mayor of Hamelin), FRAU MAUD POPPENDICK, a fleet of uninspired MUSICIANS, TWO BEAK DOCTORS, and a middle-aged PRIEST.

This latter Churchman is holding a long pole containing the Last Sacrement while reading from a heavy Latin Bible. At the other end of the pole is a young girl, LISA, lying on the bed in the throes of a fever.

The BURGERMEISTER hurries over to WART.

BURGERMEISTER

(Impatiently)

Thank God for that! Quickly, open your bag and do something, before this Priest carries us all to the grave!

PRIEST

(Interrupting)

The Death-bed is no place for a physician!
It is not for us to interfere with the
Divine Will. If He had wished her to be
spared, then He would have done so, without
the help of this. this quack!

WART

(To the Burgermeister)

My Lord, I would remind you that your
daughter is not dying. She merely has a
fever that must be allowed to run its '
course.

(Pause)

Why have the musicians stopped playing?

PRIEST

(forcefully)

By my orders, which are the orders from His Holiness Pope Clement. These heathen practices have been renounced by Mother Church on pain of excommunication. Dare you defy the faith?

WART

(Smiling)

I confess that I am not of your faith.

PRIEST

(To the Burgermeister)

What? Who is this man?

BURGERMEISTER

(Realising he's lost)

I fear you've not had the pleasure.... this is Wart Melius.

While this dialogue is going on, the CAMERA has strayed onto LISA. Very faintly in the background we can hear the PIPER's mandolin playing, and as it becomes clearer, LISA becomes entranced, as if the pain has left her body by magic. The adults fail to notice this strange effect, they are far too busy arguing in the background.

PRIEST (Off)

Melius? A Jew?

WART (Off)

A Jew.

BURGERMEISTER (Off)

Now wait a minute, I can explain....

PRIEST (Off)

(Interrupting)

What! Do you realise this child's soul is in danger of eternal damnation! Pope Innocent III decreed that to take medicine from a Jew is to enter into contract with Lucifer! By all the Saints

WART (Off)

My Lord....Shhh....

28. (Cont'd)

28.

PRIEST

(Angrily)

Don't you Shhh me ! What in the name of ...

But now the BURGERMEISTER has also heard the strange music. He waves the PRIEST quiet, then listens and watches in silence. Even the PRIEST is taken aback as he sees LISA rise from her bed like Ophelia in a trance. She drifts towards the open window, then stops. The spectators look at each other in amazement, scarcely able to believe their eyes. Except WART. He has seen it before, though rarely like this.

Suddenly the music stops, and within moments LISA has relapsed into her former spasms of pain. FRAU POPPENDICK helps her back to the bed where she resumes her fever. The BURGERMEISTER hurries to the window.

BURGERMEISTER

(Shouting)

Hey! Down there ! The Guard on the Gates! Get that musician up here!

29. EXT. BURGTOR TOWER / INT. WART'S CELLAR - DAY

29.

GAVIN has also heard the music, and he peers through the bars of the cellar as the GATE GUARD strides across the grass to the waggon.

GUARD

(Briskly)

Which of you lot was playing just then?

The PIPER appears from behind the waggon, the mandolin in his hand. He doesn't reply to the GUARD, he merely faces him.

GUARD

Was it you ? Alright, follow me.

The GUARD turns about and starts walking. He looks round, and sees that the PIPER hasn't moved.

GUARD

(Aggressively)

You heard me.....move!

29. (Cont'd)

29.

PIPER

(Quietly)

If I move.... we all move.

The GUARD looks at him, a little confused. Then he calls up again.

30. INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - DAY

30.

The BURGERMEISTER is standing with his back to the window, rubbing his chin with impatience. He has a habit of twitching his left eye when his mental powers are unduly stressed; both eyes in severe cases. The present situation is a 'one eyed' case.

BURGERMEISTER

(To Wart)

How long will the fever take?

WART

(A smile)

Don't worry.... you'll have your wedding.

GUARD (Off)

Burgermeister!

The BURGERMEISTER looks round, then out of the window.

BURGERMEISTER

(Calling)

Yes?

GUARD (Off)

He says he won't come unless the others come.

BURGERMEISTER

(Muttering)

What's he talking about?

(Calling down)

What others?

31. EXT. GRASS FLATS - DAY

31.

The GUARD stands in f.g. calling up to the BURGERMEISTER in ELS, leaning out of the tower window.

31. (Cont'd)

31.

GUARD

(Calling)

Travelling players sir, come for the wedding.

The PIPER stands to one side, casually flicking at the strings of his Mandolin. MATTIO waits impatiently in the background.

32. INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - DAY

32.

The BURGERMEISTER looks back into the room, then calls down again.

BURGERMEISTER

Oh, very wellbut tell them to hurry !

LISA moans away on the bed FRAU POPPENDICK mops her brow ineffectively. The PRIEST moves forward.

PRIEST

(Hotly)

I cannot allow it! What is this man? He may be a plague-spreadera Jew! They've been bribed by the Devil to poison all the wells in Chrisendom!

CUT TO :

33. INT. WART'S CELLAR - DAY

33.

GAVIN watches through the barred window as the WAGGON wheels round and moves towards the Burgtor Gate.

He jumps down from the table, and hobbles as best he can to the stone stairs leading up to the street.

34. INT. SPITALTOR COURTYARD - DAY

34.

The massive Oak Gates are swung open by two GUARDS, and the WAGGON rumbles into the town. An EXCISE MAN hurries from the small lodge by the gates and stops MATTIO.

He produces a tattered piece of parchment, and holds it up.

EXCISE MAN

Just a momenthave you seen this list before ?

34. (Cont'd)

34.

MATTIO

(Puzzled)

No....

EXCISE MAN

(Very fast, monotone)

Section 83, Paragraph 17, Clause 2A, subsection 4 of the Hamelin Merchant's Town Charter, as amended July 7th, 1349, states that the following articles are prohibited: Snakes, locusts, ravens, toads, crows, gnats, bats, rats, false-beards, dirty linen.... and corpses. Well?

MATTIO shakes his head.

SENTRY

Come on, come on, you're keeping the Burgermeister waiting.....

EXCISE MAN

(Dryly)

Is that all. - Alright....

The EXCISE MAN waves them on with a sarcastic shrug, then returns to his lodge house.

The SENTRY shows the PIPER to the BURGERMEISTER's side door. As they disappear inside, GAVIN slips out from the shadows where he has been watching. He sees the WAGGON move off towards the main market, then slips quietly into the BURGERMEISTER's House. A BEAT.

35. INT. LANDING OUTSIDE LISA'S BEDROOM - DAY

35.

GAVIN climbs the stairs with difficulty, pausing every now and then to rest his foot. As he nears LISA's room, we hear the PIPER'S MUSIC (Off) coming from behind the door. He creeps up to it, and peers through the large key-hole.

36. INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - DAY

36.

The PIPER stands with one foot on the bed playing his mandolin, while LISA drifts round the room, humming a descant to the tune. The BURGERMEISTER and the ADULTS are impressed by the effect, but they remain detached. The MUSICIANS frown at each other, annoyed and humiliated by this stranger's success.

36. (Cont'd)

36.

Finally LISA's eyes start to close, and (SLOW MOTION) she sinks back onto the bed in quiet sleep. Silence.

The BURGERMEISTER acknowledges his thanks with a vague nod of the head.

BURGERMEISTER

(Cautiously)

How much do we owe you for this service?

PIPER

(Shaking his head with a smile)

You kept your promise.

BURGERMEISTER

(Relieved)

Can you come back when she wakes up ?

PIPER

(Leaving)

I'll be back.

He starts to walk towards the door.

37. INT. LANDING OUTSIDE LISA'S ROOM - DAY

37.

GAVIN has been glued to the key-hole, and only now does he break away. He limps quickly to the stairs, and just manages to slip out of sight as the door is opened.

The PIPER appears in the doorway, the BURGERMEISTER behind him.

BURGERMEISTER

Perhaps you'd play for us at my daughter's wedding....she's to be married you know,

(proudly)

to the Baron Heidermindt's Son.

The PRIEST raises his eyebrows.

PIPER

(Smiling)

My friends would like that, thank you.

37. (Cont'd)

37.

BURGERMEISTER

Friends? Oh, them.

(Nodding)

Well, tell them to keep it short - and nothing too dramatic, it's bad for the indigestion.

The **PIPER** has already gone. The **BURGERMEISTER** looks for him briefly then turns back into the room.

38. INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - DAY

38.

PRIEST

(Quickly)

He's a Jew - I know it, I can tell by the colour of his finger-nails. He's probably poisoning the wells even as we speak!

BURGERMEISTER

(Scoffing)

Finger-nails! You don't tell a Jew by his finger-nails, any fool knows that.

The **BURGERMEISTER** takes his ear between his fingers, and puts his large face next to the **PRIEST**.

BURGERMEISTER

(Confidentially)

Ear-lobes, that's the sign.

FIRST MUSICIAN

Sir, I must remind you that this... this man is not a member of the musician's Guild, and has no right to play.

We stay on **LISA** asleep while the barrage of politics continues **OFF**. She looks so young that the idea of her being married seems both sad and ludicrous. Yet in spite of her age, she is strangely beautiful and has an ethereal remoteness about her atmosphere.

The drone of **VOICES** dissolves into the **PIPER'S THEME**, single notes picked out on the mandolin. Then it too fades away. **HOLD A BEAT**.

39. INT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT

39.

WART is working in f. g. on an Alchemical experiment. GAVIN sits behind him, and passes various chemicals as WART calls for them, he patiently stirs the distillation liquid as it bubbles away in a pelican flask over the furnace.

WART

Cinnibar.

GAVIN passes the jar marked Cinnibar without looking up.

WART

You miss her ?

GAVIN

(Hiding any feeling)

She was a friend.

WART

(Holding out his hand)

Arsenic.

(Gavin passes it)

You'll still be able to see her...

(Breaking off)

Quicksilver....hurry!

GAVIN passes the Quicksilver, and WART adds it to the flask. It bubbles for a few seconds, then the glass cracks open, spilling the liquid on the table.

WART shakes his head sadly as he clears up the mess.

GAVIN

Why don't you pack it in...you're never going to make this Philosophers' Stone thing.

WART ignores the comment.

WART

You were watching her, weren't you?

GAVIN

(Looking down)

Yes.....

(Pause)

Could he cure me as well?

WART

Who?

GAVIN

The Man.

WART

(Shaking his head)

He didn't cure Lisa, he just managed to do what the others failed to do. He simply took her mind from the pain.

GAVIN

You once told me you could cure my leg with this rubbish....but you failed. Perhaps he could?

WART turns round and looks at GAVIN hard.

WART

(Slowly)

Gavin...you'll never be cured, not by me, not by a piper, not by God Himself. You're not the only cripple in the World, but you're the only one I know who spends every waking hour feeling sorry for himself.

GAVIN

Then you haven't met many cripples.

WART

(Smiles)

I knew a cripple once, he said he was a Christian. He went on a pilgrimage to the Shrine of St. Francis. It took him three years, and he returned to Hamelin a cripple and he died a cripple, because he only believed for what he could get out of it, and that's not belief. Belief is a kind of Love, and you don't yet know what that means.

GAVIN

(Unconvinced)

I know how far it's got you, and that's enough for me.

(Pause)

I'll take the milk churn out.....

39. (Cont'd)

39.

GAVIN hobbles over to the stone stairs, takes the empty churn, then slowly climbs up. WART remains.

40. EXT. BURGERHEIM MARKET - NIGHT

40.

The PLAYERS have parked their BLACK WAGGON in a small square off the Main Street. They have already converted the canvas roof into a back-drop for the forthcoming play, and the waggon floor has become the stage.

OTTO sits in his barrel, reading one of his heavy volumes, while DZOUY YEN puffs at his portable furnace with bellows. The PIPER sits with KARL to one side, and their music provides a background to the scene. MATTIO, HELGA, LONGSHANKS and the PILGRIM are going through the lines of the play. The PILGRIM is dressed as Death in a white sheet.

PILGRIM

(Very dramatically)

Oh, ye wondrous fools, ye worldly apes!
Come hither, pray, and gaze upon that
buxom wench who charmed you with her
crinkly curls, her blooming peaks

MATTIO

(Interrupting)

Cheeks !!

PILGRIM

(Apologising)

Cheeks, yes....her blooming cheeks -
Ah, see those withered breasts, like
last year's prunes.....

CUT TO :

41. INT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT

41.

WART is fast asleep on the floor, amid a heap of hen's feathers and old straw. He snores quietly, occasionally twitching his nose. The CAMERA TRACKS slowly in LOW ANGLE away from him passing the rows of Alchemical apparatus in f.g. until we reach GAVIN.

He lies awake by the barred window, staring up at the ceiling, Outside, we hear the water in the moat lapping against the walls. WART grunts (Off) - GAVIN looks over at him, then very quietly lowers himself off the table which serves as his bed.

In LS he creeps across the floor, while WART remains in f.g., snoring peacefully.

41. (Cont'd) 41.

DOWNSHOT - From the top of the stairs, we see GAVIN climbing up towards us. He passes CAMERA ... we hear the door open and shut behind us. HOLD A BEAT on WART in LS.

42. EXT. KOBOLZELLERSTEIG/SCHMEIDGASSE - NIGHT 42.

GAVIN climbs the steep Kobolzellersteig takes a short cut up some steps, then turns into Schmeidgasse Street. He pauses a moment, listening into the wind. We hear the faint voice of the PILGRIM (Off)

PILGRIM'S VOICE (Off)

Mayhap ye'll think upon these times,
perchance repent before the end is
nigh. And now upon my pale and
trusty horse....

GAVIN wanders off in the direction of the PILGRIM'S VOICE.

CUT TO : _

43. EXT. BURGERHEIM MARKET - NIGHT 43.

The PILGRIM continues his dialogue and tries to climb on the horse standing by him.

PILGRIM

....I'll take my leave of you, though
soon we meet again!

The horse is far too big for the stage, and the PILGRIM is unable to mount.

PILGRIM

(To Mattio)

It's no good, we'll have to use
something else.....

At the far end of the Market, GAVIN peers round the corner of a building.

He sees the PLAYERS, and starts walking towards them, keeping to the line of the wall. The PILGRIM'S VOICE carries over.

43. (Cont'd)

43.

PILGRIM(Off)

All wickedness is little to the wickedness
of Woman, for her mind seeths with lust and
deceit, and she is desperately wicked!

GAVIN ignores the PLAYERS, and approaches the PIPER and KARL, sitting a short distance from the waggon. The PIPER sees GAVIN, smiles, and continues playing. GAVIN looks awkward like an uninvited guest. He sits down nearby and watches him.

Suddenly we CUT into ECU: The PILGRIM as he spouts his passionate message -

PILGRIM

(Highly dramatic)

Ohhhh! Ye fools! Ye wretched Baboons!
Ye perverted porcupines!

VOICE

(Calling out, Off)

Another one! Over here....;

A YOUNG MAN, FRANZ, is leading a group of youths, the HAMELIN RABBLE, through the deserted square. They are dragging a wretched WOMAN dressed, like the Pilgrim, in white. FRANZ strides over to where the PILGRIM is prancing about on the stage. He continues his speech as the mask on his face prevents him seeing this new arrival.

PILGRIM

(Pointing at Franz)

Ye fountain of blubber, ye lust-sucking
ape!

FRANZ

(To his Rabble)

Alright, grab him....

A dozen YOUTHS rush up to the stage and grab the PILGRIM.

FRANZ

(With authority)

To impersonate Death is forbidden.

43. (Cont'd)

43.

PILGRIM

(Taking off his mask)

Death? No, no, no - I'm Arthur
Cecil Forbes-Ponsonby Jones, Pilgrim
to his Grace the Earl of Richmond

(Removing his mask)

See? I'm not Death!

FRANZ

Oh no - take him!

MATTIO hurries forward to explain.

MATTIO

We're travelling players, sir, we've
been invited to play after the wedding of
the Baron's son. . . .

PILGRIM

(Angrily)

So unhand me at once, or I shall report
you to him myself.

FRANZ

Really? Well, start reporting.
I am the Baron's son.

PILGRIM

(Very quickly)

(dropping to his knees)

Oh Sir, I must apologise profusely! Oh,
yes, Sir, forgive me . . . I'll give you a relic
to make amends . . . St. Vitus' snake,
St. Alucin's finger . . . a little withered,
I'm afraid. The choice is yours.

FRANZ

(Sarcastically)

I'll have your finger if you don't
stop babbling.

His following of mediaeval skin-heads laugh gratuitously with their
leader. FRANZ looks round at the rest of the players. He
sees MAD OTTO.

43. (Cont'd)

43.

FRANZ

(Kicking the tub)

What's this, a pickled herring?

More laughter.

OTTO

(Pronouncing)

As the crackling of thorns under a pot,
so is the laughter of fools!

FRANZ is about to throttle him, but MATTIO puts his arm in the way.

MATTIO

(Quickly)

Sir, forgive him - he meant no harm, he's
a little strange in the head. . .

OTTO

(Blankly)

I am seeking a man!

FRANZ is distracted by the music from the PIPER and KARL, which has continues uninterrupted. He turns away from OTTO and strides over.

FRANZ

(Angrily)

Stop that goddamn noise when I'm thinking!

The PIPER continues for a note too long, and FRANZ kicks the mandolin out of his hands. GAVIN recognises him as the Baron's Son, and backs away. The PIPER stands to his feet and stares hard at FRANZ.

FRANZ

(confused)

Damn you, don't stare at me like that!

The PIPER remains with his eyes fixed on FRANZ. The latter raises his hand as if to strike him, but seems unable to do so. Once again MATTIO comes to the rescue.

43. (Cont'd)

43.

MATTIO

(Tactfully)

Sir, this is the man who...cured your wife-to-be....the Burgermeister's daughter.

FRANZ

He could have saved himself the effort!

FRANZ looks round to see what other trouble he can cause. He sees DZOUY YEN by the furnace.

FRANZ

(To Dzouy Yen)

What are you playing at?

(To Mattio)

And let him speak for himself-

DZOUY YEN

(Cautiously)

I'm an alchemist, Sir.

FRANZ

(Surprised)

Alchemist? We've already got one fool in the town. Can you make gold?

A Pause. The rest of FRANZ'S RABBLE crowd round eagerly. GAVIN listens from the shadows.

DZOUY YEN

(Glancing at Mattio)

I can, Sir.

FRANZ

(Interested)

Can you now.

Suddenly one of the RABBLE calls out excitedly. The WOMAN dressed in white has escaped, and is now running frantically across the square. FRANZ quickly snatches a long-bow from the YOUTH behind him. With a rare smile of pleasure he aims at the wretched woman, then fires. The old hag collapses to the ground with a cry of pain. Silence. FRANZ hands back the bow and smiles at the stunned PILGRIM.

43. (Cont'd)

43.

FRANZ

I wasn't in the army for nothing.

He stalks off into the night, followed by his RABBLE of YOUTHS.
The PLAYERS remain silent for a moment.

PILGRIM

(Shaking his head)

We never get this sort of trouble in
England....I really think we should
press on, you know.

MATTIO

(Firmly)

We're staying. At least we're free from
the Plague, and there's money to be made.

The PILGRIM sighs in agreement. He pauses a moment, then
sees the distant body of the old WOMAN.

PILGRIM

I say, don't you think we ought to bury
her or something - you know ...
(He sniffs the air)

LONGSHANKS

(Quickly)

Don't you touch her! All we need now is
trouble with the Undertaker's Guild and
we'll be out on our ears.

The PILGRIM raises his eyebrows, faintly surprised. Nevertheless
the thought of any sniff in the air by morning prompts him to shift
his sleeping mattress to the other side of the waggon.

As he passes the HORSE, he nods good-night to the PIPER as
he mends the strings of his mandolin. GAVIN hesitates in the
background, then comes forward.

GAVIN

(Shyly)

Can I help?

The PIPER looks up.

43. (cont'd)

43.

PIPER

(Cautiously)

Thank you. A little water from the moat?

(He holds out a mug)

GAVIN

(Surprised)

Water? What for?

The PIPER looks down and continues his work.

PIPER

You asked if you could help.

GAVIN

(Awkwardly)

Well, yes - but ...I mean, it's a long way.

PIPER

(Nodding)

Don't bother then. Thank you.

GAVIN looks at him, puzzled. Then he shrugs and starts walking back into the night. (NOTE: It is understood that whenever GAVIN "walks", he infact hobbles with his crutch)

The PIPER looks up briefly, then goes on working. KARL has already taken the mug, and we see him disappear behind the waggon.

44. INT. UNDERTAKER'S BARN - DAY

44.

A COFFIN-MAKER hammers away in f.g. pausing now and then to mop his brow. A couple of JOURNEYMEN work away in the background with incredible speed. The converted barn is stacked high with coffins, all roughly made from cheap wood. A FASHIONABLE LADY is talking to the FOREMAN as GAVIN appears, silhouetted against the arched door-way.

LADY

(Shaking her head)

They just don't make them like they used to. Haven't you anything better?

FOREMAN

I'm sorry Ma'am - it's the plague you see, we just don't 'ave the time, every-one puttin' in orders - were up to here in work.

LADY

(Insistently)

But couldn't you put a bit of frill round the edge ... George is so particular about detail. I know it's only a cough, but he's convinced he's got the plague - he's already had the last rites six times, and he simply insists on seeing his coffin.

The LADY opens her purse and fumbles with a few guilders. The FOREMAN Looks about him to see that no-one is looking. then proffers his paw.

FOREMAN

(Forcing himself)

Well...seein' it's you Lady-.

As he takes the money. GAVIN appears behind him. The FOREMAN pockets the guilders quickly.

FOREMAN

(Aggressively)

What d'you want?

GAVIN

Got any work?

FOREMAN

(Laughing)

Sure you haven't come to buy one? You look like you'll be needin' one soon enough!

GAVIN swallows his pride, and smiles weakly.

GAVIN

I can work, Sir, I got good hands.

44. (cont'd)

44.

He shows his palms, but the FOREMAN ignores them and starts lacing the coffin in front of him.

FOREMAN

Sorry boy - this is a man's work, not for the likes of cripples.

GAVIN

(Pleadingly)

I'd be an apprentice sir, I'd work for nothing if you'd take me.

FOREMAN

(Shaking his head)

By the time you'd learnt the trade you'd be a goner - tell you what, I'll fix you up with one ...there's one over there, just about your size.

The FOREMAN chuckles at his little joke, and continues working. GAVIN looks at him with a 'Ha ha, very funny' expression, and walks to the door. As he leaves, he passes a LARGE MAN standing in an upright coffin. A JOURNEYMAN stands by him with a tape-measure.

JOURNEYMAN

(Politely)

Comfortable?

LARGE MAN

(Seriously)

Bit tight round the waist.

As the JOURNEYMAN notes the detail on the coffin, GAVIN leaves.

CUT TO :

45. EXT. BURGERHEIM MARKET - DAY

45.

GAVIN wanders through the Market Place. The atmosphere seems to have sprung from a Bruegel painting; an extraordinary array of characters and activities come to life - one is struck by the number of CRIPPLES of every age: ONE-LEGGED, ONE-ARMED, HUNCHBACKS, DWARFS, SQUINTERS, CROSS-EYEDS, even a pair of SIAMESE TWINS (joined side-by-side) Many of these CRIPPLES convey themselves on wierd sledge-like contraptions, pushing themselves along with their arm-stubs. One unfortunate WOMAN has neither arms nor legs, and pushes herself by rubbing her nose along the ground, thus moving the little trolley to which she is attached.

45. (Cont'd)

45.

Virtually all the CROWD have some form of skin disease - their faces either marked by former attacks of small-pox, or else blotched with birthmarks. One MAN has a scarlet face with a grotesque growth protruding out of his ear, while another is suffering from acute ELEPHANTITIS.

Every one of them is doing something, and most of them represent some form of trade - THATCHERS, SCAVENGERS, ASTROLOGERS, PARDONERS, SHOEMAKERS, MINISTRELS, PROPHEETS, TINKERS MILLINERS, GLOVE-MAKERS, GLAZIERS, ROPE-MAKERS (for hanging), AMULET SELLERS, PROSTITUTES, PARCHMENT-MAKERS, INK-MAKERS, CANDLESTICK MAKERS, PAWNBROKERS, CHARCOAL SELLERS, NEEDLERS, even the local TORTURER/ EXECUTIONER can be seen talking shop with the CHIEF HANGMAN over a pint of ale.

And everywhere there are animals and poultry adding to the controlled chaos: PIGS, TURKEYS, COWS, RABBITS, DOVES, GEESE, CATS, DOGS, SHEEPbut mostly PIGS. Other activities carry on for no apparent reason: Tug-of-war matches, CHILDREN tied in balls, OLD MEN wearing up-side-down funnels on their heads, BOYS in hoops, GIRLS in barrels, games of Blind-Man's bluff, leap-frog, rolling-the-tub, stilt-walking, running the gauntlet, hoola-hoop. Strange PROPS fill windows and doorways: Cart-wheels stuck on the end of poles, over-sized shears, scales hanging upside-down, bag-pipes suspended on sticks.

None of these details are explained, they simply form part of the overall background atmosphere.

GAVIN wanders between the stalls, waving at an occasional friend. He sees another BOY sitting in the stocks, and aims a tomato at him from one of the stalls, then splits himself with laughter.

BOY IN STOCKS

(Calling)

Very comical! Wait till its' your turn.

Suddenly GAVIN sees LISA at the far end of the Market by the WAGGON. She hears GAVIN calling to her, and runs to meet him.

GAVIN

(Calling)

Lisa! I thought you'd been locked up for good!

LISA

(Laughing)

No silly...it's not till Thursday,
and anyway, it's only a wedding! Come
on, I want you to meet a friend of mine.....

GAVIN and LISA approach the other CHILDREN who are standing
by the PIPER. KARL sits close by them, unable to join in
with their games.

LISA

(Half-whispering)

He's called the Pied Piper....but
the funny thing is - he doesn't have
a pipe! That's him, he's the one who
cured me....

GAVIN

(Interrupting)

Cured you? But I thought.....

LISA

(Laughing)

Oh, they say he didn't....they say God
cured me. But what does it matter? -
I don't remember seeing God in the room!

(Pause)

Come on.....

GAVIN sees the PIPER, and draws back -

GAVIN

(Whispering)

It's alright, I've already met him.

LISA

(Surprised)

Oh? When?

GAVIN

(Turning away)

The other night

PIPER (Off)

Hello Gavin.

GAVIN turns round, rather flushed. The PIPER looks across at

45. (Cont'd)

45.

him, smiles.

GAVIN

How d'you know my name?

LISA senses an atmosphere, and takes his hand.

LISA

Come on, we were just going to show him the Boney Man's dance ... He's been telling us stories all morning, I thought it was time we showed him something.

GAVIN is glad to move away, and quickly joins the circle of other CHILDREN. LISA takes up her position in the centre of the ring, while GAVIN and other SEVEN CHILDREN dance round her. The lines are sung in turn, and although on paper they may seem somewhat macabre, the nursesey-rhyme spirit gives it a happier theme with a fast pace.

(TWO CHILDREN outside the ring provide the thin musical line)

LISA

(Pointing to Gavin)

Alright, you start.....

GAVIN : Wh....en your eyes are fogged,

1ST GIRL : And your ear-holes clogged,

2ND BOY : And your nose turns cold,

2ND GIRL : And your tongue's back-rolled,

3RD BOY : And your lips grow dim,

3RD GIRL : And your cheeks cave in,

4TH BOY : And your eyes go pop,

4TH GIRL : And your heart-beats stop,

ALL : Oh, then the Boney Man rides in,
On his pale grey horse like a skelitin!

Two link bars as GAVIN breaks from the circle and joins LISA in the centre.

GAVIN : Are you afraid of the Boney Man?
He'll drop you in his frying-pan,

45. (Cont'd)

45.

GAVIN : He'll fly you off to the Land of Ghosts,
And gobble you up with beans on toast!

ALL : So watch when the Boney Man rides in,
On his pale grey horse like a skelitin,
He'll fly you off to the Land of Ghosts,
And gobble you up with beans on toast!

LISA

(talking)

Ah, but you don't know the Boney Man like
I know the Boney Man

LISA : He'll fly you off to the Land of Dreams,
A land of sugar with Peaches and Cream,
A land where Blind and Lame are Kings;
Life gives Pain, but Death gives Wings!

If the Boney Man rides in today ,
Don't hide your face and run away;
Your pain he'll ease, your limbs he'll mend,
The Boney Man's your hidden friend!

(With Orchestra)

So, when our eyes are fogged,

2ND BOY: And our ear-holes clogged,

1ST GIRL: And our nose turns cold,

3RD BOY: And our tongue's back-rolled,

2ND GIRL: And our lips grow dim,

4TH BOY: And our cheeks cave in,

3RD GIRL: And our eyes go pop,

GAVIN : And our heart-beats stop -

ALL : We'll fly with him to the Land of Dreams,
The Boney-Man-Land of peaches and cream!

LISA : Eeny, meeny, miny, mo -

ALL : Boney Man, who's next to go!

(During LISA's solo, GAVIN reacts to the words with surprise, but by the time the alternating chorus comes, he has forgotten it. On the final "Eeny, meeny, miny, mo", LISA points to each in the circle on one of the 7 syllables. On the final chorus line "Boney Man, who's next to go", the CHILDREN in the circle

45. (Cont'd)

45.

point to each other in a chain-reaction, then fling their hands up with fingers pointing to the sky on the orchestral thump at the end).

The PIPER laughs, shaking his head.

LISA

What's wrong? Didn't you like it ?

The PIPER takes to his mandolin, and sings them a parable song in reply.

His song should be in sharp contrast to the "Boney Man Song" in three ways: a) The musical theme and rythm should be more in the style of a folk-song; b) The words should be more ethereal, and c) The "message" theme should concern some "Promised Land", neither Heaven nor Hell, and should oppose the "Boney Man" idea of Heaven on two points - 1) There are no Kings and 2) Peaches and cream aren't everything. This is, of course, not suggesting that these words should be included - it should merely give the children a different approach. Finally, it should not specifically refer to the "Inside of the Mountain" at the end of the story.

Whatever the song, and whatever the words, it should be immediately memorable to the audience. The same music should be used for the Children's Exodus at the end, possibly the same words.)

While the PIPER sings, more CHILDREN flock round to listen. LISA and KARL are entranced by his presence, but GAVIN soon tires. We follow him as he moves away to where MATTIO and the PILGRIM are painting the new back-cloth (Based on Hieronymus Bosch's "Garden of Earthly Delights", 3rd Panel). The PIPER's song continues in the background, but the words are merely repeats of earlier verses. GAVIN watches them a moment, then catches MATTIO's eye.

GAVIN

Got any work?

MATTIO

(Concentrating on his work)

What? No, no.....sorry.

45. (Cont'd)

45.

GAVIN shrugs without asking again. He sees DZOUY YEN working away behind the WAGGON, and wanders over to him.

GAVIN

(Half-interested)

What you doing?

DZOUY YEN

(Without looking up)

Go away child, I'm busy.

DZOUY YEN is desperately trying to achieve some means of success before the wedding. GAVIN watches him, recognising the alchemical apparatus.

GAVIN

(Vaguely)

Found the Philosopher's Stone, have you?

DZOUY YEN waves him away.

GAVIN

(Throwing bait)

Made any Gold lately?

DZOUY YEN

(Impatiently)

Run along boy, can't you see I'm busy.

GAVIN eyes him keenly, a sparkle in his mind.

GAVIN

Just wondered.

(Pause)

Very boring stuff really...
of course we're swimming in it!

DZOUY YEN pauses. He takes a dubious look at GAVIN. For a boy swimming in gold, he looks remarkably tatty.

DZOUY YEN

You? You've found the stone?

GAVIN

(Faked boredom)

Mmmmm.....

45. (Cont'd)

45.

DZOUY YEN

(Half-hooked)

Where boy?

GAVIN

Ohhh....someplace.. Not me, of course,
not actually me.....

DZOUY YEN

(Three quarters hooked)

Well who then?

GAVIN

(Vaguely)

An Alchemist I work for. Wart Melius.

DZOUY YEN

(Hooked)

Melius! I was told he'd never had a
success.

GAVIN

(Reproachfully)

Ah, but you don't work for him, do you.
You shouldn't believe everything you hear.

DZOUY YEN has become riveted. He changes his attitude
briskly.

DZOUY YEN

I must apologise for my manners just then,
I was...well. So you work for old Wart
Melius?

GAVIN

(Taking his time)

You see it just so happens that I want to
change jobs. Gets very stuffy down in that
cellar....all that Gold everywhere. I just
thought maybe a bit of fresh air, out in the
country - you know, travelling around....

DZOUY YEN

(Quickly)

You want a job with us, is that it?

45. (Cont'd)

45.

GAVIN

(Smiling)

Now you've got the picture.

DZOUY YEN blows with his bottom lip so that it lifts his hair. He thinks a moment, nodding to himself.

DZOUY YEN

(Cautiously)

I think...let me see, yes - I think that can be arranged.

Suddenly a cry from the otherside of the WAGGON diverts their attention. DZOUY YEN looks up, then hurries a few yards to see what has happened. He returns a second later, waving GAVIN away.

DZOUY YEN

(Anxiously)

Later, later

GAVIN looks puzzled and walks across to see for himself.

46. EXT. PFRUNDNERHAUS (BURGERHEIM)- DAY

46.

FRANZ has driven his father's carriage with accustomed clumsiness, and has knocked over one of the stalls selling Pommergranites. The STALLKEEPER frantically tries to recover as much of his fruit as possible before it is snaffled by the CHILDREN. FRANZ ignores the matter, and strides into the Burgermeister's House (Pfrunnerhaus).

FRANZ

(Calling)

Poppendick! Burgermeister!

The STALLKEEPER mutters silent oaths in f.g.

47. INT. PFRUNDNERHAUS: PASSAGE - DAY

47.

FRANZ stalks down the passage-way, banging on doors with impatience.

FRANZ

(Shouting)

Poppendick, where are you?

47. (Cont'd) 47.
He opens another door and looks inside.

48. INT. PFRUNDNERHAUS: LIVING ROOM - DAY 48.

FRANZ glances inside the room and sees FRAU POPPENDICK sitting in a chair by the fire, working on a tapestry of mediocre talent. She is wearing an iron scold's bridle - a simple, but effective, device for silencing nagging wives.

FRANZ

Where's your husband, woman?

FRAU POPPENDICK mumbles beneath her metallic gag, and points towards the floor.

49. INT. WINE CELLAR - DAY 49.

SHOOTING through rows of musty wine bottles, we see the BURGERMEISTER by a large vat, musing over the qualities of a 1336 Vintage Hock.

The sound of heavy footsteps clattering down the cellar steps can be heard(Off).

FRANZ (Off)

Burgermeister.. where the hell are you?

In CLOSER SHOT the BURGERMEISTER reacts by hurriedly gulping down the last of his wine, and replacing the cork in the vat. A loud burp echoes through the room as the door opens and FRANZ storms in.

FRANZ

(Angrily)

What the devil are you doing down here?
You're meant to be down at the Town Hall...

BURGERMEISTER

(Apologetically)

Oh, just sampling ... checking the wedding wines, you know... like to make sure my guests have the best year -

FRANZ

Well there's no time for that now - my father wants you up at the Castle.

49. (Cont'd)

49.

BURGERMEISTER

Yes, well I won't be a moment, just ...

FRANZ

(Interrupting)

Now!

BURGERMEISTER

(Weakly)

Yes....

He smacks his lips, gives a last glance at his well-stocked cellar, then follows FRANZ out of the door.

50. EXT. PFRUNDNERHAUS (BURGERHEIM) - DAY

50.

FRANZ leaps into the carriage, scarcely waiting for the sizeable BERGERMEISTER who lumbers along behind. He clammers up with some difficulty. Suddenly FRANZ sees LISA (Off).

FRANZ

(Angrily)

Is that your daughter?

BURGERMEISTER

(Confused)

Daughter? Where?

FRANZ

Over there, with that Piper!

The BURGERMEISTER strains his eyes, then sees her. He smiles merrily, thinking nothing of it.

BURGERMEISTER

Yes, I believe you're right....yes,
now that you mention it - well well!

FRANZ

What d'you mean, well well? I told you to keep her under lock and key until the wedding! I don't want her mixing with that crowd - especially him.

50. (Cont'd)

50.

FRANZ pulls on the reins, and sends the horse bolting between the stalls to the WAGGON. The PIPER continues playing, but LISA looks up, frightened.

FRANZ

(Angrily)

Get back in the house and stay there! No priest will limit the size of stick I use on you if I find you out again!

LISA looks up at her father.

BURGERMEISTER

You'd better do as he says....

FRANZ

You're damn right she'd better.

(To Lisa)

Go on....

LISA starts walking away as the CROWD stand aside for her. She looks back now and then, only to see FRANZ standing in the carriage, horse-whip in hand. He watches her, then turns on the PIPER.

FRANZ

(Threateningly)

And don't let me catch you with her again. Get it? You've done your bit. Now stay away from her....and me !

The PIPER stares back at him with steely eyes. FRANZ swings back into the coach, and with a vicious lash jolts the horse into action. The CARRIAGE charges off, leaving a sea of helpless, angered faces on the CHILDREN. GAVIN watches as LISA disappears inside her father's house at the far end.

51. EXT. KOBOLZELLERSTEIG / SCHMEIDGASSE - DAY

51.

The CARRIAGE barges its' way through the crowded Schmeidgasse, then swings abruptly round the sharp V-bend and hares off down the narrow Kobolzellersteig leading to the Castle.

52. INT. CASTLE COURTYARD - DAY

52.

LOW ANGLE - We hear the rumbling wheels of the approaching CARRIAGE as it charges across the drawbridge and bursts into the Castle courtyard, halting abruptly outside the main doors.

FRANZ jumps down as one of the Castle GUARDS runs forward to assist the BURGERMEISTER.

CUT TO :

53. INT. CASTLE: CHESS ROOM - DAY

53.

BARON WOLFGANG HEINRICH VON HIEDERMINDT III, Baron of Brunswick and vassal only to the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles IV, sits squarely in a heavy oak chair, his chin resting on his clenched fist. He is the antithesis of the Burgermeister, and immediately gives the impression of a strong-armed ruler. Both his son FRANZ and the BURGERMEISTER have tried to adopt his brisk method of handling people, but when in his presence they quickly relapse into obedient lackeys, revealing their truer personalities.

The BARON is watching a game of chess (Off), and he observes the moves with all the gravity such occasions demand.

BARON

Pawn seven forward one.....ah! my castle back, if you'd be so kind.

CAM. TRACKS BACK and we see that the game is being played with the unfortunate members of the castle STAFF. The BARON himself sits on a raised dias, directing the proceedings with great flourish, while his wretched court droop on aching legs awaiting his movements.

His CHESS-MEN are dressed in Black, while those of his partner, BARON HILDESHEIM (Off), are in white. The only piece allowed the comfort of a chair is the BARONESS, an ageing woman of formidable character. She is mounted on a wooden square on rollers. She passes the dreary hours completing a tapestry of talentless design. CAM. continues to TRACK across the floor until we HOLD on the PRIEST in CU. Like the other "pieces" he is an unwilling participant, and he gazes with brooding eyes at

the beamed ceiling. The BARON continues in b. g.

BARON

Re-call the Bailiff to stand as Castle,
and you - get back to your post...you've
been exchanged.

The PAWN happily leaves the Chess-floor, and joins a group
of other FALLEN PIECES who are playing dice between themselves.
One of them the MARSHALL, is whispering hurriedly to the
Castle SENESCHAL. The latter stands up.

SENESCHAL

(To the Baron)

I fear he has gone to lunch, my Lord.
No doubt he thought his...

BARON

(Interrupting)

I don't care what he thought, it's not
his business to think! Kindly retrieve
him at once..... he's holding up
the game.

SENESCHAL

Yes, my Lord.

The SENESCHAL hurries off to a door behind the visiting
BARON HILDESHEIM. What he lacks in brawn he appears to
have in brain, for he is flanked on either side by FALLEN
BLACK PIECES belonging to BARON HIEDERMINDT. The
SENESCHAL is about to leave when the BARON calls out.

BARON

It's alright Seneschal, the day is
saved!

From the BARON'S POV we see that the BURGERMEISTER has
arrived, followed by FRANZ. The BURGERMEISTER stands
wedged in the doorway, collecting his breath.

The BARON'S ALSATION whimpers in agitation at his master's
side. The BURGERMEISTER eyes it uneasily.

BARON

(Genially)

Your arrival could not have been better
timed, Burgermeister.

BARON(Cont'd)

(With mock reverence)

Pray do you Lord the honour of taking
up arms in his hour of need.

(Briskly)

Over there, on the black square ...
and that's an order !

The BURGERMEISTER looks totally bewildered.

BURGERMEISTER

But my Lord, I thought.

BARON

(Interrupting)

Shut up! It can wait...

The BURGERMEISTER slinks into the room, acutely conscious of the mirth his arrival has caused, His eyes twitch with humiliation as he slithers to his allotted place on the board, amid the suppressed titters of the other players. Suddenly the BARON'S HOUND leaps forward with drooling jaws, unable to resist the temptation any longer. The BURGERMEISTER cowls in terror, but is saved as the BARON recalls his dog to heel.

BARON

Leo! Back boy...

(Whispering)

Save it for a rainy day

(to Hildesheim)

So Baron, ... your move.

HILDESHEIM

(Quietly)

Forgive me Baron, but it would seem
that I have your Queen, no? If your
Bishop would be so kind as to move
himself three places diagonally....

The BARON is somewhat taken aback by this surprise coup.
He watches grimly as the PRIEST shifts himself across the floor.

BARON

As a matter of interest, his official
capacity is that of Priest, not Bishop
yet, thank God!

HILDESHEIM

(With Sarcasm)

My apologies Baron, I was speaking metaphorically within the terms of the game, so to speak. Perhaps your QueenI'm sorry, the Baroness, would oblige.?

The delighted BARONESS is wheeled off the floor by a SERVANT as the PRIEST takes her place.

BARON

Take her, she's yours!
(To the BARONESS)
Go on, get off the board !

The BARONESS, well accustomed to these jibes, continues her tapestry by the door

BARON

Now Burgermeister, kindly move yourself five squares back and rid the game of the Baron's surviving horse.

HILDESHEIM

(Quickly)

Regrettably not possible Baron, for you would be moving into check. Indeed, now that I look upon it, you are already in check from your ... priest.

BARON

(Grunting)

A familiar situation

The BARONESS has observed the move from behind her tapestry.

BARONESS

(Smiling)

Check-mate, to be precise.

BARON

(Angrily)

Shut up! Woman!

HILDESHEIM

(Tactfully)

With due respect, the Baroness is right.

The BARON flusters a moment, then waves away the victory.

BARON

(A bad loser)

Confounded gamealright, alright!

He strides across to the door. The BARONESS continues her tapestry.

BARONESS

(without looking up)

Why don't you stick to cock-fighting,

(dryly)

something you understand.

BARON

(unable to think of a better reply)

Why don't you go back to bed -

something you don't understand.

HILDESHEIM has walked over from his dias, and stands by the door expectantly. The BARON looks at him, then realises he wants money.

BARON

(Throwing it away)

Oh, alright ...I'll give you a letter of credit.

HILDESHEIM

(In a tactfully low voice)

Cash...if you don't mind. Your letters of credit have a habit ofhow shall I say ? I think "bouncing" is the term our Merchant banks use.

BARON

(In a corner)

Oh, very well then, see the Burgermeister later. Now then, to more important matters.

(A low voice)

A moment Baron

53. (Cont'd)

53.

The BARON takes HILDESHEIM's arm, and leads him from the room.

54. INT. CASTLE: PASSAGE - DAY

54.

The BARON takes HILDESHEIM across to the window. The BURGERMEISTER, FRANZ and the PRIEST stand in the background.

BARON

(Low voice)

Now then, about this Hanseatic League I've given it some thought, and we're prepared to join. The only problem is the entrance fee. . . .

(He indicates cash with his fingers)

Half-a-million Guilders is an awful lot, and my vassals and I feel that if you could see your way to letting us pay it in . . . installments, say 10,000 a month -

HILDESHEIM

(Shaking his head)

I'm sorry Baron, it's not my decision. The committee make the rules, not me. Half a million by the new year, or else you're out in the cold.

(Pause)

It's your last chance.

HILDESHEIM half-bows with mock graciousness, then leaves. The BARON rubs his chin a moment and turns back to the others.

FRANZ

Well?

BARON

No.

PRIEST

(Shaking his head)

I don't see any reason why Hamelin should join at all.

BARON

You wouldn't, would you? We'll end up joining because we have no choice - it's the only way to stop the Emperor's power.

BARON(cont'd)

Dei Gratia - the conceit of the man!
But there's the small matter of half-a-
million guilders. Burgermeister?

BURGERMEISTER

(Flustering)

My Lord, I must in truth confess that our
margin of funds no longer exists. Guilders
do not grow on trees.

(sniggering)

The Passage starts to darken .

BARON

(Sarcastically)

Burgermeister, your wit is neither humorous,
nor to the point. I am well aware that
guilders don't grow on trees. I am also
aware that this wedding of yours is costing
the earth. Our understanding, correct me if
I'm wrong, was that by giving your daughter
a place in my court, you would find the means.
The fact that our orchards are not a-bloom
with guilders does not prevent you searching
out some other way.

BURGERMEISTER

(Pushing his luck)

My Lord, with due respect I would remind you
that this town spent its' last guilder in ran-
soming your son at Crecy. Last summers'
Trade Fair was a little short of disaster, and
now we have these lamentable games of chess.
The people are taxed to the bone... even as
we speak I have a crisis with the guilds....

BARON

(Interrupting)

Damn you, that's your problem? Do you want
this wedding or not? Christ alive, I've done
my share of the bargain - your daughter's
dowry is nothing less than your undivided
support. Let me give you due warning that if you
fail me once, just once, then that slut and
her baggage will be into the Castle moat faster
than you dare breathe....

The BARON grabs the BURGERMEISTER by his collar and holds him against the wall.

BARON

Do I make myself abundantly clear?

BURGERMEISTER

(Choking)

Abundantly.

The passage-way has gradually grown darker and darker. It is now that the BARON senses that something is wrong. He looks round him while talking.

BARON

And on the subject of moats, I'm still waiting for mine to be filled - the plague could arrive any day, I want to be prepared.

PRIEST

(Laughing)

My Lord, since the English Channel failed to protect the English, I find it hard to believe that a moat will protect you from the wrath of God should he

The BARON walks to the window, followed by the others. He peers out.

BARON

(A whisper)

Good God

FRANZ

What is it?

FRANZ follows his eyeline.

CUT TO :

55. EXT. TOTAL ECLIPSE OF THE SUN - SPECIAL EFFECT 55.

The vast black disc of the moon is silhouetted against the fiery sun. It is a beautiful, yet terrifying sight. Silence.

CUT TO :

56. EXT. BURGERHEIM MARKET - ECLIPSE EFFECT(FILTER) 56

The preceeding silence is shattered by the chaos in the Market Place. The CROWD scream out in terror - stalls are overturned people trampled underfoot. The squeals of PIGS adds to the general din as they break loose from their pens. We hear snatches of dialogue over :

"It's the Hand of God! "

"The Day of Judgment! "

"The end at Hand! "

"The Shadow of Death! "

Over by the BLACK WAGGON, the PILGRIM blunders among his possessions.

PILGRIM

(In panic)

Sodom and Gomorrah!- Where are my
relics? Who's stolen my toe -nail ?

57. EXT. KOBOLZELLERSTEIG (WART'S CELLAR) - ECLIPSE
EFFECT(FILTER) 57

People race hither and thither across the street, DZOUY YEN and GAVIN are standing in the shadows near the door to Wart's Cellar. GAVIN looks either side of him, then signals to DZOUY YEN.

GAVIN

Come on

We see them disappear inside the doorway.

58. INT. CASTLE: PLANNING ROOM - DAY 58

The room is in semi-darkness. We can dimly see the outline of a large model of the town, around which the BARON and his lackeys stand.

PRIEST

(Parrot-fashion)

. . . .and therefore, O Lord, we humbly
beseech Thee in this our hour of need -

BARON

(Interrupting)

Will you shut up and make yourself useful-
light some candles for Christ's sake.

FRANZ

(Lighting a candle)

It's alright

BARON

That's better. Now Burgermeister, I want this wall finished by the end of the week. We'll talk about the moat later. Now go.

BURGERMEISTER

But my Lord, I have no horse.

BARON

You've got legs haven't you? Go on, get back to your Corporation.

The BURGERMEISTER nods helplessly and retreats from the room. FRANZ stands over the model, holding the candle in his hand. The BARON shakes his head as the door slams shut.

BARON

(CLENCHING his fist)

There must be some way

(To Franz)

What about the money-lenders, what's the rate?

PRIEST

(Quickly)

My Lord, in faith I must warn you that the Jews are excommunicate from the Church, they

BARON

(Firmly)

This is not a church affair. Kindly confine your advice to ecclesiastical matters, and leave the secular side to me.

(Smiling)

Some of my best friends are Jews, they can be quite human, when you get to know them. The fact that they don't pay taxes to the church is not their fault, and is no concern of mine. If the Pope had sought sounder advice, he would have learnt that there is much profit

BARON(cont'd)

in money-lending. Personally I intend to take full advantage of my heathen friends, providing they continue to pay me my 10%.

PRIEST

But my Lord, our Saviour himself cast out the money-lenders from the Temple. St. Matthew 21, Verse 12.

BARON

(Smiling)

Quite right. I should have done the same myself. A Sunday service is neither the time nor the place to start lending money. But that does not mean to say that you cannot borrow a few guilders after the service and outside the church. You must remember, dear Priest, that there is a time and a place for everything. Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3, Page one.

The PRIEST gives up. FRANZ comes forward, holding the candle so that it lights his face with a sinister touch.

FRANZ

Father, I have a suggestion.

BARON

Well?

FRANZ

A few nights ago certain players arrived in the town...

BARON

(Angrily)

What! I thought I said that no one was to be allowed in?

PRIEST

(Seeing his moment)

Yes, my Lord - the Burgermeister let them in. They have in their company a certain musician, a Piper I believe, a Jew...

BARON

(Cutting him off)

Well, what about them?

FRANZ

One of them is an alchemist by trade. He claims to be successful in making Gold

BARON

(Scornfully)

Fool's gold no doubt.

FRANZ

(Cautiously)

Possibly . . . yet what is Fool's Gold but Gold to fool a fool, and are we not dealing with fools?

BARON

You can't fool the merchants - that's their job.

FRANZ

Not the Merchants - the Mercenaries. Your soldiers. We pay them in fool's gold, they go off and fight for Philip against the English, and we send him the bill. The difference being that he pays us in real gold.

The BARON rubs his chin, contemplating the plan.

BARON

What happens when they come back?

FRANZ

Come back? Who said anything about coming back? How many soldiers came home from Crecy? And if a few do escape the English archers, they'll never survive the Plague in France.

BARON

(Musing)

It's an idea, certainly, but we don't have enough mercenaries.

FRANZ

Not at the moment, but we can soon
recruit a few... leave that to me.

BARON

(thinking)

I don't want to use too many - I need men
to work on the new fortifications. I hear
the Duke of Milan has taken to lobbing
plague corpses over other town-walls. An
ingenious idea, germ-warfare. But I
don't want it happening to me.

FRANZ

(Surprised)

I never said anything about men.

(Pause)

But there were plenty of twelve-year-olds
at Crecy.

A long, cold pause. The sunlight gradually filters back into the
room, giving a strange, ghostly reflection. The BARON looks at
FRANZ, narrows his eyes. He fingers the model castle.

BARON

(Slowly)

This alchemist when can he start?

IN LS the two men face each other across the model of Hamelin.
In beyond them, the PRIEST pretends not to hear as he stands
with his hands behind his back, gazing up at a miscellaneous
painting of the Crucifixion. HOLD A BEAT.

59 EXT. KLINGENTOR & MOAT - DAY

59.

GAVIN is staring out of the barred window, watching some
CHILDREN in MS pulling barrels out of the water. A few more
drift into view from under the drawbridge, and TWO BOYS
wade into the shallow moat to drag them out. We hear DZOUY
YEN (Off).

DZOUY YEN (Off)

This is no good to me. . . . I thought
you said he'd made Gold.

59. (Cont'd)

59.

GAVIN

(Without turning)

Must have given it away. He's a generous man old Wart. I told you, that's the formula on the table

One of the BOYS manages to pull out the stopper from a barrel.

CUT TO :

60. INT. WART'S CELLAR - DAY

60.

GAVIN half-watches DZOUY YEN as he picks up the tatty piece of paper laying on the table.

DZOUY YEN

(Scornfully)

What's this? Two pounds of flour . . . four eggs . . . half-a-pound of sugar ?? This is a cake-recipe!

GAVIN

(Indignantly)

No it's not . . . that's how he makes his Philosopher's Stone. The Elixir of life, he calls it.

61. EXT. KLINGENTOR & MOAT - DAY

61.

We pick GAVIN up from the outside again. He watches the TWO BOYS feel inside the barrel for food.

GAVIN

You can eat it as well you know

DZOUY YEN (Off)

(Dryly)

I can see that.

GAVIN

(Nodding)

Yes . . . if you eat that lot, you'll live forever

61 (Cont'd)

61

The FIRST BOY pulls his hand out in disappointment.

FIRST BOY
(To the other BOY)
Nothing in that one.

SECOND BOY
Nothing in this either

They abandon the barrels near the barred window, and start playing at Boney Man Rag with the other CHILDREN. GAVIN watches sadly, unable to join them.

FIRST BOY
Bags me Boney Man - I'll give you
ten to hide.

GAVIN
(to DZOUY YEN, OFF)
Wart says it contains a secret ingredient.
(pause)
Extract of Cow Manure. He says it
protects you from the plague.

FIRST BOY
(OFF)
One two

CUT TO:

62 INT. WART'S CELLAR - DAY

DZOUY YEN in CS raises his eye-brows. GAVIN remains in b.g. by the window.

GAVIN
There's some on the shelf behind you
if you want to try it.

DZOUY YEN turns round and sees a bottle marked "VACCINA" on the shelf. But something else catches his eye. He glances round to see if GAVIN is looking, then grabs a bottle labelled "GOLD PELLETS" and opens it. It contains about 24 small shiny pellets.

GAVIN stares out of the window.

62 (Cont'd)

62

FIRST BOY

(OFF)

Six seven

CUT TO:

63 EXT. KLINGENTOR & MOAT - DAY

63

GAVIN watches the CHILDREN as they disappear among the trees.

FIRST BOY

(OFF)

Eight nine

Suddenly GAVIN's face falls.

GAVIN'S POV - Two white eyes and a handful of whiskers poke out from the Barrel. The RAT shoots out like a bullet from a gun, followed by a second, then a third

FIRST BOY

(OFF)

Ten ! Yoohoo ! Boney-Man'll-catch-you !

As the BOY runs off, a veritable army of RATS swarm out from the barrels and follow their leader towards the Barred window.

CUT TO:

64 INT. WART'S CELLAR - DAY

64

GAVIN dives away from the window-edge as the first RAT jumps through the bars, quickly followed by his comrades.

GAVIN

(calling out)

Rats ! Look out !

DZOUY YEN swivels round as the army cascades through the window and onto the floor. Without further consideration he makes a leap for the stone stairs, and shoots out the door at the top.

GAVIN dodges about the room, trying to avoid the invading vermin, but in doing so trips and falls against the shelf. A dozen bottles crash to the ground beside him, including the now

64 (Cont'd)

64

empty bottle of Gold Beads. The RATS scurry away into the thousand cracks and crannies in the wall as GAVIN stares round at the broken glass and equipment.

Suddenly he notices that the gold beads are missing. He desperately searches the floor, sweeping aside the broken equipment in the process. Finally he gives up in despair. We HOLD on him as ORGAN MUSIC laps over.

65 INT. CATHEDRAL - DAY

65

LOW ANGLE - UPSHOT. FRANZ, dressed in black velvet and wearing a heavy golden chain, faces LISA, clothed in simple white. Between them, the PRIEST towers above. The magnificence of the Cathedral altar is in sharp contrast to the previous squalour of Wart's cellar. LISA seems sadly innocent of the PRIEST's ramblings, while FRANZ looks acutely bored.

PRIEST

Thou hast decreed that all wickedness is
but little to the wickedness of Woman, that
her miserable body is filled with vanity and
lust, seethed with corruption

CU - LISA. A less apt description would be hard to find.

PRIEST

(OFF)

. . . . yet we beseech Thee to grant this
wretched Daughter of Eve, the origin
of all worldly sin, such humility that she
may leave her deceitful ways

TWO SHOT - The BARON yawns, the BURGERMEISTER snores. FRAU POPPENDICK mops her tears dispassionately in the b.g.

PRIEST

(OFF)

. . . . and submit to the righteous and
blessed hand of her Husband, Lord and
Keeper, until the day she returns to the
dust, whence she came.

HIGH ANGLE - DOWNSHOT. The PRIEST turns and raises his arms towards the crown of thorns in f.g. (soft f.). The remainder of the CONGREGATION can be seen in the b.g.

PRIEST

(threateningly)

Those whom God hath joined together,
let no man tear asunder ! Amen.

FRANZ turns quickly away and walks back to his chair beneath the pulpit. The PRIEST and LISA follow behind him.

MS - The PRIEST passes FRANZ as he mounts the pulpit.

FRANZ

(low voice)

Keep it short.

The PRIEST ignores the remark, and mounts the pulpit with due solemnity.

UPSHOT - The PRIEST turns on his CONGREGATION (OFF). He clears his throat, then launches into his attack.

PRIEST

Exodus 9, Verse 14: "For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thy people, that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the Earth."

(pause)

People of Hamelin, a Voice in Rama has been heard ! God for the sins of men has struck the world once again with a punishment of sudden death. Already the people to the south of our lands are dead

MCS - The BARON in f. g. becomes irritated, and drums his fingers on the side of his chair, while the BURGERMEISTER rubs his famished belly. The PRIEST drones on in the b. g.

PRIEST

(OFF)

But although God often afflicts us,
it is not in man's power to judge His
divine counsel. We cannot escape His
terrible wrath, so People of Hamelin,
repent ! Repent of your sins

Suddenly the BARON flares up and shouts at the PRIEST, making the BURGERMEISTER jump.

65 (Cont'd)

65

BARON

(angrily)

For Christ's sake man, this is a
wedding, not a funeral !

The PRIEST looks down at him with fiery eyes.

CUT TO:

66 INT. WART'S CELLAR - DAY

66

GAVIN is standing awkwardly by the broken shelf, while WART paces the room, his hands behind his back. The entire cellar has been turned up-side-down in a search for the missing gold beads.

GAVIN

(imploringly)

But I've told you the truth I don't
know where they've gone the rats
poured through the window and I knocked
over the shelf, but I didn't take any gold.

(pause)

I promise you, that's the truth.

WART

(sarcastically)

I suppose the rats ate it ?

GAVIN bites his lip without reply.

WART

Look gold doesn't just disappear like
that. If you didn't take it, and if the rats
didn't eat it, then someone else took it.

(pause)

Did anyone come in ?

GAVIN hesitates a moment. An idea occurs to him, but he keeps it to himself and shakes his head.

GAVIN

No . . .

WART

(insistently)

Are you sure ?

GAVIN
Course I'm sure.

WART throws up his hands and gives in.

WART
Well so much for Christmas turkey.
(pause)
Where did the rats come from ?

GAVIN
Out of some barrels . . . they must have
floated in from the river.

WART looks worried. He makes a rough sketch with his finger
on the shelf. Outside we hear laughter (OFF).

CUT TO:

67 EXT. BURGERHEIM MARKET - DAY

67

The two rows in front of the WAGGON include the BURGERMEISTER,
FRAU POPPENDICK, LISA, FRANZ, The BARON, The
BARONESS and other members of the BARON'S COURT.

GAVIN enters at the far end of the Market. The rest of the
AUDIENCE stand at the back and sides of the waggon. Others
prefer to watch in the comfort of their own homes, and gaze
down from first-floor windows.

The PILGRIM is dressed in his white sheet, and stands over a
smoking pit beneath the waggon. LONGSHANKS is playing
SAMSON, though he looks more like a mediaeval Tarzan in
his leopard-skin robe and padded muscles. He beckons to him.

PILGRIM
Come hither, pray, and gaze upon
Delilah, who charmed you with her crinkly
curls, her blooming leaks

MATTIO rises from the smoking pit, dressed as Delilah. He
wears bright-red lipstick, flashy eyebrows and a huge padded
bosom.

67 (Cont'd)

67

CLOSER SHOT - MATTIO and the PILGRIM.

MATTIO

(undertone)

Cheeks !

The PILGRIM looks a little surprised at MATTIO's costume.

PILGRIM

.... her blooming cheeks. Ah, see
those withered breasts (!) like last
year's prunes

The PILGRIM cannot resist a discreet wink at MATTIO ... his voice lapses for a brief moment, then MATTIO slowly sinks back beneath the stage.

68 EXT. UNDERNEATH WAGGON - DAY

68

HELGA quickly helps MATTIO off the lift platform, and replaces the "Hell Fire" tray of hot coals.

PILGRIM

(OFF)

Mayhap ye'll think upon these times,
perchance

69 EXT. BURGERHEIM MARKET - DAY

69

MLS - The BURGERMEISTER and the BARON in f. g., side angle.
The PILGRIM continues -

PILGRIM

... repent before the end is nigh, or
ever shall your soul rest here below.
And now upon my pale and trusty horse -
(pause - louder)
And now upon my pale and trusty horse

From the side of the stage, we see that MATTIO is having some difficulty in getting Otto's PIG onto the platform. It has been poorly disguised to resemble a horse.

He finally gives it a push, and KARL - dressed as Death's Angel - manages to lead it onto the stage amid laughter from the audience.

69 (Cont'd)

PILGRIM

(to MATTIO)

Thank you.

(louder)

And now, upon my pale and trusty
horse I'll take my leave of you, though
soon we meet again !

The PILGRIM quickly mounts the PIG, but the wretched animal, unaccustomed to such weight, bolts through the canvas backdrop with a squeal of anger. The PILGRIM is thrown off its' back, and tumbles into the Hell Fire pit with a shriek.

MLS - The PILGRIM reappears through the black-cloth covering the wheels, his behind ablaze. The AUDIENCE roar with laughter as he tears round the market, trying to put himself out.

PILGRIM

(crying out)

Help, water ! (Etc.)

He staggers over to the Hegereiterhaus, a small towered building at the side of the market, where his prayers are answered with a bucket of pig's-swill from the second-floor window.

The drenched PILGRIM sags against the wall amid cries of "Author", "Bravo", etc. He glares round, unamused.

70 EXT. BACK OF WAGGON - DAY

70

MATTIO quickly tries to rustle up some entertainment while they repair the shattered back-cloth. He finds the PIPER tinkering with his mandolin, and press-gangs him into service.

MATTIO

Quick get round the front and
play something !

The PIPER looks at him, pauses a moment, then gets to his feet and walks round the waggon.

71 EXT. BURGERHEIM MARKET - DAY

71

The PIPER appears round the front, but is totally ignored by the CROWD, who's attention is split between the soaked PILGRIM, the berserk PIG still blundering over in the far corner, and several large barrels of Beer being passed down the rows.

The PIPER sits himself on the steps below the WAGGON, and starts picking out the threads of a song on his mandolin. After a short intro., he sings a simple theme which should reflect on the Rape of Innocence. For example:

A rose-tree in a thorn-bush,
The Fox saw as he lay;
He could not steal the rose-tree,
But he bore the flower away.

It should perhaps be less obvious than this, but along these lines, with a different metaphor if necessary.

LISA becomes immediately drawn by the song, and as she watches, the SOUNDTRACK of laughter is CUT.

The silent guffaws of the BURGERMEISTER and others looks ridiculous: only LISA remains, watching the PIPER with sadly large eyes.

In the 2nd Verse, the atmosphere SOUNDTRACK returns, and by this time FRANZ has noticed the effect over his wife. The BURGERMEISTER loses his smile as he sees what is happening, and for a brief second the whole CROWD watch the PIPER in gauped silence.

Suddenly FRANZ can take it no longer. He leaps to his feet and approaches the PIPER, who continues playing.

FRANZ
(trembling)
I warned you . . . I warned you -
Now get out - get out, and stay out.

He controls his rage, which heightens the threat. The PIPER fixes him with a glazed stare. FRANZ trembles, then loses control. With a swipe of his hand he smashes the mandolin to the ground.

FRANZ
(shouting)
Out !

As the PIPER turns away, LISA runs up behind FRANZ, clutching at his coat.

LISA
(imploringly)
Don't send him away

FRANZ
(turning on her)
Get your hands off me . . . Burgermeister,
get rid of her !

The BURGERMEISTER, confused and alarmed by the sudden turn in events, hurries forward and takes LISA.

BURGERMEISTER
(muttering)
It's not my fault, my Lord - I told
him not to play.
(to LISA)
Come on child, back to your mother.

The BURGERMEISTER leads LISA to FRAU POPPENDICK, then turns round to the GUESTS.

BURGERMEISTER
(eagerly)
The feast is all waiting my Lords
in the Town Hall.

MLS - WAGGON stage in f. g. , KARL gazes blankly as the GUESTS file out of the Market Place.

MCS - UPSHOT. GAVIN, who has observed the incident from the far end of the Market, starts to push his way through the CROWD. We hear odd snatches of dialogue (OFF), while following GAVIN.

VOICE
Who was he anyway ?

2nd VOICE
They say he's a Piper faith
healer or something -

3rd VOICE
I heard he'd cured Poppendick's girl.

GAVIN pushes his way through the CROWD. Then notices DZOUY YEN moving out of the Market Place with his bag of chemicals. He watches him a moment, then follows at

71 (Cont'd) 71

a distance.

CUT TO:

72 EXT. MARKTPLATZ - DAY 72

The BURGERMEISTER proudly leads his GUESTS into the Rathaus, while a small CROWD watches him with envy in the Market Place.

73 EXT. INNENHOFF DES RATHAUSES (COURTYARD) - DAY 73

DZOUY YEN hurries along a darkened Courtyard, and enters the back of the Rathaus. GAVIN sees him from the far end, then turns away through the large oak doors.

74 EXT. HERRNGASSE - DAY 74

GAVIN stands by the Oak Doors. The Baron's CARRIAGE rumbles by with FRAU POPENDICK and LISA. GAVIN calls out to her, but it passes too quickly for LISA to see him. GAVIN watches it disappear down the hill. A BEAT. He walks up to the side-steps of the Rathaus and tries to peer through the window.

75 INT. CORPORATION ROOM - DAY 75

MCS - Reverse on GAVIN's face, steaming up the window. CAMERA PULLS BACK into LS, bringing the wedding GUESTS in on either side. They are seated round a long table, similar to the one we saw in the deserted castle. CAMERA TRACKS along the length of the table, passing huge piles of food and fruit, garnished peacocks, roast swans and other delights. We PAN ROUND onto the BURGERMEISTER, seen through the rib-cage of a turkey. He plunges his knife and fork into a sucking pig, and hungrily devours the contents. We hear dialogue (OFF) while studying this portrait of gluttony.

MAN'S VOICE

(OFF)

I've got the same problem in Minden,
my moat's completely blocked with sewage.

WOMAN'S VOICE

(OFF, very refined)

Poor Charles, he was so proud of his cess-
pool. If only he hadn't built the water-
closer right on top of it. The funerals' on

WOMAN'S VOICE (cont'd)

Friday . . . I do hope you'll be able
to come -

MAN'S VOICE

(OFF)

I heard that smelling sewage is a
very good protection against the plague.
What do you think Burgermeister ?

The BURGERMEISTER extracts a hunky piece of stuffing from the
Pig's body, and crams it into his mouth.

BURGERMEISTER

Huh ? What ?

TWO SHOT - The MAN on his right repeats the question.

MAN

(annoyed)

I asked for your opinion.

BURGERMEISTER

(resuming his food)

Oh, quite.

He draws the coiled spaghetti-like stuffing between his leathery
lips, and sucks it into his mouth.

Two SERVANTS carry in a further supply of garnished peacocks,
piled high on an old door held with handles (See Breugel's
'Wedding Feast' Painting). As they pass, we re-f. on GAVIN
through the window. His eyes bulge in wonder and envy.
Suddenly he disappears.

76 EXT. HERNGASSE - DAY

76

A GUARD has tugged GAVIN away from the window by his feet.
He lies on the cobbles, staring up at him.

GUARD

(roughly)

Go on boy, 'oppit !

GAVIN pulls himself up with a grunt, and shuffles off across the
Marktplatz, throwing an extended tongue in the GUARD's
direction.

MLS - The GUESTS belch on into their 7th Course. FRANZ motions to one of the SERVANTS, whispers something in his ear, then rises to his feet.

FRANZ
(clapping his hands)
My friends friends -

The GUESTS babble on.

FRANZ
(shouting)
Quiet !

A hush falls upon the room, except the BURGERMEISTER who continues to gnash into his skull.

FRANZ
My friends. We have in our company today a magician of undoubted talent the celebrated alchemist Dzouy Yen, who is about to perform for us.

DZOUY YEN is led into the room with his equipment bag amid loud applause.

FRANZ
Ladies and Gentlemen . . . Dzouy Yen.

He sits down next to the BARON and watches as DZOUY YEN moves uncertainly into the centre of the room, where his furnace has already been placed.

DZOUY YEN
(false modesty)
I thank you.
(pause)
Before I demonstrate this great art,
I must ask you for complete silence.
Without prayer and supplication to our
Lord, a transmutation will be impossible.

Even the BURGERMEISTER has paused for breath, and he gaups with the others as DZOUY YEN produces his crucible, pelicans, and other pieces of equipment.

78 EXT. MARKTPLATZ & RATHAUS - DAY

78

A bitter wind has swept through the large Market Place, and most of the CROWD have taken to their homes. GAVIN sits on the steps under the Apothecary, carving his crutch absent-mindedly with a pen-knife. He looks round a moment, then puts the knife back in his pocket and walks back towards the Rathaus.

LOW ANGLE - GAVIN cautiously climbs the Rathaus steps, glancing round to make sure no-one is looking. He leans up to the window and peers through. His face falls.

79 INT. CORPORATION ROOM - DAY

79

The BURGERMEISTER gnaws on a large peacock-leg as he gazes in wonder at DZOUY YEN. The BARON and FRANZ are equally fascinated as DZOUY YEN hovers over his crucible.

In MCS DZOUY YEN takes a small bar of black lead and melts it in the crucible. He then produces an egg-shaped lump of wax, and breaks a piece off, adding it to the mixture which he stirs with a large stick.

DZOUY YEN

(with great reverence)

Oh, gracious Lord, I beseech Thee grant me the power of Hermes, that through the medium of this heavenly Philosopher's Stone, by which Noah made the Ark, Moses the tabernacle, and Solomon the Temple, this crude and inglorious metal might, like our souls, transform, transmute and transcend into the quickened, perfected and glorified substance of almighty Gold !

The GUESTS lean forward as DZOUY YEN stirs the melted liquid. Slowly the colour changes from black to red to yellow to gold.

DZOUY YEN snaps out of his faked trance, grabs the crucible and plunges it into a bowl of water by his side. A tremendous volume of steam rises into the already smoke-filled room, and as the crucible cools, DZOUY YEN takes it out and places it in front of FRANZ, without even looking at it.

DZOUY YEN

Place your hand in the bowl and tell me what you find.

FRANZ looks at him, then at the bowl. The BARON and the other GUESTS crowd round as FRANZ removes the solid ball of gold. They gaze at it in amazement.

GOLDSMITH

Give it here, I'm a goldsmith ... I'll soon tell you.

The GOLDSMITH takes the ball from FRANZ, and examines it carefully. He hands it back.

FRANZ

Well ?

GOLDSMITH

That's gold alright.

GAVIN stares through the window. He too has seen the transmutation, but is immediately suspicious.

BURGERMEISTER

(OFF)

And now dear friends, after that spectacular display, allow me to unveil what I've ... what we've been waiting for -

MS - The BURGERMEISTER walks to where a large curtain divides a corner of the room.

BURGERMEISTER

(rather drunk)

It gives me great pleasure to grant my daughter's hand unhappily not present to the noble and right excellent personage of our reverent Baron Wolfgang Heider

(glances at a piece of paper)

.... Hiedermindt von Heinrich, I'm sorry - Heinrich von Heidermindt ... so without further ado I hereby declare this bridge ... cake - opened !

The BARON watches unamused as the BURGERMEISTER tugs at the heavy rope by his side. The curtains over the windows pull shut. A SERVANT hurries forward to show the BURGERMEISTER the correct ropes.

BURGERMEISTER

(embarrassed)

Slight hitch ah, thank-you.

(pause)

Ladies and friends -

Once again he tugs at the ropes.

This time the curtains pull back to reveal a vast wedding-cake, fashioned in the shape of a fantasy Castle. It is beautifully made, and towers above the delighted BURGERMEISTER. The GUESTS clap approvingly, and he moves forward to lower the marzipan draw-bridge.

MLS - The GUESTS look at the cake (OFF), the BURGERMEISTER with his back to CAM. Suddenly their faces drop.

(REVERSE) - The BURGERMEISTER watches amazed as the GUESTS freeze for a moment in terror, then disintegrate. He turns back to the cake.

His POV - Hundreds of RATS pour out of the cake across the marzipan draw-bridge, before the walls collapse as dozens more leap out of the ruins.

Chaos ensues. The GUESTS trample over themselves in the rush for the exits - roast peacocks fly through the air, rib-cages crash to the ground. The BURGERMEISTER flings himself across the nearest table in a bid to jump over it: his weight succeeds in smashing it in half, with the knives, forks, plates, jellies and creams sliding down on top of him.

80 EXT. RATHAUS - DAY

80

GAVIN leaps clear of the window as the GUESTS pour out of the main doors, and down the Rathaus steps, tripping themselves over on their wedding robes. The BARON and FRANZ are first out -

BARON

(calling out)

What's happened to the carriage ?

FRANZ

It went back to the castle - come on,
we'll take the Burgermeister's

80 (Cont'd)

80

They race across the Marktplatz to where the Burgermeister's Carriage is waiting. FRANZ jumps in and pulls the horse round. The BARON follows, pushing the BARONESS in front of him.

The carriage wheels round and charges back to the Rathaus steps.

MLS - LOW ANGLE. The BURGERMEISTER appears at the top of the steps, covered in spaghetti and cream-fillings.

BURGERMEISTER

(calling out)

My Lord, that's my carriage

BARON

That's right !

BURGERMEISTER

(desperately)

But my Lord . . . what about the rats ?

BARON

That's your problem Burgermeister . . .
not mine !

The carriage pulls off violently and speeds away down the street.

The wretched BURGERMEISTER stands dumb-struck at the top of the steps as he watches his rapidly-receding carriage.

81 INT. CORPORATION ROOM - DAY

81

The remaining GUESTS push their way past DZOUY YEN as he packs up his bags. He leaves the unnecessary apparatus behind and joins the throng of people heading for the doors.

82 EXT. RATHAUS STEPS - DAY

82

GAVIN sees DZOUY YEN hurry down the steps with the rest of the CROWD. The BURGERMEISTER turns back into the Rathaus, and GAVIN slinks in behind him.

MS - DZOUY YEN is about to turn into the Schmeidgasse when he stops, thinks a moment, then turns back towards the Rathaus.

83 INT. CORPORATION ROOM - DAY

83

The room is now almost empty, and resembles the aftermath of a Circus act. Tables and chairs are strewn in every direction, with scattered heaps of food littering the floor. A number of RATS still scurry about, though most have taken to the town.

GAVIN filters into the room and looks around. He sees the remnants of Dzouy Yen's equipment, including the crucible and stirring stick.

In CLOSE SHOT he fingers the bowl, trying to work out how Dzouy did the trick. Behind him the BURGERMEISTER laments the wreckage of the day. GAVIN looks at the stick, then drops it on the table. It makes a hollow sound -- He picks it up again, this time feeling it carefully.

In LOW ANGLE CS he breaks the stick open. It has been hollowed out, and when he tips one of the halves, two gold beads fall onto the table. We re-f. on the window in b.g. - DZOUY YEN's narrow eyes peer through, watching GAVIN in f.g.

GAVIN puts the two pieces of stick in his pocket, and walks towards the door. The BURGERMEISTER is sitting on an upturned table, licking the cream off his coat.

BURGERMEISTER

(mournfully)

Where did I go wrong ?

GAVIN looks down at the drunken heap on the floor. The BURGERMEISTER nods gravely as a RAT appears, looks at him a moment, then scurries away beneath the skirting-board.

84 EXT. RATHAUS STEPS - DAY

84

GAVIN hobbles down the Rathaus steps and walks across the Marktplatz. DZOUY YEN watches him leave from the shadows of the wall. He waits till GAVIN is out of sight, and hurries inside the building.

85 INT. CORPORATION ROOM - DAY

85

DZOUY YEN enters the room, and picks his way across the debris to where his apparatus is lying. He hunts around for the stick, but realises that Gavin has taken it. He pauses a moment, thinking hard.

85 (Cont'd) 85

LOW ANGLE MCS - The last remaining wall of the marzipan castle crumbles to the ground. HOLD A BEAT.

86 EXT. CASTLE COURTYARD - DAY 86

The Burgermeister's carriage thunders across the moat and into the Castle Courtyard. It stops outside the main doors, and the BARON leaps out, followed by FRANZ.

87 INT. CASTLE: HALL - DAY 87

FAST TRACKING SHOT in front of the BARON (LOW ANGLE) - He strides through the huge hall of his castle, calling out to various members of the STAFF who try and keep pace behind him.

BARON

(calling out)

Lower the Draw-bridge ! Fill the moat !
Bolt the windows ! Lock the doors !
Summon my Bailiff, my marshall, my
Seneschal, my Reeve

As each man is called, a SERVANT scurries off to find him.

88 INT. CASTLE : PASSAGE - DAY 88

The CAMERA continues TRACKING as the BARON storms along the passage at an ever-increasing pace. The number of STAFF followers grow as the BARON approaches the Planning Room.

BARON

(continuing)

My Constable, my Butler, my Astrologer,
my Prophet, my Accountant and my Lawyer !

BAILIFF

(following apace)

He's on holiday my Lord.

BARON

(without turning)

Then get him back at once, he's got no
business to be on holiday when I need him:
I want to make my will ... all leave
suspended until further notice !

88 (Cont'd)

88

The BARON swings through the door into the Planning Room, CAMERA TRACKING in front of him.

89 INT. CASTLE : PLANNING ROOM - DAY

89

CAMERA TRACKS with the BARON as he strides over to his raised chair at the far end of the room. We CRANE UP on his level (Elem.) and HOLD in MCS as he sinks exhausted into his chair at the top of the steps.

BARON'S POV - MLS - His COURT fall into the room like a burst dam, and flop against the wall, arms dangling, heads bowed for breath. (MUSIC should cover from the moment the Carriage enters the Courtyard, Sc. 86, gathering speed like Khatchaturian's "Sabre Dance" until it ends with a rumbustious 'Dum/dum/dud-a-da-dum' as the last of the Baron's lackeys slams the door behind him.)

The BARON pauses for breath a moment, then stands up and addresses his Court Assembly.

BARON

Gentlemen, the rats are upon us ! I need hardly tell you that where there are rats, there follows the plague as surely as the night follows the day.

His STAFF look anxiously at each other, repeating the Baron's words in whispers.

The BARON slowly descends his raised pedestal, and walks over to the model of Hamelin.

BARON

The problem is a simple one.

(spelling it out)

I do not wish to catch it. Of course I'm not thinking about myself no no.

(smiling)

I'm more concerned with the welfare of my loyal servants -

(pause)

Obviously if I catch the plague, then you catch it . . . and I should hate that to happen after all your years of devoted service.

There are muttering of "How kind", "Very generous", etc. among the STAFF.

BARON

(continuing)

Therefore, my friends, we must see that I don't become a victim. In short, you must protect me.

(pause)

Where's my Chronicler ?

An ancient man, the CHRONICLER, comes forward. His back is so rounded that he is unable to look anyone in the face.

CHRONICLER

Here, my Lord.

BARON

I want you to prepare a list of every known remedy and precaution against the plague.

CHRONICLER

I am already doing so, my Lord. I'm afraid the news is not good - I've been in contact with Pope Clement's physician in Avignon. He tells me that every case of the Black Death is incurable.

BARON

(annoyed)

That's not good enough . . . the Pope's a confirmed pessimist - these men of God are all the same

(sarcastically)

"we must all submit willingly and cheerfully to the Scourge of God."

PRIEST

(pushing himself into the room)

Quite so - the Fear of God is our only protection.

BARON

Really ? I was always taught that God helps them who help themselves.

89 (Cont'd)

89

The STAFF smile at each other. FRANZ has walked over to the BARON.

FRANZ

The Brethren of the Free Mind say that sex is the best remedy. "Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die."

(to the PRIEST with a smile)

Anyway, I believe that was the advice St. Paul gave to his Corinthian friends.

BAILIFF

But isn't our first job to get rid of the rats ?

BARON

(surprised)

Rats ? That's the Burgermeister's job.

CUT TO:

90 INT. BURGERMEISTER'S PASSAGE - DAY

90

The BURGERMEISTER stands by his open front door, his mouth filled with food. WART stands outside with TWO MEN.

BURGERMEISTER

Rats ? Go and see the Rat-Catcher's Guild, that's what they're paid for.

He slams the door.

91 EXT. RAT-CATCHER'S GUILD HEADQUARTERS - DAY

91

WART bangs on the door. A small plaque announces the building as Headquarters of the Rat-Catchers Guild. A SERVANT BOY opens up.

BOY

What you want ?

WART

(firmly)

We've come to see the Guild Provost.

The BOY shrugs, and lets them in. WART enters first, followed by the TWO MEN.

The GUILD PROVOST is sitting in f.g., filling out Time Sheets on pieces of parchment. TWO ASSISTANTS are rummaging through some book-crates in the b.g. as WART and the TWO MEN enter.

PROVOST
(without turning)
Sorry, no vacancies - books are full.

WART
We haven't come for a job, we've come to

PROVOST
(interrupting)
How many hours did you put in last Sunday ?

ASSISTANT
(calling out)
Nine to five with a no-lunch-break.

PROVOST
(to himself, writing)
Nine to five . . . double time, that's 22 guilders plus 5 for no lunch . . . 29.

We see that the PROVOST is trying to add up in Roman numerals, XXII + V. WART walks over to him.

WART
Twenty-seven.

PROVOST
(annoyed)
Oh, yes - 27.

He makes the correction, then turns round.

PROVOST
Well, what do you want ?

WART
(boldly)
We want to know what you're going to do about the rats ?

PROVOST

(surprised)

Rats ? I'm sorry, you'd better see the Burgermeister. You tell him to meet our demands, and we might think about doing something.

WART

(angrily)

But that'll be too late. Do you want to catch the plague ?

PROVOST

I'm sorry, it's got nothing to do with us. Tell him to spend less on defence ... all this digging moats nonsense.

(pause)

Can I sell you a rat-trap ?

He points to a shelf laden with traps. One half is piled with incredible contraptions labelled "APPROVED", while another heap on the floor is marked "REJECTS". Above the shelves is a large painting of a rat with a halo. It is entitled "St. Rat", and someone has added underneath "OUR BREAD & BUTTER FRIEND".

WART looks at the unlikely traps on the shelf.

WART

(shaking his head)

No thank you, I'll make my own.

WART turns about and leaves with the TWO MEN. The PROVOST shakes his head and continues with his work.

CS - UPSHOT - The Painting of St. Rat. SOUND-TRACK lapped over of a Woman's shriek.

CUT TO:

93 EXT. SPITALKIRCHE ROOF - DAY

93

a) TIGHT ZOOM LENS - MCS - The RODERTOR TOWER. On the CUT, a WOMAN flings her arms out of the window.

WOMAN

Rats !

- b) FAST PULL BACK to include the FAULTURM TOWER, CAM. L., MCS. A SECOND WOMAN throws her head out of the window.

2nd WOMAN

Rats !

- c) FAST PULL BACK to include the KLEINER STERN TOWER, CAM. L., MCS. THIRD WOMAN appears -

3rd WOMAN

Rats !

- d) VERY FAST PULL BACK to include the GROSSER STERN TOWER, CAM. R., CS - (All four towers are now in SHOT; KLEINER STERN, CAM. L.; FAULTURM, CAM. CENTRE L.; RODERTOR, CAM. CENTRE R.; GROSSER STERN, CAM. R.)

4th WOMAN

Rats !

- e) FINAL PULL BACK into WIDE ANGLE as EIGHT WOMEN simultaneously throw up their hands from the eight attic windows in f. g.

EIGHT WOMAN

(together)

Rats !

Between the EIGHT WOMEN in f. g. and the FOUR TOWERS in b. g., we see a CROWD of WOMEN running along the Town wall GANTRY.

(NOTE: The CAMERA PULL-BACKS should be as follows, dependent on the MUSIC:

a) 24 fr., b) 24 fr., c) 10 fr., d) 10 fr., e) 48 fr.,

The total SCREEN-TIME is therefore only about 5 sec. (116 fr.) for Sc. 93.

The next few scenes, the RAT MONTAGE SEQUENCE, is wholly dependent on the MUSIC. It should be fast in pace, possibly using a LIVE CHORUS, such as:

"With a rat-rat here, a rat-rat there, here a rat, there a rat, everywhere are rats !" ("Old McDonald had a farm" style.)

93 (Cont'd) 93

The following MONTAGE SCENES should be included,
with VOCAL MUSIC laid over.

94 EXT. STADTMAUER (TOWN WALL GANTRY) - DAY 94

MLS - The CROWD OF WOMEN run towards us along the Town
Wall Gantry, crying out with their arms in the air -

WOMEN

(very fast, in time to MUSIC)

Rats-Rats-Rats-Rats-Rats-Rats-RATS !

On the final "Rats !", they freeze in MCS -

95 EXT. KLEINER STERN TOWER (SP/X) - DAY 95

WOMEN'S POV - An army of RATS stand at the top of the wooden
stairs, blocking their path. (Possibly a KING RAT, his paws
folded patiently across his hairy chest, stands at the fore.
This depends on whether rubber-models or live rats are used.)

96 EXT. STADTMAUER (TOWN WALL GANTRY) - DAY 96

The WOMEN back-track on themselves, stumbling over each
other's dresses. The RATS pursue them down the length of the Town
Wall Gantry.

THE FOLLOWING SCENES ASSUME BROWNING'S ORDER (See
Poem at the End)

97 INT. BARON'S CHESS-ROOM - DAY 97

Quick MLS - The RATS break up one of the BARON's chess-
games. The BARONESS leaps into the arms of the SENESCHAL,
dressed as a Horse. The BARON's ALSATIAN cowls in terror
from a large RAT staring into his eyes.

LINES: (Over)

"They fought the dogs, and killed the cats"

98 INT. CATHEDRAL FONT - DAY 98

The PRIEST is anointing a new-born BABY with holy water out
of a jug. He howls in pain as he pulls his hand out of the jug,
with a large RAT dangling from the end of his thumb.

LINES; (Over)

"And bit the babies in the cradles"

99 INT. CASTLE : KITCHEN - DAY

99

The Baron's COOK tries to beat the RATS off the cheese-board. He returns to the soup-pot on the stove, only to find more RATS leaping out from the thick green pottage. He chases one of them with his ladel, while his female ASSISTANT races round the room with a rolling-pin. She sees one RAT sitting on a shelf over the door - she aims and strikes. The BUTLER opens the door and is immediately felled by the rolling-pin.

LINES (Over)

"And ate the cheese out of the vats,
And licked the soup from the cook's own ladels."

100 INT. BURGERMEISTER'S PASSAGE - DAY

100

The BURGERMEISTER and FRAU POPPENDICK are pruning themselves before leaving for the Sunday Service. The BURGERMEISTER reaches for his hat which is lying top-side down on a shelf. Without looking, he jams it on his head, then quickly removes it again. A large nest of twigs remains on his hair, with two RATS peering over the top, wondering what has happened.

LINES (Over)

"Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats"

101 EXT. CHURCHYARD - DAY

101

A couple of NUNS are gossiping over the Churchyard wall with TWO MONKS from the next-door Cloisters. One of the NUNS blocks her ears from the squeaks of RATS sitting on the wall, while the other NUN flashes her eye-lids at the young MONK. Suddenly she goes berserk, and races round the churchyard as she tries to remove a RAT caught up in the folds of her long black underwear.

The MONK bellows with laughter until another RAT shoots up into his habit.

LINES (Over)

"And even spoiled the women's chats,
By drowning their speaking
With shrieking and squeaking
In fifty different sharps and flats. "

CUT TO:

ADDITION MONTAGE SCENES:

102 EXT. BURGERHEIM MARKET - DAY

102

MAD OTTO opens his lantern - a RAT jumps out.

OTTO'S PIG rushes wildly round in circles, trying to catch another RAT.

The PILGRIM delves into his bag of relics, then chases after a RAT that has got the Keys of Heaven in its' mouth.

MAD OTTO returns to his writings, only to find that a RAT has burrowed its way up through the pages.

103 INT. WART'S CELLAR - DAY

103

GAVIN chases round the room, trying to beat off RATS with his crutch, but merely succeeding in smashing more of Wart's bottles and apparatus.

WART waves his hand for GAVIN to stop, then returns to his crucible; a BABY RAT is sitting in the bottom, staring up at him.

104 EXT. HOFBRUNNEN (WELL) - DAY

104

A gaggle of NUNS are laughing and chatting round a well, while the MOTHER SUPERIOR draws on the ropes. A predictable number of RATS leap out of the bucket as it reaches the surface, sending the NUNS racing across the Dominican Cloister.

(MUSIC FADES)

105 INT. BURGERMEISTER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

105

The BURGERMEISTER snores loudly in his large four-poster bed. He is wearing a large night-cap with a bobble on the end, and he twitches every now and then, causing the bobble to roll around on the pillow. FRAU POPPENDICK is lying beside him. She grunts loudly, then opens her eyes.

FRAU POPPENDICK (Dreamily)

Oh Gunter - Is that you ?

The BURGERMEISTER snorts.

BURGERMEISTER

(Gruffly)

Huh ? What ?

FRAU POPPENDICK

(Sleepily)

Not now Gunter

BURGERMEISTER

Oh shut up . . . I'm trying to get some sleep.

The BURGERMEISTER is in f. g. , his face to CAMERA. FRAU POPPENDICK is behind him, on the other side.

FRAU POPPENDICK

That's a funny way to get to sleep, . . . go on, stop it.

We hear her rustle her hand underneath the bed-clothes.

BURGERMEISTER

(Annoyed)

What's the matter with you woman ?

Suddenly FRAU POPPENDICK notices that both the BURGERMEISTER's hands are lying on the pillow beside her -- She leaps into the air with a shriek and lands on top of the BURGERMEISTER, sending them both rolling onto the floor. We see the RAT dive under a cupboard.

The BURGERMEISTER grabs at his night-cap and tries in vain to whip his frantic wife with the bobble. She clutches him in terror.

BURGERMEISTER

(Bellowing)

Good grief woman, control yourself !

FRAU POPPENDICK

(Desperately)

Oh, Gunter . . . it must have been a rat !

BURGERMEISTER

(Angrily)

Nonsense . . . what on earth would a rat be doing in your bed !

The BURGERMEISTER sits on the edge of his bed, mopping his brow. FRAU POPPENDICK whimpers by his side, rubbing herself better.

FRANZ is standing on a wooden platform under the Hegereiterhaus. He is flanked on either side by his RABBLE of YOUTHS, dressed in black blouses. A large sign has been painted on a board behind him. It bears a portrait of the Baron, and reads: "YOUR BARON NEEDS YOU!" FRANZ is waving his fists around as he shouts to the large CROWD listening to him.

Among them we notice many of the CHILDREN seen earlier with the PIPER, including GAVIN.

FRANZ

(Shouting)

The wicked English have forced their way into Northern France against the wills of the French peoples! It is our duty, in the Name of Christ, to come to the aid of our comrades in the south, and to help them in their bitter struggle against the tyrannical invader!

FRANZ's RABBLE lead the CROWD into cheerings and applause. Every now and then a RAT scurries across the platform, but they are ignored in the general frenzy of enthusiasm. FRANZ holds up his hands for quiet.

FRANZ (OFF)

People of Hamelin, in the name of Justice and Christian fellowship, take up your arms and fight the good faith. We can't lose with God on our side, and friends, such is the love of my Father to see justice done, he is giving a hundred golden guilders upon the return of every boy over the age of ten who enlists in his army! Furthermore, as a token of his generosity and thanks, he is giving away a free gift of holy water to everyone who enrolls today! My comrades, don't delay... show me your love for Christ! This is your chance for salvation! Visit the shrines of the French saints! Escape the Plague! Enlist today!

The reception is tumultuous. The CROWD surge forward, clamouring to add their names to the parchment lists.

Over most of FRANZ's dialogue we CUT AWAY to CHILDREN's reactions. They look at each other, whispering excitedly about such an opportunity.

GAVIN pushes forward with the others and manages to catch hold of one of the RABBLE taking down names.

GAVIN
(Eagerly)
Please sir ... I want to go ... Gavin,
G - A - V ...

RABBLER
(Interrupting)
Second name.

GAVIN
Don't have one.

RABBLER
Age ?

GAVIN
Fourteen -

RABBLER
(Seeing his crutch)
Just a minute ... You're a cripple.

GAVIN
(Desperately)
Oh, no Sir ... I can fight, I swear it Sir !
Please Sir, please take me !

RABBLER
(Aggressively)
Go on, clear off. Next !

GAVIN turns sadly away into the CROWD. As he leaves, we hear another BOY enlisting.

BOY (OFF)
Henrik ... that's all.

RABBLER (OFF)
Age ?

HENRIK (OFF)
Ten.

RABBLER (OFF)
Ten ? You're not even eight.

HENRIK (OFF)

Yes Sir, honest. It's my birthday.

(Pause)

Can I have my free-gift sir ?

GAVIN disappears into the CROWD.

107 EXT. BURGERHEIM MARKET (WAGGON) - DAY

107

GAVIN wanders over to the Black Waggon. It has been converted back into a waggon again, though no-one seems to be about, except OTTO in his barrel. GAVIN gazes at him hopelessly, then sits down by the waggon steps and bursts into tears.

MCS - GAVIN cries into his cupped hands, trying to hide his face. The PILGRIM passes by and sees him. He sits down next to him, and fumbles with the relics in his bag. A BEAT.

PILGRIM

(Happily)

Want to buy a relic ?

(Singing)

Oh, Ye Children of Man, who's life...

He notices that GAVIN is crying.

PILGRIM

(inquiringly)

What's wrong Child ?

(Whispering)

Got the plague, have you ?

GAVIN

(Hiding his face)

No ... go away.

PILGRIM

(Shrugging)

Only asked.

(pause)

You want to work out your last lines well in advance.

(pause)

People remember you by last lines, did you know that ?

(pause)

Yes ... they stick them all in a book, then years later someone looks it up, and thinks

PILGRIM (cont'd)

"Oh, what a clever chap!" And then he goes off and bores all his friends - he says - "Did you know what Arthur Cecil Forbes-Ponsonby Jones said before he croaked?" And they all say, "No, what did he say", so he says, "Oh, he said such a clever thing . . ."

A PAUSE. The PILGRIM nods at the ground. GAVIN has stopped crying, and looks up gloomily.

GAVIN

Well, what did he say ?

PILGRIM

(Shaking his head)

Dunno . . . I haven't thought it up yet.

(Pause)

I was looking at old Otto's books - there's some good ones in there.

(Acting)

"You may go home now, the show is over". Then there's "Wait till I've finished my problem" . . . Archimedes - he drowned in his bath you know.

(Pause)

Yes, he jumped up in the air, shouted a few "Eurika's", slipped up on a bar of soap and drowned.

(Pause)

"What an artist the world is losing!" I like that one, that was Nero.

(Pause)

I'm not boring you, am I ?

GAVIN

(Smiling)

No

The PILGRIM gazes round at the Market Place, and sees the long queues of PEOPLE waiting to give their names.

PILGRIM

(Shaking his head)

Don't know what they're excited about. Fancy wanting to go off and get killed.

GAVIN

(Surprised)

Get killed ? How can they if God's on their side ? Anyway, it's better than this place.

The PILGRIM looks at GAVIN a moment, then laughs, shaking his head.

PILGRIM

You haven't seen much, have you ? I'm an Englishman, and that's what they tell us ! He can't be on both sides, can he ? Bless me, no he can't. Do you know I sometimes wonder whether he's on anyone's side. I tell you Child, I've been a Pilgrim all my life. I've been to every shrine in Chrisendom . . . all of them. But I'll tell you something - between you and me, that is.

(Whispering)

I think it's all fiddle-sticks ! That's what I think. Of course I could be wrong . . .

(he looks up)

. . . I could be struck dead with a bolt of lightning . . .

(he waits. No lightning)

But no . . . then in that case, I think it's fiddlesticks !

GAVIN

(Genuinely surprised)

But what about all these relics ?

PILGRIM

(laughing)

These ! They're about as holy as

(whispering)

my arse ! And that's the truth of it !

The PILGRIM chortles to himself. Then suddenly his face becomes serious. He takes GAVIN's shoulder and points into the Market Place.

PILGRIM

(Bitterly)

Look around you, boy ! What do you see ? See any goodness boy ? See any Love ? See any happiness ? Did you ever see any ? Of course you didn't, and nor did I . . . and I've been around a few years longer than you

PILGRIM (cont'd)

boy.

(To himself, but out loud)

Not once, not even a glimmer did I ever see of the Love of God. And you know why I never saw it . . . because it don't exist, because it's all fiddlesticks !

GAVIN looks at the PILGRIM hard. He smiles gently.

GAVIN

Don't upset yourself.

PILGRIM

(Nodding)

See that old man behind you ?

(pause)

A truffle hunter all his life, and he never found a truffle. Not one. Not in all his life.

(pause)

And he never will, and nor will I.

(pause)

And nor will you !

The Market Place has quietened. We hear only the wind and OTTO's pen scratching away at his parchment.

108 INT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT

108

WART is peering through a crude system of lenses, studying a black speck underneath. With his right hand he draws on a piece of parchment what he is seeing through his home-made microscope: a large flea with a suction trunk. A brown mixture bubbles away in a phial above him, and he pauses now and then to glance at its progress.

GAVIN is propped up on his table-bed, reading the Bible by candle-light. He is laughing to himself with suppressed giggles, and we see that the Bible is only a mask to cover up a smaller edition of Chaucer's "The Miller's Tale" which he is reading behind it. Suddenly an alarm bell rings out. WART glances up at the phial -

WART

(Excitedly)

Quickly ! . . .

GAVIN looks up with a frown.

GAVIN

That's not gold is it ?

WART

(impatiently)

Hurry up, I must try it out. Now
where's that rat ?

He hunts round and finds a box by the table.

WART

Where's it gone ?

GAVIN

(Shrugging)

Must have got out while it had the chance -

WART

(Urgently)

Well find another one ... we've got
to experiment on something ... ah !

He sees a large brown RAT crawling along the floor towards him.
It is a rather sad specimen, with big round eyes and no tail.
WART moves towards it, but the RAT seems unafraid.

WART

(Merrily)

This one will do fine -

GAVIN

(Quickly)

No, don't ... wait !

He climbs down from his table, and kneels down on the floor beside
the RAT.

GAVIN

It's a rather sad one ... wonder what
happened to its tail ? I think I'll keep
it ... after all, we've got something in
common !

WART

But I need it to try out my vaccina -

GAVIN

(Picking it up)

You'll just have to find something else,
this one's mine !

WART looks gloomily at GAVIN's new pet, but realises he has lost. He holds up his vaccina, raises his eyes quickly, then knocks back the mixture. GAVIN stares at him in amazement.

GAVIN

(Sarcastically)

Cut flowers or a wreath ?

(Shaking his head)

I wish you'd stick to Alchemy . . . it
might be crazy, but at least no-one gets
hurt !

WART ignores the comment and returns to his microscope.
GAVIN places the RAT in the wooden box, and feeds it a piece of cheese.

CUT TO:

109 INT. CASTLE : PLANNING ROOM - DAY

109

The room is filled with smoke coming from two huge fires either side of the BARON. Every now and then a SERVANT throws a handful of powerful-smelling herbs onto the fires, which sends up another cloud of smoke.

A fleet of RESEARCHERS are thumbing through piles of manuscripts and old volumes, searching out further remedies against the plague.

At the far end of the room, DZOUY YEN tries in vain to bring about a repeat performance of his previous alchemical success. FRANZ stands over him.

FRANZ

(Agitated)

Come on you fake, I've got five hundred
soldiers waiting to be paid . . .

DZOUY YEN

(Giving up)

It's no good . . . I don't have the spirit
with me.

FRANZ

(Angrily)

You've said that a dozen times ! I've given you everything you need, now let's see some results.

DZOUY YEN

(Alarmed)

My Lord, I'm sorry but ... well it's like the weather - unpredictable ... it's all this smoke, I mean the stars aren't in the right position - I must have Saturn in Aquarius ... it's all wrong !

FRANZ

(Threateningly)

I give you one more chance
(he taps the piles of lead
awaiting transmutation)
- If this isn't gold by tonight ...

He puts his hand round DZOUY YEN's throat and squeezes. DZOUY YEN gets the message without further need for words.

110 EXT. FAULTURM TOWER (CASTLE) - DUSK 110

LISA sits by an open window high in the (Castle) tower. Beneath her, at the foot of the Town Wall, WORKMEN finish off their work on the moat, already part-filled with stagnant water.

111 INT./EXT. LISA'S (CASTLE) BEDROOM - DUSK 111

(MATTE SHOT) - LISA stares out across the mountains in the b.g., her mind far away. The PIPER'S THEME drifts in very quietly as she turns from the window and returns to a tapestry.

The room is dark and cold, but the tapestry is alive with colour. It is a fantasy world of winged horses, scarlet trees, shining faces. From somewhere in the castle a bell rings out. LISA pauses, then puts down her needle and thread, and walks to the door. In a few short weeks she has aged five years. Her face is pale and drawn, her smile gone. As she leaves the room, we CUT BACK to the Tapestry a moment. MUSIC FADES.

112 INT. CASTLE : PLANNING ROOM - NIGHT 112

The BARON is eating his dinner off a tray, while he sits between the two huge fires either side of him. The rest of his COURT are

seated by the long table next to the model of Hamelin. LISA sits next to FRANZ, the PRIEST next to the BARONESS. There is total silence, except for the clattering of knives and forks.

At the far end of the room, DZOUY YEN rubs his chin with anxiety, unable to achieve any success.

A SERVANT throws another handful of herbs onto the fire, making the PRIEST choke on his dinner.

PRIEST

(Muttering)

Do we have to have this rubbish burning
all the time ?

BARON

If it's good enough for Pope Clement,
then it's good enough for you .. unless
of course you question the wisdom of his
Holiness ?

The PRIEST raises his eyebrows, but continues his meal as the BURGERMEISTER enters, very much out of breath.

BARON

Ah, Burgermeister ! How good of you
to come ...

BURGERMEISTER

(Wishing to make a point)

I came on foot my Lord.

BARON

(smiling)

Good for the figure ... now, Burgermeister -

The BARON rises from his seat and walks towards the model of Hamelin. A SERVANT walks in front of him, holding up a bowl of smoking herbs.

He stands by the model a moment, then beckons the BURGERMEISTER to come closer.

In LOW ANGLE - MCS - the BARON grips the BURGERMEISTER's arm, and pulls him into a TIGHT TWO-SHOT, with the Town Walls and moat in f.g. (sharp f.). The BARON pulls a lever under the table, allowing a small sluice gate to rise up from the Castle draw-bridge. As it does so, water pours in from underneath, effectively filling the town moat.

BARON

(In loud whisper)

Tonight.

BURGERMEISTER

(Protesting)

But my Lord, the workers have gone home, they've only just finished the dredging . . .

BARON

(Waving his finger)

Tonight. No buts.

BURGERMEISTER

But why can't it wait till tomorrow ?

BARON

Because, Burgermeister, by tomorrow the plague will be with us.

BURGERMEISTER

(Amazed)

How do you know ?

BARON

(Sarcastically)

A little bird told me.

PRIEST (OFF)

I told you . . .

The PRIEST pauses from his dinner without turning round. The BURGERMEISTER and BARON are behind him.

PRIEST

And I in turn was informed by the Medical Faculty in Paris. They have merely observed that the plague strikes on the tenth day after the rats appear.

BARON

(Bellowing)

Shut up, Priest - confine your speech to your prayers !

The PRIEST shrugs and continues his meal.

BARON

So Burgermeister . . . tonight.
Any more questions ?

BURGERMEISTER

Yes . . . could you put me up for a few nights ?

BARON

(Smiling)

You can move in if you want, we've got some space in the dungeon. But do this first.

BURGERMEISTER

Yes my Lord !

He walks off towards the door, then notices DZOUY YEN working at his alchemy.

BURGERMEISTER

Oh, that reminds me . . . there's the problem of old Wart Melius - he'll be flooded out when the moat rises.

MCS - DZOUY YEN reacts to this piece of information.

BARON

Tell him to move, find him somewhere else . . . If you think he's worth saving !

DZOUY YEN stands up, thinking fast.

DZOUY YEN

(Hesitantly)

My Lord . . . with your permission, allow me to tell him. I remember now . . . there are certain er . . . chemicals and apparatus that could be some help -

FRANZ

(quickly)

Just a moment . . . Executioner, go with him - see that he returns.

The EXECUTIONER, a burly character who has been eating at the far end of the table, finishes his beer, then rises with a nod.

MCS - LISA. She too reacts to the news that Wart will be flooded out.

LISA

(To Franz)

Couldn't you let him stay here ?

FRANZ

(Quickly)

We've got one fool alchemist as it is,
I'm not having another.

LISA looks down and continues her meal in silence. As the
BURGERMEISTER leaves, she speaks, but without turning round.

LISA

(Softly)

Goodnight, Father.

But the BURGERMEISTER has gone. HOLD A BEAT.

CUT TO:

113 INT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT

113

WART is fast asleep on the floor, snoring quietly. GAVIN looks
sleepily at his pet RAT who peers up at him from his straw-lined
box.

Suddenly there is a loud banging on the door (off). GAVIN reacts.

EXECUTIONER (OFF)

Open up !

GAVIN

(Calling)

Who is it ?

EXECUTIONER (OFF)

The Baron's chief Executioner !

GAVIN swallows hard. He hurriedly gets off the table and crawls
across to WART.

GAVIN

(Urgently)

Wart ! Wake up, quickly .. it's the
Executioner ...

WART opens his eyes.

114 EXT. WART'S CELLAR DOOR - NIGHT

114

The EXECUTIONER has donned his black mask, and bangs the door with his axe. DZOUY YEN stands by him, making the most of his heavy companion.

EXECUTIONER

(Impatiently)

Open up, or I'll smash the door down !

DZOUY YEN

(Calculating)

No don't ...

The door opens, and WART stares out with blurry eyes.

WART

What do you want ?

EXECUTIONER

I've been sent to ...

DZOUY YEN

(Interrupting)

It's alright ...

(to Wart)

The Baron has ordered that you should hand over ... certain chemicals.

(to the Executioner)

You stay here a moment -

DZOUY YEN pushes his way into the cellar.

115 INT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT

115

DZOUY YEN hurries down the stairs, followed by WART. The EXECUTIONER stands at the top, then moves out of sight.

DZOUY YEN

(Aggressively)

Alright, let's have it.

WART

Have what ?

DZOUY YEN

You know what. Now where is it ?

Without waiting for an answer, DZOUY YEN starts searching through the bottles and apparatus, knocking over equipment in the process.

GAVIN

(Angrily)

It was you . . . you stole it !

WART

(Puzzled and irritated)

Stole what ? What are you looking for ?

GAVIN

He's after your gold . . . he's a fraud,
I knew it . . .

DZOUY YEN grabs GAVIN roughly.

DZOUY YEN

Since you're so well informed, you can
tell me where the rest is ?

WART

(Angrily)

Let go of the boy . . .

WART tries to attack DZOUY YEN, but the latter pushes him off. WART loses his balance and falls against the shelf, bringing the whole lot crashing to the ground.

DZOUY YEN turns round and sees that a brick has fallen loose from behind the shelves. He quickly pulls the remaining bricks away, revealing a hidden box in the wall. GAVIN tries in vain to stop him pulling it out and breaking it open on the floor.

The box contains six or seven jars of gold beads. With a smile of triumph, DZOUY YEN stacks them into another box, then covers them over with some irrelevant apparatus.

WART is still groaning under the piles of broken shelves. GAVIN starts pulling them clear as DZOUY YEN leaves.

GAVIN

(Calling up)

You just wait !

DZOUY YEN

(Laughing)

You just try !

115 (cont'd)

115

At the top of the stairs, DZOUY YEN looks back and sees that GAVIN is helping WART free. He quickly removes the keys from the inside of the door and leaves.

CUT TO:

116 EXT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT

116

The EXECUTIONER is standing by a small carriage, polishing his axe's blade with pride.

DZOUY YEN stands by the Cellar door, looks quickly at the EXECUTIONER (off), then bolts the door quietly from the outside, and pockets the keys in his overcoat.

The EXECUTIONER looks up from his shining blade, lays it on the floor of the carriage, and comes forward to help DZOUY YEN.

DZOUY YEN

(Quickly)

It's alright, I can manage.

EXECUTIONER

Did you tell them to move ?

DZOUY YEN

(Smiling)

I told them.

He follows the EXECUTIONER into the carriage.

CUT TO:

117 EXT. RIVER WESER (TAUBER) LOCK GATE - NIGHT

117

The BURGERMEISTER supervises several WORKMEN heaving on some rope pulleys.

BURGERMEISTER

(Doing nothing)

Come on men, put your backs into it !

UPSHOT - the Sluice Gate slowly raises in f. g. as the WORKMEN at the top heave away. The murky waters of the River Weser start to pour through.

118 INT. CASTLE : LISA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

118

LISA is being undressed for bed by two ageing HANDMAIDS. While they gossip between each other, they remove her top dress, leaving only a steel cage over her naked body. She is almost flat-chested, though she is just beginning to show the first signs of transition from childhood. She stands by the window with her arms outstretched, staring out into the night.

We hear the water pouring into the moat from the river (off).

1ST HANDMAID

(to her friend)

Of course my Albert said it all along. Soon as he saw those frogs come out from the sky, he says "Maud, things don't look too good"; that's what he said -

2ND HANDMAID

I don't know what the world's coming to, and that's a fact! Did you hear about Eleanor's girl ? She's taken up with a flagellant ! Beating herself all over the place . . . she brought him round last Sunday, they hadn't been sat down at the table more than two minutes when she pulls out her thongs and gives herself blue murder ! She danced around for five minutes, sang half-a-dozen "Ave Maria's", then sat down and finished her sweet !

1ST HANDMAID

Still, keeps them off the streets ! Let them have a bit of fun while they got the chance. You should see my Albert's coffin: lovely piece of work . . . he's had it ever since his sister came down with leprocy. He got it out the hen-house last week to give it a dusting over - it don't half come up a lovely shade of green . . . oh, he's going to be a handsome corpse when he goes !

For much of the dialogue we remain on LISA, who remains impassive throughout.

119 EXT. TOWN MOAT - NIGHT

119

In LOW ANGLE we PAN ROUND as a piece of weed floats along the

119 (Cont'd) 119

rising moat, HOLDING on the barred window of Wart's Cellar.

120 INT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT 120

GAVIN has dragged WART free of the fallen shelves, and is wiping his cut head with a cloth.

GAVIN

(Desperately)

Wart ... Wart - say something !

But the old man only moans. GAVIN props him against the wall, and does his best to make him comfortable.

121 INT. CASTLE : PLANNING ROOM - NIGHT 121

DZOUY YEN returns into the room, and discreetly walks over to his furnace. He takes off his overcoat, hangs it up by the door, and starts getting back to work. We hear the BARON (off) listening to a recital of further measures he must take against the plague.

CHRONICLER (OFF)

Hippocrates, Volume 46 ... Looks can kill ... the pestilence is passed through the eyes !

PHYSICIAN (OFF)

The contemplation of gold ... powdered emeralds so potent it'll crack a toad's eyes ...

CHRONICLER

... Dionysius Book 28 ... Sulphur and best quality arsenic.

PHYSICIAN

Galen, Volume 12 - The plague brings stinking mists, rains of snakes and frogs, locusts darkening the sun ... rats borne out of mud !

The BARON soaks up the information while his fleet of RESEARCHERS continue their investigations.

122 INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

122

LISA lies awake in bed, listening to the sound of the swirling waters outside her window.

123 INT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT

123

GAVIN is fast asleep on his table, while WART lies propped up on the straw against the wall.

MCS - GAVIN's Rat squeaks in his box ... drops of water are splashing in, and as we PAN UP, we see a trickle running down the wall from the barred window.

124 INT. CASTLE : PLANNING ROOM - NIGHT

124

FRANZ wanders across to where DZOUY YEN is working.

FRANZ

Well ?

DZOUY YEN

(Cautiously)

I think we might have a measure of success.

FRANZ

(Roughly)

You think ! You'd better ...

DZOUY YEN

(Smiling)

Patience ... don't forget Aesop's fable - Thinking he'd get at once all the gold that the goose could give away ...

FRANZ

(Imitating)

Quack !

The RESEARCHER's dialogue is lapped over the above.

CHRONICLER (OFF)

Keep goats in the house ... Bottled wind from sewers ... Talismen ... Flagellants !

FRANZ leaves DZOUY YEN to his work.

125 EXT. RIVER WESER (TAUBER) LOCK GATE - NIGHT 125

Quick UPSHOT - The water pouring through the opened lock gates, now fully hoisted.

126 INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 126

LISA listens to the distant water, then gets up and crosses the room.

127 INT. CASTLE : PLANNING ROOM - NIGHT 127

LISA enters the smoke-filled planning room, and quietly walks across to FRANZ.

He is sitting by his father, listening to the advisory panel.

RESEARCHER

Avicenna's "Treatise on Cannabis" ...
the smoking of the dried flowers -

LISA

(Interrupting)

Franz ...

FRANZ

(Without turning)

Shhh ...

LISA

(Quietly)

I can't sleep - I'm worried about Ga...
Wart.

FRANZ

(Waving his hand)

He's alright - go back to bed.

CHRONICLER (OFF)

Extract of the sacred mushroom...
Xenophanes Chapter 104 ...

LISA walks back across the room, passing DZOUY YEN. He continues his work without looking up.

DZOUY YEN

(False prayer)

Oh sweet saviour, grant me the wisdom

127 (Cont'd)

127

DZOUY YEN (cont'd)
of thy servant Aristophanes, that the
Silvery waters and Starry Earth be ...

PHYSICIAN (OFF)
... free from all melancholy ...

PRIEST (OFF)
... with prayer and supplication ever-
lasting, that in Christ's name ...

We remain on LISA as she walks back to the door. The dialogue
(OFF) is building up into something of a religious orgasm ...

RESEARCHER (OFF)
The Flagellants should be called in -
the scourging of the flesh is to be
preferred to the Holy oil of a Priest ...

LISA pauses -

LISA'S POV - Dzouy Yen's overcoat. The wooden key-tag with the
words 'W.M. - CELLAR' is sticking out from the pocket.

LISA looks anxiously round the room, then quickly grabs the keys
and leaves. PACE MUSIC STARTS (over).

128 INT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT 128

The water is pouring through the barred window, but GAVIN sleeps
on. His RAT prances around his box, squeaking hysterically.

CUT TO:

129 INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 129

LISA tugs down the heavy curtains, and starts lashing them
together. She ties one end to a pillar on her four-poster bed,
and throws the other out of the window.

130 EXT. LISA'S TOWER (CASTLE) & WALL GANTRY - NIGHT 130

LISA (STUNT-DOUBLE) clambers out of the window, and slides
down the curtain rope. (FAULTURM TOWER)

It falls slightly short of the Town Wall gantry roof, but she
manages to swing herself onto a piece of stone jutting out from the
edge.

131 INT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT 131

GAVIN is awakened by his RAT which has climbed out of its box, and is squeaking next to his ear. He mumbles sleepily, then opens his eyes.

GAVIN'S POV - The Room is two foot under water, and WART is still lying on the floor, submerged up to his chest.

GAVIN jumps down from the table, and wades over to WART. He shakes him wildly -

GAVIN
(Yelling)
Wart ! For God's sake wake up ...

The old man stirs, but doesn't wake. GAVIN drags him over to the stone steps, then looks up at the door.

132 EXT. TOWN WALL GANTRY - NIGHT 132

FAST CAMERA TRACK along the roof-beams. LISA runs below us, stumbling along in her night-dress. The occasional RAT jumps out at her, but she carries on running for all her worth.

133 EXT. SCHMIEDE & TOWN WALL - NIGHT 133

UPSHOT - LISA racing along the Gantry as it curves round towards the Northern Gate.

134 INT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT 134

GAVIN bangs on the solid door with useless pieces of wood. He turns round anxiously, and sees WART stirring at the foot of the steps. The water is still cascading through the barred window, and the level is almost half-way up the wall.

135 EXT. RODERTOR STEPS - NIGHT 135

LISA hurtles down the steps connecting the Town Wall Gantry with the Rodertor Archway.

136 INT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT 136

GAVIN drags WART further up the steps from the flooding waters. A tremendous crash followed by a veritable tidal wave washes the walls of the room as Wart's 36 Volumes of Plato's "Republic"

- 136 (Cont'd) 136
collapses off the wall.
- 137 EXT. RODERBOGEN ARCH - NIGHT 137
QUICK LOW ANGLE - LISA dashes under the Roderbogen Arch,
and down the Alter Keller.
- 138 EXT. SPITTALGASSE & KOBOLZELLERSTEIG - NIGHT 138
LISA runs along the Spittalgasse, takes the short-cut down the
steps under the Plonlein House, and round into the Kobolzeller-
steig Street.
- 139 INT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT 139
GAVIN is crouched next to WART at the top of the stairs.
Suddenly he hears LISA's approaching footsteps ...
- 140 EXT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT 140
LISA arrives at the door, tries the handle, then quickly fumbles
for the keys.
- LISA
(Calling)
Gavin ... Are you there ? Gavin !
- 141 INT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT 141
Before GAVIN has time to reply, the door swings open. LISA
stands at the top a moment, taking it in.

LISA's POV - the room is almost completely submerged in water.
She rushes down the few remaining dry steps, and throws herself
round GAVIN.
- GAVIN
Quickly, help me get him out !
- 142 EXT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT 142
They drag WART out of the cellar, then fall against the wall
themselves, exhausted. Suddenly GAVIN remembers something.
- 143 INT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT 143
GAVIN stumbles down the steps, and plunges in the water.

143 (cont'd)

143

CS - His pet RAT is stranded on a piece of remaining shelf where the books once stood.

GAVIN flounders towards it, grabs it in his hand, then struggles back to the stone steps. LISA has returned at the top.

LISA

Gavin ... what are you doing ? !

She helps pull him out of the water. GAVIN shows her the RAT.

GAVIN

(Smiling)

A friend of mine.

LISA looks at him, amazed. Then she bursts out laughing.

144 EXT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT

144

LISA comes out of the cellar, followed by GAVIN, soaked to the skin. He stumbles without his crutch, and leans against the wall. He starts to go back.

LISA

You're not going back in there again.
Come on, you can still lean on me ...

GAVIN smiles, and puts his arm around her. They walk across to where WART is lying at the foot of the wall. He is beginning to come round, and his eyes flicker between groans.

GAVIN

(to Lisa)

He'll be alright...

He kneels down beside him and wipes his forehead.

145 INT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT

145

As the MUSIC FADES OUT, we HOLD in LOW ANGLE (MCS) on Gavin's crutch bobbing up and down alongside a volume of Plato's "Republic". HOLD A BEAT.

FADE INTO:

146 EXT. BURGERHEIM MARKET - DAY

146

A PAMPHLET SELLER is wandering round the Market Place, ringing his bell.

PAMPHLET SELLER

(Calling out)

Famous Alchemist hung from gilded
gallows ! Sensational ! Read all about it !

The PILGRIM walks over to buy a copy. In the b.g. we can see
STALL KEEPERS trying to beat the RATS off their stalls.

PILGRIM

(Reading pamphlet)

What a way to go ...
(He winces)

PAMPHLET SELLER

(Looking at guilder)

Got nothing smaller ? I'm a bit short
on change.

GAVIN pushes his way through the CROWD to the PAMPHLET
SELLER.

GAVIN

Two please.

GAVIN hands over some loose pfennigs.

GAVIN

(To the Pilgrim)

You wouldn't be needing an extra
player, would you ... now that he's
gone ?

PAMPHLET SELLER

(To the Pilgrim)

140 ... 160 ... 164 ... 1 guilder.

The PAMPHLET SELLER hands back the change to the PILGRIM,
then walks off, shouting out as before.

PAMPHLET SELLER (OFF)

Sensational hanging ! All the details !
Two hours a-dying ! Read all about it !

PILGRIM

(Over - reading)

Last lines ... where are they ? Ah -

PILGRIM (cont'd)

"Don't pull it too tight, I've got a sore throat". Oh dear oh dear ... couldn't he come up with anything better than that !

GAVIN

(Pushing)

Do you think you might have room ?

PILGRIM

(Looking up)

Room ? Yes, I think we might have.
Let me see, two down and five to go ...

There is an ear-splitting scream from the waggon. HELGA comes rushing out.

HELGA

(Terrified)

It's Longshanks ...

MATTIO

(Quickly)

Keep quiet for God's sake !

The PILGRIM crosses himself quickly.

PILGRIM

My mistake ... three down and four to go !

They approach the waggon cautiously. MATTIO waves them back.

MATTIO

(Whispering)

Keep back and keep quiet - we're all finished if the mob finds out !

MATTIO holds his face away as he pulls back the canvas flap of the waggon. Then very quickly he glances inside. Although we don't see the unfortunate Longshanks, the groans from within tell us all we need to know.

MATTIO

We'll move him out tonight with the garbage.

146 (Cont' d)

146

OTTO is in his barrel in the background, writing as usual.

OTTO

(Without looking up)

"We are all kept and fed for Death,
like a herd of swine to be slain without
reason !"

OTTO's PIG gives a snort of agreement.

147 INT. CASTLE : PLANNING ROOM - DAY

147

The BARON is sitting between his two enormous bonfires, still listening to his team of RESEARCHERS. The PRIEST walks over.

PRIEST

My Lord, the people are besieged by rats,
and now the plague is upon them. I have
been asked to move the blessed relics of
St. Agnes into the Market Place ...

BARON

(Quickly)

Don't you touch them - they stay in the
castle.

(Smiling)

St. Paul has told us that Charity begins
at home.

(Looking up)

Ah, my dear Wart ! Forgive me for not
coming to see you. I trust you have
everything you need ?

WART has entered, and is standing by the model of Hamelin,
waving away the herbal fumes.

WART

My room is comfortable enough, thank
you, though I need more equipment if I
am to succeed.

(Pause)

But my Lord, this may only be effective
once we have got rid of the rats. They are
the cause of the plague ...

PRIEST

(Interrupting)

God is the cause, and God will find the remedy if and when he sees fit to do so. This man is a Jew, and ...

The BARON waves him quiet.

WART

(Continuing)

With respect my Lord, it is Man's task to find the remedy, not God's.

(Sarcastically, to the Priest)

That is presumably why he provided some of us with a brain.

(To the Baron)

The rats may be the Burgermeister's business, but when they bring death within your own walls, then my Lord it will become your business too.

The BARON has taken in the message.

BARON

How much are the Rat-Catchers asking for ?

WART

I believe the Guild want an extra five thousand a year.

BARON

(Giving up)

Alright, see the Bailiff. Take a thousand down to the Burgermeister but just tell him to get on with it.

The BAILIFF is the other side of the bonfire.

BAILIFF

My Lord, your son needs the money to pay the mercenaries...

BARON

(Smiling)

Tell him to pay them when they get back from France. Where is he anyway ?

CUT TO:

148 EXT. BURGERHEIM MARKET - DAY

148

There is panic and chaos in the Market Place. The surviving PLAYERS and GAVIN watch from behind the canvas as FRANZ leads his RABBLE from house to house.

In CLOSER SHOT we see an OLD MAN being pulled from his house and thrown into a cart.

OLD MAN
(Protesting)
But I'm not Jewish ... I -

He is silenced by one of the THUGS.

FRANZ
(Pointing)
There's another one, poisoning
the well !

THREE THUGS wrench another suspected JEW from the well and add him to the heap of humanity in the cart.

FRANZ
And him ...
(Looking round)
Where's that Jew with the pig ?

MS - OTTO ducks down inside his barrel.

FRANZ
(Pointing)
There's the pig ... it's possessed !

The frenzied RABBLE start stoning the wretched animal (off) with anything they can lay their hands on. We hear the PIG squeal out in pain.

CS - OTTO peers up from his barrel, his face trembling with rage. Suddenly he stumbles out and rushes over in a desperate bid to save his animal. He tries beating off the rabble with his lantern-pole.

OTTO
(Crying out)
Get your hands away, she's done nothing
wrong !

148 (Cont'd)

148

FRANZ
(Victorious)
Take him - over here !

The RABBLE carry OTTO back to his barrel, then brutally wedge him inside. FRANZ finds the lid, and hammers it down.

MLS - The RABBLE kick the barrel along the ground, then carry it off.

149 INT. WAGGON - DAY

149

GAVIN turns away from the canvas slit. The PILGRIM looks gloomy.

PILGRIM
(Shaking his head)
Keep out of sight, we'll be needing you.

GAVIN
Shouldn't we do something ?

PILGRIM
(Holding him back)
You go out there and they'll tear you to pieces . . .

GAVIN
(Remembering)
But what about Wart !

CUT TO:

150 EXT. GROSSER STERN WALL & MOAT - DAY

150

UPSHOT - The shouts of the RABBLE become louder, then suddenly they appear over the top of the wall with the Barrel containing Otto. They hurl it over the edge and into the moat -

LOW ANGLE - The Barrel splashes into the water, then starts to drift along towards the Weser River (Tauber).

151 EXT. MARKTPLATZ - DAY

151

A huge CROWD has converged outside the Rathaus. The return of FRANZ and his rabble incites the mob into further outbursts of mass hysteria. They chant and yell up at the Burgermeister's

- 151 (Cont'd) 151
window, hurling stones and abuse at the Corporation within.
A covered carriage moves slowly towards the stone steps
in front of the building.
- 152 INT. CARRIAGE - DAY 152
WART looks anxiously out at the angry CROWD. The
EXECUTIONER has come with him to give protection.
- EXECUTIONER
I don't like the look of that crowd,
Sir - I think we'd best use the back
way. If they know you're a Jew ...
pardon the mention Sir ... I
wouldn't give a guilder for your
chances.
- He calls up to the DRIVER (OFF)
- Use the back entrance ... and be
quick about it.
- 153 EXT. MARKTPLATZ - DAY 153
The CARRIAGE turns slowly round, and manoeuvres its way
towards the large oak doors. Suddenly one of the CROWD
spots WART inside the carriage.
- MAN
(Calling out)
It's Melius ... it's the Jew !
- DRIVER
(Quickly)
Open the doors ! Baron's orders !
- The heavy doors swing open as the CROWD surge forward.
- 154 EXT. RATHAUS BACK-YARD - DAY 154
The CARRIAGE rumbles through the arch-way, and the GUARD
manages to shut the doors in the face of the CROWD.
The CARRIAGE stops outside the back-door, and WART climbs
out, followed by the EXECUTIONER.

The noise from the Marktplatz below makes any conversation within the room almost inaudible. The BURGERMEISTER sits with his CORPORATION members and the RAT-CATCHER'S PROVOST round the long table.

BURGERMEISTER

(Sweating)

Perhaps we could excommunicate the Rats - I hear that's what they've done in Bremen.

CORPORATION MAN

(with contempt)

You think they'll swallow that !

BURGERMEISTER

(Close to panic)

Well what else can we do !

There is a loud banging on the door. The BURGERMEISTER jumps up in fright.

BURGERMEISTER

(Calling)

Who is it?

EXECUTIONER

(OFF)

The Baron's Executioner ! Open up !

BURGERMEISTER

(Terrified)

Oh, my God . . . (waving at a SERVANT)
you'd better let him in -

The SERVANT unbolts the four heavy locks on the door, and the EXECUTIONER enters, followed by WART.

BURGERMEISTER

(Surprised)

You ! What are you doing here ? (To the SERVANT) Quick, bolt the door again.

As the SERVANT locks the door, WART comes over to the table, holding out the bag of guilders.

WART

(To the Provost)

The Baron has agreed to meet your demands. (Putting down the money)
A thousand guilders in cash, and the rest will follow, later.

The PROVOST shakes his head.

PROVOST

I'm sorry, it's too late now. We'll never get rid of the rats even if we worked day and night. We're outnumbered a thousand to one!

(To the Burgermeister) It's your fault ... if you'd listened a month ago, we might have stood a chance.

BURGERMEISTER

(Hotly)

What d'you mean it's my fault! It's not my fault ... I'm not an alchemist - I can't produce guilders out of a hat!
(To the Corporation) It's your fault - you should have backed me up!

CORPORATION MAN

(Angrily)

It's not our fault at all ... it's your fault - and if it's not yours, then it's the Baron's fault. You shouldn't have spent so much on the wedding.

WART

(Interrupting)

Don't waste time arguing who's fault it is. Here's the money, now start doing something!

PROVOST

(helplessly)

How can we? We don't have enough traps for a start ... and the one's we have don't work!

155 (Cont'd)

155

A RAT sits nibbling some cheese from an ineffective trap in the corner, while another one waltzes across the table. Outside the CROWD (OFF) chants for the Burgermeister's blood.

The BURGERMEISTER thumps the table with his fist, then gets up and paces the room. He goes to the window, muttering oaths under his breath. He bangs his fists together in agitation, his eye-brows twitching ten to the dozen.

CORPORATION MAN

(Hopelessly)

Perhaps we should just go home and forget all about it.

BURGERMEISTER

(Looking out of the window)

Perhaps you'd like to repeat that ingenious idea to them !

156 EXT. RATHAUS & MARKTPLATZ - DAY

156

BURGERMEISTER'S POV - HIGH SHOT - The CROWD are beside themselves with anger and frenzy.

157 INT. CORPORATION ROOM - DAY

157

The BURGERMEISTER wheels round.

BURGERMEISTER

(Shouting)

You great imbecile ! How can we go home? I can't even get into my own bed !

The CORPORATION MAN shrugs, and opens up his packed lunch, only to find that it has been eaten by rats.

BURGERMEISTER

(Miserably)

Perhaps we should just all jump out of the window !

CS - The BURGERMEISTER looks gloomily out of the window, contemplating the idea. Suddenly a quiet voice speaks up from behind.

PIPER (OFF)

If I can rid the town of rats, will you
give me a thousand guilders ?

BURGERMEISTER

(Without turning)

A thousand ? Fifty thousand !

Then his face freezes. He turns round very slowly.

MLS - The PIPER is standing inside the room ... the door
remains locked. He is dressed as before, though this time he
has a long reed-pipe in his hand. He smiles, almost into CAMERA.

The BURGERMEISTER looks at him in amazement.

BURGERMEISTER

(Almost a whisper)

How did you get in ?

The PIPER looks at him, his fingers itching at the pipe.

PIPER

(Repeating the question)

If I can rid your town of rats, will you
give me a thousand guilders ?

The BURGERMEISTER looks bewildered. He turns round to the
CORPORATION, who seem equally surprised.

PROVOST

Who is this ?

(To the Piper)

Who are you ?

PIPER

(Smiling)

People call me the Pied Piper.

PROVOST

(Indignantly)

I don't give a fiddle what they call you,
you're not in the Guild !

WART

Oh, Provost - At least he's worth a try.

The BURGERMEISTER returns to the table. He thinks for a moment, fingering the bag of guilders, then holds it up.

BURGERMEISTER

You get rid of the rats . . .
(he drops the bag on the table)
- The money's yours.

PROVOST

(Protesting, OFF)
But Burgermeister, that money's for us,
it's from the . . .

His voice trails off as the PIPER turns away from the table, and walks back towards the door. He smiles "a little smile, as if he knows what magic sleeps, in his quiet pipe the while." He takes the pipe to his lips, with his sharp eyes twinkling "like a candle flame where salt is sprinkled".

MCS - The RAT eating the cheese in the trap pauses, twitching its' ears. Then it scurries off behind the PIPER.

UPSHOT - The RAT in f. g. eating the CORPORATION MAN'S lunch quivers its' whiskers and follows its' companion after the PIPER.

The PIPER leaves the room through the open doorway, and we HOLD on the frozen faces of the BURGERMEISTER and CORPORATION.

158 INT. RATHAUS: STAIRCASE - DAY

158

LOW ANGLE UPSHOT - The PIPER'S MUSIC (OFF) becomes louder, backed by the sound of scurrying feet. He appears round the coil of the spiral stone staircase, piping away to the RATS that follow behind him. CAMERA PANS round as he passes in CS, then HOLDS as he disappears round the coil. The RATS hurry after him, their numbers growing all the time. (LIVE RATS).

- 159 EXT. MARKTPLATZ & RATHAUS - DAY 159
- LOW ANGLE - The angry CROWD jostle in f.g., shouting up to the Rathaus. Slowly their voices subside as the PIPER'S MUSIC (OFF) takes over. They move out of SHOT to left and right, making way for the PIPER who appears in LS. As he walks towards us, we CRANE UP into the air, PANNING ROUND and down as he passes underneath, followed by an army of RATS (Model).
- 160 INT. CATHEDRAL - DAY 160
- LOW ANGLE - UPSHOT - Some RATS (LIVE) are nibbling away at the Communion Bread on the High Altar. They react to the Piper's MUSIC (OFF), and jump down either side of CAMERA.
- MLS - LOW ANGLE - The RATS (LIVE) scurry along towards us down the centre aisle.
- 161 EXT. ST. JAKOBSKIRCHE CATHEDRAL - DAY 161
- MLS - The RATS (MODEL) dive out of the Cathedral, and join other RATS in LS (MODEL) heading down the street towards the Klingengasse.
- 162 EXT. ALTERSTADTGASSE - DAY 162
- Two RATS (LIVE) crawl underneath the door of a house, and we PAN them round as they run off into LS.
- 163 EXT. SPITTALGASSETOR TOWER - DAY 163
- HIGH ANGLE DOWNSHOT - The PIPER leads the RATS (MODEL/SFX) in LS down the Kobolzellersteig. We HOLD on the CROWD as they follow at a cautious distance behind.
- 164 EXT. KOBOLZELLERSTEIG - DAY 164
- MCS - UPSHOT - TWO CHILDREN appear at a window. Their eyes follow the Piper (OFF) round as he passes by, with the shadows of the rats (SPX) drifting across their fixed expressions.
- 165 INT. BURGERMEISTER'S BEDROOM - DAY 165
- LOW ANGLE UPSHOT - FRAU POPPENDICK stands trembling on a stool as some RATS (LIVE) jump out from underneath the bed-clothes, and head off down the passage.

- 166 EXT. BURGENTHEIM MARKET - DAY 166
- MLS - The CROWD stand back in silent wonder as the RATS (MODEL or MATTE) pass by in CS, soft f.
- MS - UPSHOT - More RATS (LIVE) jump out from the garbage cans in a small Porchway, scurrying away to the Piper's MUSIC (OFF).
- CS - the PIPER leads his army (OFF) as he plays the thin MUSIC from his pipe. As he turns away, we PULL BACK to include GAVIN and KARL in f.g., CS, watching him.
- LS - LOW ANGLE - The CROWD fill in the ranks behind the rats (OFF), muttering to themselves in amazement.
- 167 INT. CASTLE : KITCHEN - DAY 167
- MCS - The BARON's COOK leaps back in alarm as TWO RATS (LIVE) jump out of the flour bin and run to the distant MUSIC (OFF).
- 168 INT. CASTLE : PLANNING ROOM - DAY 168
- LOW ANGLE - MLS - The BARON looks round in faint surprise as a RAT, (LIVE) scarpers out from one of the RESEARCHER's books in f.g.
- 169 INT. CASTLE : WART'S ROOM - DAY 169
- LS - Wart's new room in the castle is sadly lacking in equipment and atmosphere. Two RATS (LIVE) jump out from the darkness, their white eyes flashing.
- CS - Gavin's Pet RAT sweaks back and forth in its cardboard box as the Piper's MUSIC (OFF) becomes louder. It jumps up on a piece of stale bread, and manages to climb over the top.
- MLS - LOW ANGLE - The Pet RAT wobbles across the floor behind the others.
- 170 EXT. CASTLE COURTYARD - DAY 170
- LOW ANGLE - The tailless Pet RAT crosses the courtyard. In LS beyond the draw-bridge we can see the shadow of the Rat Army (OFF) moving past.

171 EXT. KOBOLZELLERTOR TOWER - DAY 171

The WORKMEN repairing the wall pause in their lunch-hour to watch the PIPER and his RATS passing below them (MODELS)

LOW ANGLE - (ZOOM) - Gavin's RAT fights its way through the CROWD's feet, trying to keep up with the others (OFF).

172 EXT. KOBOLZELLERTOR DRAWBRIDGE - DAY 172

MLS - The PIPER leads the RATS (MODEL/MATTE) out of the Town Gates and down the approach road.

INSERT - A mass of RATS (LIVE) fill the SCREEN, each one trying to push in front of the next: "Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats, brown rats, black rats, grey rats, tawny rats, grave old plodders, gay young friskers, Fathers, Mothers, Uncles, Cousins, cocking tails and pricking whiskers, families by tens and dozens, brothers, sisters, husbands, wives, follow the Piper for their lives !"

CS - A not-so-gay young frisker, Gavin's Pet RAT, lumbers along behind the others. CAMERA PANS UP onto the CROWD that follows behind.

173 EXT. DOPPELBRUCKER BRIDGE & WESER (TAUBER) - DAY 173

MCS - ZOOM SHOT (From far side of Tauber River) - The PIPER approaches with the RATS behind him. As he stops, we PULL BACK in LS WIDE ANGLE, incl. the double-arched Doppelbrucker Bridge CAM. L., with Hamelin (Rothenburg) behind it on the sky-line. The River Weser (Tauber) flows in front of us, into which the RATS (MODELS) plunge.

UPSHOT - Doppelbrucker Bridge. The CROWD move onto the bridge, and watch in amazement.

UPSHOT - MS - The PIPER plays on as the RATS (SPX) surge past him in CS.

INSERTS - Fast CLOSE SHOTS of RATS (MODELS) falling into the river.

LS - From under the arched bridge. The PIPER in b.g., the RATS floating past CAMERA in CS (soft focus).

MCS - the CROWD on the river bank include KARL and GAVIN watching the PIPER (OFF)

174 EXT. FAULTURMTOR TOWER (CASTLE) - DAY 174

MCS - LISA watches and listens from her window to the Piper's MUSIC (OFF).

175 EXT. DOPPELBRUCKER BRIDGE & WESER (TAUBER) - DAY 175

CS - the PIPER plays on, while the last of the RATS (MODEL) flash past his feet and into the river (off). Behind him, in sharp f. b. g., the CROWD stand in silence on the Bridge.

MLS - The BURGERMEISTER pushes his way through the CROWD, followed by FRANZ and some of his RABBLE.

MCS - Gavin's Pet RAT hurries along as a late-comer. He is about to follow the others into the fast-flowing waters, when the MUSIC stops. With skidding paws, he manages to stop himself falling in. He looks around him, then quickly beats a retreat back towards the town.

LS - UPSHOT - The CROWD on the bridge. They pause a moment, then break into tumultuous cheering.

MCS - The PIPER smiles as the CROWD leap in the air with joy on the Bridge behind him.

The BURGERMEISTER stops short and looks around him at the cheering CROWD. In the background we hear the bells of Hamelin ringing out amid the cheers. The BURGERMEISTER turns to one of his CORPORATION MEMBERS who has followed from the Rathaus.

BURGERMEISTER

(Excitedly)

Quickly, tell the Baron what's happened,
tell the Scavengers to poke out the nests,
and block up the holes !

(Beside himself with joy)

Oh, what a celebration this calls for !

The BURGERMEISTER is about to join the rest of the CROWD, when a shadow falls across his face.

PIPER (OFF)

A thousand guilders ... if you please.

The BURGERMEISTER looks around.

The PIPER stands by him, holding out his hand with a smile.

BURGERMEISTER

(Pretending not to hear)

What ?

PIPER

(Smiling)

The thousand guilders you promised me.

The BURGERMEISTER looks at him stonily, then turns round to the CROWD. He gives a short, unpleasant laugh - then a peel of false guffaws. The CORPORATION MEMBERS laugh with him.

BURGERMEISTER

A thousand guilders ! My dear sir, what did you do ? Our river did the work for you ! A thousand guilders ! Come, take fifty . . .

He produces some coins from his pocket and hands them to the PIPER.

PIPER

(Shaking his head)

You promised me a thousand guilders.

The CROWD roar with laughter at the PIPER's hesitating "stutter".

BURGERMEISTER

(Laughing)

I was joking, and besides you're not even in the Guild . . . you're lucky to get anything !

The PIPER's smile fades like a cloud across the sun.

PIPER

(Calmly)

People who break their promises may find that I pipe a different tune.

BURGERMEISTER

(Angrily)

You threaten me ? Who do you think you are ?

(Turning to his Corporation

BURGERMEISTER (cont'd)

Members)

He threatens us ! This Piper ! This idle
vagrant, this ...

(trying to find words)

this miscellaneous wanderer !

The BURGERMEISTER turns back to the PIPER as FRANZ pushes
his way forward.

BURGERMEISTER

(Waving him away)

Go on, do your worst, play your pipe
until you burst !

FRANZ

(Angrily)

I gave you fair warning, I told you
never to show your face here again !

The PIPER stares at him hard. Once again, FRANZ loses control.
He knocks the pipe out of his hand and into the river. KARL
stumbles forward and tries to stop him, but it is too late.

FRANZ

Don't push me around !

He pushes KARL backwards into the mud, then turns round again
to the Piper. But he has gone.

FRANZ

Where did he go ?

BURGERMEISTER

(Dismissing it)

God knows ...

(Pause)

what does it matter ? Come on,
there's work to be done ... food to be
ordered !

FRANZ takes a last look round, then follows the BURGERMEISTER
with the rest of the CROWD back towards the Town.

MCS - KARL pulls himself up out of the mud, and feels his way
along the River bank.

176 (Cont'd)

176

CS - his hand gropes among a clump of rushes, searching for something.

UPSHOT - KARL's face. It breaks into a smile as he feels the Piper's Pipe.

He takes the pipe from where it has been caught among the rushes and hides it in his jacket. HOLD A BEAT.

177 INT. CASTLE : PLANNING ROOM - DAY

177

Some SERVANTS are sweeping away the remnants of the Baron's two bonfires, while others carry in piles of yule-logs, Christmas Trees and decorations. The BARON is talking to the BURGERMEISTER.

BARON

We'll pay them when they come back - I need the money for this Hanseatic League business.

(Pause)

Has the moat been lowered yet ?

BURGERMEISTER

Yes my Lord ... Melius can move back when he wants. We've fitted the cellar up for him ...

BARON

(Interrupting)

We'll make sure you keep him happy ... Oh, and cancel the Flagellants will you - I shan't be needing them after all.

BURGERMEISTER

(Rubbing his hands)

Yes my Lord, indeed my Lord. Now if you could just approve the wine lists ...

178 INT. WART'S ROOM - DAY

178

WART is packing up his equipment and bottles into various crates. GAVIN looks at his rat's box.

GAVIN

(Gloomily)

He wouldn't have been a good
traveller anyway.

WART

(Sadly)

When are you going ?

GAVIN

(Vaguely)

Oh, they said they'd be leaving at
first light in the morning. They're
doing a new play in Bremen first . . .
it's a new one from England -
Geoffrey someone. It's called the
Canterbury Tales, and I'm to be the
Wife of Bath !

GAVIN does a quick imitation of the part he has been given. WART
watches him; he smiles, but is obviously hiding his feelings.

WART

(Without looking round)

I shall miss you.

GAVIN

(Laughing it off)

No you won't ! You don't need me - you
never did really. But I'll write to you . . .
you taught me that after all. And I can
read my own part too . . . and I'm
grateful for that.

(Pause)

Just think of it - me in England ! That's
where we're going afterwards. And the
Pilgrim says he knows a doctor in
Richmond who can . . .

He tails off. WART is hiding his face from GAVIN.

GAVIN

(Hurt)

What's wrong ? . . . You won't miss me.
Will you ?

WART

(Turning away)

I'm an old man Gavin, you forget that.

(Pause)

Yes, I'll miss you.

GAVIN

But you've got ... you've got all your work.

WART

(With a sigh)

Yes.

(Pause)

I've got my work.

WART fumbles for a list on the table. He folds it up and gives it to GAVIN.

WART

Can you take this to the Baron ... it's a list of books I need.

GAVIN looks at WART closely, then at the list.

GAVIN

(Laughing)

The complete works of Plato and Aristotle. That's going to set him back a few guilders !

(Walking to the door)

I'll write a play about them one day ... and I'll dedicate it to you - Wart Melius: Philosopher, Teacher ... and my sometime friend.

GAVIN leaves. We HOLD on WART as he slowly continues to pack up his books.

179 INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - DAY

179

LISA is working on her fantasy tapestry, which is almost completed. There is a soft banging on the door.

GAVIN

(OFF - Loud whisper)

Lisa ... Lisa, it's Gavin.

179 (Cont'd)

179

LISA looks round, and hurries over to the door.

180 INT. CASTLE; CORRIDOR - DAY

189

GAVIN is standing outside the door, glancing anxiously over his shoulder to see that no-one is coming.

GAVIN

(whisper)

Lisa ... are you there ?

LISA

(OFF - whisper)

Yes - when are we going ?

GAVIN

(looking round)

Shhhh Tomorrow at dawn. I'm going down there now to make sure it's alright...

LISA

(OFF)

What happens if they say no ?

GAVIN

They won't ... I asked the Pilgrim the other day and he said he'd ask. He said it'd be alright.

Approaching footsteps echo down the dark corridor.

GAVIN

(quickly)

I've got to go ... I'll see you tonight !

GAVIN moves off down the corridor.

181 INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - DAY

181

LISA is still pressed against the door.

LISA

Gavin ...

There is no reply. LISA quickly returns to her tapestry as the

181 (Cont'd)

181

door is unbolted. A SERVANT enters.

SERVANT

(coldly)

Luncheon is served Madam.

CUT TO:

182 EXT. KOBOLZELLERSTEIG - DAY

182

GAVIN walks up the Kobolzellersteig, passing Wart's Cellar. The door is open, and some WORKMEN are off-loading equipment from a horse-and-cart outside. Further up the street a VETERAN is drilling a batallion of MERCENARY BOYS, between the ages of 10 and 14.

VETERAN

(Sergeant-major fashion)

Come on now, chests out, stomachs in !
Keep those heads up now, show a pride in
your style !

Some of the BOYS look as though they are beginning to have second thoughts about the "pilgrimage".

183 EXT. BURGERHEIM MARKET - DAY

183

GAVIN enters the Market-Place, which has resumed its' former activities, though in one corner FRANZ is supervising an ARCHERY CLASS.

FRANZ

(holding a BOY's long-bow)

Aim it boy ! That's better ... remember
your long-bow's your friend - it's the only
thing that stands between you and the enemy,
you must make every arrow count !

GAVIN jostles his way between the stalls towards the Black Waggon by the barn. Some BRETHREN OF THE FREE MIND are sitting nearby. They wear brightly-coloured clothes with flowers in their hair, and are singing folk songs. The older TOWNSMEN look at them with scorn.

1st TOWNSMAN

(OFF)

Bloody kids - put them in the army, that
would sort 'em out soon enough !

2nd TOWNSMAN

(OFF)

To think we fought at Minden for this lot !

GAVIN ignores the side-comments and walks over to the waggon. MATTIO and HELGA are standing at the back with KARL and a junior DOMINICAN PRIEST. He is mumbling some words while holding a long pole which reaches into the waggon.

GAVIN is about to climb the steps, when MATTIO stops him.

MATTIO

(quietly)

Don't go in ...

GAVIN

(surprised)

Why not ?

MATTIO calls out again, but GAVIN mounts the steps and enters the waggon.

184 INT. BLACK WAGGON - DAY

184

The waggon is dark and cold in atmosphere. The long pole reaches over to where the PILGRIM is lying on a heap of sacks. His face is blotched, but the darkness spares us of the more unpleasant details of the plague. He is in some pain, and is obviously dying. As GAVIN enters, he holds up his hand.

PILGRIM

(softly)

Child stay a little way from me.

GAVIN looks at him and hesitates. Then very slowly he walks over and takes his hand.

PILGRIM

(anxiously)

Stay back ... stay away.

GAVIN

It's alright.

A large Book of Quotations is lying face down on his stomach. The pole containing the last rites dangles in front of his face. The PILGRIM sips from the cup tied to the end, while outside the DOMINICAN recites, parrot-fashion.

DOMINICAN

(OFF)

Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun ? One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh, and there is no new thing under the sun. The grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail ; because man goeth to his long home.

GAVIN's dialogue is lapped over the DOMINICAN's.

GAVIN

I thought it was all fiddle-sticks.

PILGRIM

(wearily)

Habit boy, habit. You tend to take your chances at times like this.

(pause)

I had something to say ... I had it all worked out.

(pause)

But I've forgotten what it was

GAVIN

(smiling)

It doesn't matter.

PILGRIM

(turning to him)

Oh, but it does you see if I could remember what it was, you could tell the publishers when you get to England - they'd put it in here, in the next edition.

(pause)

People would remember me then.

GAVIN

I'll remember you.

PILGRIM

(anxiously)

Will you boy ? And will you remember me to my Lord, the Earl of Richmond ? Will you tell him I went out with a

(quoting)

a stiff upper lip ? He'd like that ... he's very fussy about detail you know.

GAVIN

(smiling)

I'll tell him where does he live ?

PILGRIM

Yorkshire ... you can't miss it ! Take the north road out of London, keep going straight for two weeks, then turn right by the Fox and Grapes. It's half-a-mile up on the right - you can't miss it boy it's a bloody great castle !

He crosses himself quickly, then siezes himself in pain. He holds GAVIN's hand tightly.

PILGRIM

(excitedly)

I've remembered it ! Quick boy, write it down, I've got it it's it's -

(sadly)

Oh, bless me if it hasn't gone again

GAVIN looks down at his hand, then gently lays it down by his side.

185 EXT. BURGERHEIM MARKET - DAY

185

The DOMINICAN PRIEST rambles on with the last rites, unaware that the Pilgrim is already dead.

DOMINICAN

We have ploughed wickedness, and have reaped iniquity. We shall go softly all the years of our life in the bitterness of our sins; for our days are as grass, as a flower of the field so we

GAVIN stands at the top of the Waggon steps. They look up at him expectantly, but he says nothing. In the background, KARL picks out a few notes on the Piper's pipe.

HOLD A BEAT:

186 INT. CASTLE HALLWAY - NIGHT

186

The BARON and the BARONESS are welcoming GUESTS to the great Rat Party. Although the BARON and his wife are dressed normally, most of the GUESTS are in fancy dress, particularly vermin. The BURGERMEISTER enters the hall dressed as a

grotesque Water-rat, while FRAU POPPENDICK is fitted out as a muzzled Poodle.

BURGERMEISTER

(merrily)

Ah, good evening Baron ! I bring with me the Season's greetings

(his smile drops)

. . . . and my wife.

BARON

(sarcastically)

A rare pleasure

The BURGERMEISTER smiles weakly, then hurries his WIFE off towards the festivities in the Planning Room. The BARON sees BARON HILDESHEIM and his WIFE entering with other GUESTS. HILDESHEIM is dressed as a monstrous gnat, while his WIFE has come as a bat. The BARON quickly extracts them from the others.

BARON

My dear Baron how good of you to come !

HILDESHEIM

We weren't sure what you were celebrating - my wife thought it was bats, but I heard you'd had a plague of gnats so we compromised.

BARON

(laughing)

Rats . . . they all suddenly took to the river like lemmings ! Good evening Baroness.

(aside, to HILDESHEIM)

Perhaps we could talk a little later ?

HILDESHEIM nods without committment, and escorts his WIFE towards the Planning Room.

The Planning Room has been transformed into a Christmas banqueting Hall. A large table is laden with mediaeval goodies, including the usual helping of garnished peacocks, turkeys, swans, and other delights. The BURGERMEISTER is standing with his back to the table, and although the meal hasn't started, he discreetly snaffles a few overtures. Many of the GUESTS have

familiar faces, indeed the scene is something of a curtain-call. The PRIEST is costumed as the Angel of the Seventh Plague from the Book of Revelations. His halo is propped above his head by a piece of wire, but it keeps getting caught in the holly decorations. FRANZ is dressed as a large Black Rat, and is trying to chat up a GIRL in a lynx's outfit when he sees the PRIEST.

FRANZ

Who do you think you are ? The Angel Gabriel ?

PRIEST

(proudly)

I represent the Angel of the Seventh Plague from the Book of Revelations.

FRANZ

(never heard of it)

What book ?

PRIEST

The Bible, if you remember, starts with Adam and Eve in the garden, and ends in revelations !

The PRIEST sweeps proudly off to join a DOMINICAN friend, dressed as St. Francis' rabbit. Other GUESTS include the PROVOST, the SENESCHAL and BAILIFF, the members of the CORPORATION, the UNDERTAKER (Dressed as a corpse), the VETERAN SOLDIER, the RESEARCHER (Still researching), the PHYSICIAN in his beak-doctor outfit, the EXECUTIONER dressed as himself and chatting to his friend the HANGMAN, the EXCISE OFFICER, and numerous others.

LISA stands on her own. She is clothed as a White Mouse, and looks round the room for GAVIN.

188 INT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT

188

GAVIN is sitting by the barred window, staring out into the night. The Room has been completely cleaned out, and is fitted up with new shelves and equipment.

WART is working away at his bubbling "pelican" flask. He glances occasionally at a large chart on the wall attempting to show the cause of the plague, then adds more chemicals to the mixture.

WART

(to himself)

If I can just Wait a minute, I believe we've got something, if only

GAVIN raises his eyebrows.

GAVIN

That's what you said about the gold.

(pause)

Anyway, the plague's gone so why waste time with all this ?

WART

(without turning)

It'll be back. Next year, and the year after, and the year after that, and every year until we've found a way to end it.

(pause)

I don't yet know what that way is, but it's up to us to find it, because no-one else is going to.

GAVIN

(smiling)

You'll never find it, not if you live to be a hundred.

WART

I said 'us'

GAVIN looks at him doubtfully. He sits down on the stone steps and starts to put on his boots.

WART pauses from his work and consults one of his books. He rubs his eyes and peers more closely.

GAVIN

Aren't you going to the party ? You've been invited

WART

(not listening)

Could you read this for me ?

GAVIN looks at him, then at the book.

GAVIN

(reading)

It says "that the liquid be heated to a temperature beyond that required to melt goldsmith's borax, see Roger Bacon's 'Opus Tertium', Volume 4 Page 207. "

WART

(taking it in)

Thank you . . .

WART looks along his book-shelf and takes down a heavy volume. GAVIN sees it's the wrong one.

GAVIN

(laughing)

That's Galen's "Remedies" here !

GAVIN takes down the correct book and gives it to WART. As the old Man opens it, GAVIN starts to climb the stairs.

WART

(without turning)

You're not coming back, are you ?

GAVIN pauses on the stairs.

GAVIN

(lying)

Course I am I'm just going up to the Castle - I left something up there.

He turns round and walks on up the stairs. He reaches the top and opens the door.

WART

(without turning)

Good-bye Gavin.

GAVIN hesitates uncertainly. He realizes that Wart knows, and turns round slowly.

GAVIN

(trying to excuse himself)

It's my only chance don't you see ?

WART

I'm not stopping you. I said "Good-bye".

188 (Cont'd)

188

GAVIN
(wishing he was somewhere
else)
Good-bye.

The door closes behind him.

WART pauses a moment, then opens the book. He peers closely,
but cannot read the words.

WART
(calling out)
Gavin

LS - WART stands alone.

189 EXT. KOBOLZELLERSTEIG/SCHMEIDGASSE - NIGHT (S) 189

GAVIN binds himself against the driving snow. It is bitterly cold,
and the street is almost empty. He takes the short-cut into the
Schmeidgasse, and hobbles along as best he can.

190 EXT. RODERGASSE - NIGHT (S) 190

GAVIN passes a group of CAROLLERS singing "Good King
Wenseslas" outside one of the houses. He glances at them, then
hurries on.

We remain with the CAROLLERS. They include some of the
Mercenary BOYS and KARL. He playing the Piper's Pipe, but
although he tries his best, it has none of the magic we heard
earlier. A VOICE shouts out from a top window.

MAN'S VOICE
(angrily)
Stop that racket for Christ's sake, we're
trying to get some sleep !

The CAROLLERS look at each other gloomily, then shuffle off down
the street.

191 EXT. CASTLE : COURTYARD - NIGHT(S) 200

GAVIN walks up to the Main Door, but the GUARD stops him going
in.

GUARD
(aggressively)
What you want ?

191 (Cont'd)

191

GAVIN

I've come for Wart Melius ... he left
some things in his room -

The GUARD looks at him, then waves him inside.

GUARD

Go on then, be quick about it.

GAVIN goes in.

192 INT. CASTLE: HALLWAY - NIGHT

192

GAVIN looks about him quickly. A few GUESTS wander through the Hall, but most of them are in the Planning Room beyond. He pauses a moment, thinking out a plan. He sees a drunken COUPLE leave the Planning Room and wander off down the passage. They are both dressed as Rats, and GAVIN decides to follow them at a distance.

193 INT. CASTLE: PLANNING ROOM - NIGHT

193

The Celebrations are well under way. The BURGERMEISTER is parallitic, and is standing on the table, knocking back a hog's-head of rhenish to the applause of some bystanders. FRAU POPPENDICK watches him, unimpressed by such an every-day sight.

LISA sits next to FRANZ at the table. He is playing with a GIRL wearing stag's antlers, and is finding the technique rather difficult. LISA looks round the room anxiously.

194 INT. CASTLE: PASSAGE - NIGHT

194

GAVIN has followed the drunken COUPLE along the endless corridors. He stops and hides in an alcove as the MAN looks into a room.

MAN

(calling into the room)

Anyone there ?

There is no reply. The COUPLE enter the room, giggling and laughing. GAVIN watches them from the alcove. The door slams shut, and we can hear the COUPLE (OFF) fooling around inside. GAVIN raises his eyebrows, and sinks down onto the floor to wait.

195 EXT. SPITALGASSE - NIGHT(S) 195

The CAROLLERS are into the second verse of "Once in Royal David's City". Again their singing is interrupted by bangings on an upstairs window. They move on down the street, still singing in spite of the unwelcome reception.

196 INT. CASTLE: PASSAGE - NIGHT 196

GAVIN is almost asleep when he is roused by the sounds of heavy snoring coming from the room opposite. He gets to his feet, looks up and down the passage, then limps across to the door and opens it gently.

197 INT. CASTLE: EMPTY ROOM - NIGHT 197

The DRUNKEN COUPLE are lying in f.g., their Rat Costumes lying beyond them. GAVIN tip-toes over, grabs one of the costumes, and makes his escape.

198 INT. CASTLE: PASSAGE - NIGHT 198

GAVIN re-emerges with the costume under his arm. He is about to leave then decides to lock the door as an afterthought. We HOLD as he scuttles behind the alcove to change.

199 INT. CASTLE: PLANNING ROOM - NIGHT 199

The celebrations have lapsed into a scene of Roman decadence - huge Rats roll around on the floor, while other horned creatures lie sprawled across the table. Some MUSICIANS provide a poor background arrangement, but few of the GUESTS bother to listen.

The only sober people left seem to be the PRIEST, the BARON and HILDESHEIM. They are sitting at the far end of the room, grouped round a small table. The PRIEST's halo has wilted somewhat.

PRIEST

(rubbing his chin)

I daresay the Church could see its way to agreeing providing we receive a share of course. 'Man cannot live by bread alone' - Yes, 5,000 a year might be acceptable.

BARON

(slapping him on the back)

There you are, what did I tell you
Baron ? Now if you could supply us with
the arms - preferrably long-bows

LISA sits by herself at the table, carving out faces in a piece of
orange-peel. Suddenly a rather lame-looking rat sits down
beside her.

GAVIN

(whispering)

Pssst Lisa -

He gives her a nudge. LISA spins round, and is about to utter a
squeak of surprise when GAVIN puts up his paw in silence.

LISA

(amazed)

I thought you were never coming
how did you get it ?

GAVIN

Doesn't matter now listen carefully,
they'll be waiting for us at eight o'clock
by the New Tower just inside the gate.
If we can

FRANZ stumbles over drunkenly and pushes GAVIN aside.

FRANZ

What you playing at with my wife !

The Stag's Head GIRL pulls at him from behind.

GIRL

(also drunk)

Oh, Franz - come on

FRANZ

(calling)

Guard take that slut to her bed,
make sure she doesn't come out again

A GUARD hurries over as FRANZ resumes his activities on the
floor.

GUARD

(gently)

Sorry Madam you heard what he said.

LISA looks round quickly at GAVIN, but can say nothing. The GUARD escorts her past the BARON's table and out of the room. As she leaves, we HOLD for a moment on the conversation. The BARON pours the PRIEST another drink.

BARON

(coaxingly)

Surely you can find something. Didn't St. Paul have anything to say . . . he's your usual source ?

PRIEST

(thinking hard)

Let me think I believe he did. Now what was it ? No, wait a minute, I think it was our dear Lord

(he snaps his fingers)

"Suffer the little children to come unto me" - that was it !

BARON

(with a clap)

There you are ! And since He also said "Fight the good fight", it's obvious to any fool what He meant Suffer the little children to fight the good fight ! So then Baron, how many can you supply ?

FAST CUT TO:

200 EXT. BURGERHEIM MARKET - NIGHT (S)

200

The CHILDREN singing "Away in a Manger". The snow falls softer now, though the wind still moves through the trees above. The CHILDREN sing the two verses complete, then pause. Silence. No bangs, no shouts, nothing. They look at each other, huddling up under their coats and mufflers to keep warm. HENRIK, the 10-year-old soldier who got the free-gift, blows into his hands. He glances up at the stony windows of the Hegereiter House, then looks round at the others.

200 (Cont'd)

200

HENRIK

Not much point, is there ?

(pause)

Well, Happy Christmas.

The CHILDREN murmur their "Good-nights" and "Happy Christmases", then slowly break away and shuffle off to their homes.

Only KARL remains. He stands very still.

201 INT. CASTLE: PLANNING ROOM - NIGHT

201

The noise is shattering. The BURGERMEISTER lies sprawled under a table with wine dribbling from the side of his mouth.

GAVIN sits by the heavy curtains, trying to keep out of sight as much as possible, while FRANZ and the GIRL heave around on the floor.

CUT BACK TO:

202 EXT. BURGERHEIM MARKET - NIGHT (S)

202

KARL, as before. He slowly takes the pipe from his pocket, and picks out the notes of "Away in a Manger". Then he turns and walks back towards the Waggon. Once or twice he stops and listens. He hears soft foot-steps crushing the snow, but they always seem to dissolve into the wind when he pauses.

Again he stops, but this time it is to feel the corner of a house. He guides himself round it, and wanders towards the darkened shape of the Waggon. He pauses by the steps, feeling his way round. Then very slowly his face falls into shadow. He raises the pipe to his mouth again, but a HAND moves towards his, and gently lifts the pipe from him. KARL looks up and smiles.
HOLD A BEAT.

CUT TO:

203 INT. CASTLE: PLANNING ROOM - NIGHT

203

The room has quietened a little; most of the GUESTS lie in various positions of sleep, having succumbed to the effects of warmth and wine. The BARON concludes his business with HILDESHEIM, and they shake hands.

HILDESHEIM

We'll talk about it more next week.
Good-night . . . Oh, and Happy Christmas !

BARON

(turning round)
Christmas ? Oh yes, same to you.
Good-night !

GAVIN watches from his corner as HILDESHEIM collects his WIFE who has been sitting with the BARONESS. They step cautiously over the snoring rat-bodies, and leave the room. The BARON and PRIEST toast each other to a Prosperous New Year, then they too turn in for the night, followed by the BARONESS.

GAVIN waits a moment. He glances round at FRANZ and the other GUESTS. They are all either lying on the tables and floor, or else engrossed in drunken revelling.

GAVIN climbs to his feet and limps across the room with his crutch concealed inside his costume. He pauses by the door, and grabs a flask of wine.

204 INT. CASTLE: CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The GUARD is slumped on the floor outside LISA's room, fast asleep. GAVIN appears round the corner, and tip-toes over to the door. He tries the handle, but it's locked. Then he notices the keys under the GUARD's hand. He bends down beside him, and gives him a nudge, at the same time handing him the flask of wine.

GAVIN

(loud whisper)
Here . . . present from the Baron.

The GUARD gives a grunt, then sees the wine. He takes it with a vague nod of the head, giving GAVIN the chance to remove the keys. He waits a moment for the GUARD to go back to sleep, then gently puts the key in the lock, and turns the handle.

205 INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

LISA has been sitting by the window, staring into the moonlit night. She has changed out of her mouse-costume, which lies by her side like a butterfly's crysalist.

205 (Cont'd)

205

As the door opens, she jumps up and looks round. GAVIN enters and beckons to her. She hurries over to the door, carrying a small round sack made from a handkerchief.

LISA
(whispering)
You can't go like that !

GAVIN looks at himself, and quickly strips off the rat-skin. They look at each other a brief moment, then LISA takes his hand.

LISA
Come on

They leave the room, with its two discarded skins and the tapestry of winged horses staring back at us.

206 INT. CASTLE: PLANNING ROOM - NIGHT

206

GAVIN and LISA pick their way between the sleeping bodies. FRANZ lies by the door leading to the hall. His hand is resting against the stag's antlers on the GIRL, and nearby we see the BURGERMEISTER's tail sticking out from under the table.

LISA lets go of GAVIN and hurries ahead to make sure no one is coming. Suddenly GAVIN trips over the Burgermeister's tail, and crashes to the ground.

As he picks himself up, FRANZ turns over. He opens his eyes and sees LISA by the door.

GAVIN
(loud whisper)
Go on . . . I'll catch you up -

LISA disappears from the doorway while GAVIN blocks the entrance, then turns and stumbles off into the Hall.

207 INT. CASTLE: HALL - NIGHT

207

FRANZ is still half-asleep as he blunders after LISA and GAVIN. LISA reaches the Main door leading to the courtyard, and quickly opens it. She rushes out, followed closely by GAVIN.

208 EXT. CASTLE: COURTYARD - NIGHT

208

GAVIN slams the door shut, and grips the handle -

GAVIN

(loud whisper)

Hurry I'll meet you by the Tower !

LISA takes a final glance back, then runs across the draw-bridge. GAVIN sees a piece of broken wood lying a few feet away from him. He stretches across with one hand, while holding the handle with the other. We can hear FRANZ (OFF) banging the door on the other side.

He manages to pull it towards him, then pick it up and wedge it through the catch-bar on the door.

He puts his hands together in a quick sign to heaven, and stumbles off across the courtyard.

FRANZ shouts and bangs on the door, and a few seconds later it flies open. He rushes out after GAVIN, who has only a few yards lead.

209 EXT. CASTLE: DRAW-BRIDGE & FROZEN MOAT - NIGHT (S) 209

GAVIN reaches the Draw-bridge and turns round. FRANZ, still dressed as the Black Rat, charges over towards him. GAVIN awaits his moment, then quickly ducks down, levelling his crutch at FRANZ's feet. With a cry of terror, FRANZ shoots over the edge of the draw-bridge, and crashes headlong into the frozen moat.

GAVIN looks down in amazement at his success. There is a large hole in the ice, but no Franz. He glances round, sees that no-one has followed from the Castle, picks up his crutch and limps off into the town.

210 EXT. KIRCHPLATZ - NIGHT (S)

210

LISA runs into the deserted Kirchplatz, and pauses for breath. She looks round, but there is no-one behind her.

The moon drifts from behind the clouds above the Cathedral spires, washing the snow in shades of indigo grey. LISA starts walking across the Platz, then stops.

- 210 (Cont'd) 210
- From far away we hear the first few notes of the Piper's Song. It is the same one that he played to the children on his mandolin, but this time it has a hollow, echoed sound. LISA listens.
- 211 EXT. BURGERHEIM MARKET - NIGHT (S) 211
- The shadow of the PIED PIPER falls across the snow as he plays his tune. He starts walking away, and we PAN UP as he moves across the Market Place, playing all the while.
- KARL appears from the Waggon, and starts following him as he turns into the street beyond.
- 212 EXT. RODERGASSETOR TOWER - NIGHT (S) 212
- From the top of the tower we see the PIPER walking up the moonlit street below, with KARL following behind him. Lights start flashing on in the top windows of some of the houses, and seconds later THREE CHILDREN appear in the door-ways below. They watch the PIPER for a moment, then run after him, their white nightdresses flowing out behind.
- The PIPER walks on past the old well, and at every step more faces appear in the windows, followed by more CHILDREN at open doors. Soon the PIPER has a small line of CHILDREN behind him as he drifts on down the snow-covered street.
- 213 EXT. SPITTALGASSE - NIGHT (S) 213
- LISA walks slowly back in the direction of the Piper's MUSIC. She pauses again, then starts running.
- 214 EXT. RODERSCHUTT - NIGHT (S) 214
- GAVIN limps along the road running by the Town Wall. He searches round for Lisa, calling out into the night. Then he too hears the distant MUSIC. He pauses a moment, straining his ears. He turns round slowly and takes a side-turning. (Wenggasse) towards the music.
- 215 INT. ROOM OVERLOOKING ALTERSTADTGASSE - NIGHT (S) 215
- Through a frosted window in f. g., we see the PIPER in the street below, advancing towards us with his ever-growing flock behind him. HENRIK's face appears in CS as he glances out, then leaves.

- 216 EXT. ALTERSTADTGASSE - NIGHT (S) 216
- LOW ANGLE - The PIPER moves faster, and as the CHILDREN start to dance behind him, we bring in the Orchestral backing - very slowly at the start, adding a new instrument for each handful of new arrivals.
- HENRIK appears at his doorway, dressed only in his night-shirt and clogs. He smiles quickly, then trips off and joins the others behind the PIPER.
- 217 EXT. BURGGASSE - NIGHT (S) 217
- As the MUSIC builds (OFF), we CUT in time to the rhythm onto a mosaic of CHILDREN's faces in windows, feet running down stairs and doorsteps, fleeting shadows against walls, laughing faces, flowing hair.
- Finally, with FULL ORCHESTRA, we CUT TO -
- 218 EXT. SCHMIEDGASSE / KOBOLZELLERSTEIG - NIGHT (S) 218
- HIGH SHOT (From the Siebersturmtor Tower) - The procession of dancing CHILDREN behind the PIPER. There are close to a hundred CHILDREN, all dressed in their white night-clothes, and against the snow they seem like phantom spirits drifting behind their caller.
- LISA appears at the Neugasse side-road. Her face breaks into a smile as she dances out into the street with the other CHILDREN.
- 219 EXT. KAPPELENPLATZ - NIGHT (S) 219
- GAVIN drags himself along as fast as he can. In the far distance we can see the PIPER and the CHILDREN gliding on down the street.
- 220 EXT. KOBOLZELLERSTEIG - NIGHT (S) 220
- The PIPER takes the sloping road that leads down past Wart's Cellar. More CHILDREN appear at windows and doorways as they pass by.
- 221 INT. WART'S CELLAR - NIGHT (S) 221
- WART has fallen asleep over his work. As the MUSIC plays on, he stirs, turning his head over on the open book.

- 222 EXT. SPITTALGASSE - NIGHT (S) 222
GAVIN struggles on, trying to keep up with the music. He sees the PIPER and CHILDREN disappearing down the Kobolzellersteig, and takes his short-cut down the snow-covered steps.
- 223 EXT. KOBOLZELLERTOR - NIGHT (S) 223
LISA starts singing the words of the PIPER's song, the same as we heard the Piper sing in the Burgermarket before the Wedding. As she sings, the other CHILDREN join in

HIGH SHOT - The PIPER and CHILDREN pass under the Kobolzeller Tower.

An old TRAMP lies curled up by the wall, his flask of wine by his side. The shadows of the PIPER and CHILDREN pass over him. He sleeps on.
- 224 EXT. KOBOLZELLERSTEIG - NIGHT (S) 224
GAVIN stumbles on down the Kobolzellersteig past Wart's Cellar.
- 225 EXT. KOBOLZELLERTOR (OUTER GATE) - NIGHT (S) 225
LOW ANGLE - MLS - The PIPER leads on towards us. All the CHILDREN are now singing to his MUSIC, with LISA and KARL close behind him at the front.

As they pass, we PAN ROUND (TRICK EFFECT)
- 226 EXT. FIELDS & MOUNTAINS - NIGHT (S) 226
The PAN continues round (lapped CUT), then we slowly CRANE UP as the PIPER and CHILDREN dance on towards the moonlit Mountains beyond. The CAMERA continues CRANING to the full height, and the impression (S/FX) is that his following is now over 1,000 CHILDREN. HOLD.
- 227 EXT. KOBOLZELLERTOR (OUTER GATE) - NIGHT (S) 227
GAVIN limps out of the Gate - he gazes up beyond him.
- 228 EXT. FIELDS & MOUNTAINS - NIGHT (S) 228
GAVIN'S POV - The snake-like procession of CHILDREN behind the distant PIPER. His music is far away.

- 229 EXT. KOBOLZELLERTOR (OUTER GATE) - NIGHT (S) 229
GAVIN starts off again, limping and stumbling as fast as he can.
- 230 EXT. KOPPELBERG MOUNTAIN - NIGHT (S) 230
The CHILDREN and PIPER dance on up the moonlit slopes.
- 231 EXT. HAMELIN (MODEL SHOT) & SLOPES - NIGHT (S) 231
GAVIN struggles on in f.g. - Behind him we can see the sleeping town of Hamelin against the starry night (S/FX)
- 232 EXT. KOPPELBERG SLOPES - NIGHT (S) 232
INTER-CUTS between GAVIN and the distant CHILDREN. They drift on up into the mountains, their white clothes melting into the landscape.

The MUSIC starts to fade away, very gradually, and as it dies, the wind becomes louder.
- 233 EXT. KEPPELBERG SLOPES - NIGHT into DAWN (S) 233
It is colder now, and the snow has started to fall. The MUSIC and singing has become no more than a whisper above the wind.

Suddenly GAVIN stops. He stands a moment, searching the mountains before him.

GAVIN'S POV - The Children and Piper have gone. Only their footprints are left, and even as GAVIN watches, the snow drifts across them until they too have disappeared. Only the wind stirs. The Children, the Piper, and his wonderful music have gone forever.

GAVIN stands very still. The pale dawn breaks across the distant horizon, replacing the moonlight with a cold, grey spell.

GAVIN turns slowly round, then stops. He sees something in the snow. He kneels down and pulls Lisa's handkerchief out from the drift, scattering the few belongings it contained ... a wooden doll, a rosary cross and some beads. He picks them up and puts them in his pocket, leaving the handkerchief in the snow.

234 EXT. HAMELIN (MODEL SHOT) & SLOPES 234

As Christmas dawns over Hamelin, we watch GAVIN limping slowly back towards the distant town (S/FX).

235 EXT. KOBOLZELLERTOR - DAWN (S) 235

DOWNSHOT - GAVIN walks back across the Draw-bridge, and up through the empty street.

236 EXT. KOBOLZELLERSTEIG / SCHMEIDGASSE - DAWN (S) 236

LS - GAVIN limps along the deserted road, pausing outside Wart's Cellar, then walking on up towards us.

Very slowly he sinks down in a doorway, and bursts into tears. He cries as if he'd never cried before in his whole life; the tears pour down his cheeks, melting little patches of snow as they drop from his face. He holds his face in his hands, shaking his head from side to side in his loneliness.

We hear the scraping of feet above him. GAVIN pauses, then looks up.

DOWNSHOT - His Pet RAT is in f.g., twitching its' whiskers and staring down at him. He looks at it a moment, then gets up slowly and takes it in his hands.

He sits back on the door-step, smiling through his tears as he watches the RAT scurrying around his feet.

We hear the familiar noise of the Black Waggon (off) as it rumbles along the higher road. GAVIN looks up.

In LS the BLACK WAGGON stops just above the stone steps, and MATTIO calls out.

MATTIO

(pause)

We're going now You coming ?

GAVIN looks at him, then back at his RAT. He turns round to MATTIO, smiles and shakes his head.

MATTIO shrugs with a brief nod, and the WAGGON pulls off again. As it disappears under the Siebersturn Tower, we hear the faint notes of the Piper's THEME filtering in above the wind.

GAVIN looks at his RAT, then slowly gets to his feet. He takes his crutch in his hand, but as he walks down the road, we notice that he trails it behind him through the snow.

We HOLD in LS as GAVIN wanders back to Wart's Cellar, with the RAT wobbling along at his heels. He opens the door, pauses to let his RAT enter first, then follows it inside, closing the door behind him.

The pipe's THEME builds as we stay on the long, thin trail in the snow.

END TITLES & CREDITS

* * * * *

Rothenburg:
04.12.70

"THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN"

A Poem

by

ROBERT BROWNING

Hamelin Town's in Brunswick,
By famous Hanover City;
The River Weser, deep and wide,
Washes its wall on the Southern Side;
A pleasanter spot you never spied;
But, when begins my ditty,
Almost five hundred years ago,
To see the townsfolk suffer so
From vermin, was a pity.

Rats !

They fought the dogs and killed the cats,
And bit the babies in the cradles,
And ate the cheese out of the vats,
And licked the soup from the cook's own ladles,
Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,
And even spoiled the women's chats,
By drowning their speaking
With shrieking and squeaking
In fifty different sharps and flats.

At last the people in a body
To the Town Hall came flocking:
'Tis clear, " cried they, 'our Mayor's a noddy;
'And as for our Corporation - Shocking !
'To think we buy gowns lined with ermine
'For dolts that can't or won't determine
'What's best to rid us of our vermin !
'You hope, because you're old and obese,
'To find in the furry civic robe ease ?
'Rouse up, Sirs ! Give your brains a racking

"To find the remedy we're lacking,
"Or, sure as Fate, we'll send you packing!"
At this the Mayor and Corporation
Quaked with a mighty consternation.

An hour they sat in council,
At length the Mayor broke silence:
"For a guilder I'd my ermine gown sell;
'T wish I were a mile hence !
'T's easy to bid one rack one's brain -
'I'm sure my poor head aches again,
'I've scratched it so, and all in vain
"Oh for a trap, a trap, a trap !"
Just as he said this, what should hap
At the chamber door but a gentle tap ?
"Bless us, " cried the Mayor, "what's that ?"
(With the Corporation as he sat,
Looking little though wonderous fat;
Nor brighter was his eye, nor moister
Than a too-long-opened oyster,
Save when at noon his paunch grew mutinous
For a plate of turtle green and glutinous)
"Only a scraping of shoes on the mat ?
"Anything like the sound of a rat
"Makes my heart go pit-a-pat !"

"Come in !" - the Mayor cried, looking bigger:
And in did come the strangest figure !
His queer long coat from heel to head
Was half of yellow and half of red,
And he himself was tall and thin,

With sharp blue eyes, each like a pin,
And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin
No tuft on cheek nor beard on chin,
But lips where smile went out and in;
There was no guessing his kith and kin:
And nobody could enough admire
The tall man and his quaint attire.
Quoth one: 'Tt's as my great-grandsire,
Starting up at the Trump of Doom's tone,
Had walked this way from his painted tombstone !''

He advanced to the council-table:
And, 'Please your honours, " said he, 'I'm able,
'By means of a secret charm to draw
'All creatures living beneath the Sun,
'That creep or swim or fly or run,
'After me so as you never saw !
'And I chiefly use my charm
'On creatures that do people harm,
'The mole and toad and newt and viper;
'And people call me the Pied Piper. "
(And here they noticed round his neck
A scarf of red and yellow stripe,
To match with his coat of the self-same cheque;
And at the scarf's end hung a pipe;
And his fingers they noticed were ever straying
As if impatient to be playing
Upon his pipe, as low it dangled
Over his vesture so old-fangled).
'Yes, " said he, 'poor piper as I am,
'In Tartary I freed the Cham,
'Last June, from his huge swarms of gnats,

'T eased in Asia the Nizam
"Of a monstrous brood of vampire-bats:
"And as for what your brain bewilders,
"If I can rid your town of rats
"Will you give me a thousand guilders?"
"One? Fifty thousand!" - was the exclamation
Of the astonished Mayor and Corporation.

Into the street the Piper stept,
Smiling first a little smile,
As if he knew what magic slept
In his quiet pipe the while;
Then, like a musical adept,
To blow the pipe his lips he wrinkled,
And green and blue his sharp eyes twinkled,
Like a candle-flame where salt is sprinkled;
And ere three shrill notes the pipe uttered,
You heard as if an Army muttered;
And the muttering grew to a grumbling;
And the grumbling grew to a mighty rumbling;
And out of the house the rats came tumbling:
Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,
Brown rats, black rats, grey rats, tawny rats,
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,
Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,
Families by tens and dozens,
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives -
Followed the Piper for their lives!
From street to street he piped advancing,
And step for step they followed dancing,
Until they came to the River Weser

Wherein all plunged and perished !
- Save one who, stout as Julius Caesar,
Swam across, and lived to carry
(As he, the manuscript he cherished)
To Rat-land home his commentary:
Which was: "At the first shrill notes of the pipe,
'I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,
'And putting apples, wondrous ripe,
'Into a cider-press's gripe,
'And a moving away of pickle-tub-boards,
'And a leaving ajar of conserve-cupboards,
'And a drawing the corks of train-oil-flasks,
'And a breaking the hoops of butter-casks:
'And it seemed as if a voice
'(Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery
'Is breathed) called out, 'Oh rats, rejoice !
'"The world is grown to one vast drysaltery !
'"So munch on, crunch on, take your nuncheon,
'"Breakfast, supper, dinner, luncheon !'
'And just as a bulky sugar-puncheon
'Already staved, like a great sun shone
'Glorious scare, an inch before me,
'Just as methought it said, 'Come, bore me !'
' - I found the Weser rolling o'er me. "

You should have heard the Hamelin people
Ringing the bells till they rocked the steeple
'Go', cried the Mayor, 'and get long poles,
'Poke out the nests and block up the holes !
Consult with Carpenters and Builders,
'And leave in our town not even a trace
'Of the rats !' - When suddenly up the face

Of the Piper perked in the Market-place,
With a "First, if you please, my thousand guilders!"

A thousand guilders ! The Mayor looked blue;
So did the Corporation too.

For council dinners made rare havoc
With Claret, Moselle, Vin-de-grave, Hock;
And half the money would replenish

Their cellar's biggest butt with Rhenish.

To pay this sum to a wandering fellow

With a gipsy coat of red and yellow !

"Beside," quoth the Mayor with a knowing wink,

"Our business was done at the river's brink;

"We saw with our eyes the vermin sink,

"And what's dead can't come to life, I think.

"So, friend, we're not the folks to shrink

"From the duty of giving you something to drink,

"And a matter of money to put in your poke;

"But as for the guilders, what we spoke

"Of them, as you very well know, was a joke.

"Beside, our losses have made us thrifty.

"A thousand guilders ! Come, take fifty !"

The Piper's face fell, and he cried,

"No trifling ! I can't wait, beside !

"I've promised to visit by dinner-time

"Bagdad, and accept the prime

"Of the Head-Cook's pottage, all he's rich in,

"For having left, in the Caliph's kitchen,

Of a nest of scorpions no survivor:

"With him I proved no bargain-driver,

"With you, don't think I'll bate a stiver !

"And Folks who put me in a passion
"May find me pipe after another fashion. "
"How?" cried the Mayor, 'd'ye think I brook
"Being worse treated than a Cook ?
"Insulted by a lazy ribald
"With idle pipe and vesture piebald ?
"You threaten us, fellow ? Do your worst,
"Blow your pipe there till you burst!"

Once more he stept into the street,
And to his lips again
Laid his long pipe of smooth straight cane;
And 'ere he blow three notes (such sweet
Soft notes as yet musician's cunning
Never gave the enraptured)
There was a rustling, that seemed like a bustling
Of merry crowds justling at pitching and hustling,
Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes clattering,
Little hands clapping and little tongues chattering,
And, like fowls in a farm-yard when barley is
 scattering,
Out came the Children running,
All the little boys and girls,
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,
And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls.
Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after
The wonderful music with shouting and laughter.

The Mayor was dumb, and the Council stood
As if they were changed into blocks of wood,
Unable to move a step, or cry
To the children merrily skipping by.

- Could only follow with the eye
That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.
But how the Mayor was on the rack,
And the wretched Council's bosoms beat,
As the Piper turned from the High Street
To where the Weser rolled its waters
Right in the way of their sons and daughters !

However he turned from South to West,
And to Koppelberg Hill his steps addressed,
And after him the children pressed;
Great was the joy in every brest.
'He never can cross that mighty top' !
'He's forced to let the piping drop,
"And we shall see our children stop !"
When, lo, as they reached the Mountain-side,
A wondrous portal opened wide,
As if a cavern was suddenly hollowed;
And the Piper advanced, and the children followed,
And when all were in to the very last,
The door in the Mountain-side shut fast.
Did I say all ? No; one was lame,
And could not dance the whole of the way;
And in after years, if you would blame
His sadness, he was used to say, -
'T's dull in our town since my playmates left !
'I can't forget that I'm bereft
'Of all the pleasant sights they see,
'Which the Piper also promised me.
'For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,
'Joining the town and just at hand,
'Where waters gushed and fruit-trees grew,

"And flowers put forth a fairer hue,
"And everything was strange and new;
"The sparrows were brighter than peacocks here,
"And the dogs outran our fallow deer,
"And honey-bees had lost their stings,
"And horses were born with Eagle's wings;
"And just as I became assured
"My lame foot would be speedily cured,
"The music stopped and I stood still,
"And found myself outside the hill,
"Left alone against my will,
"To go now limping as before,
"And never hear of that country more !"

Alas, alas for Hamelin !

There came into many a burgher's pate
A text which says that Heaven's Gate
Opes to the rich at as easy rate
As the needle's eye takes a camel in !
The Mayor sent East, West, North and South,
To offer the Piper, by word of mouth,
Wherever it was men's lot to find him,
Silver and Gold to his heart's content,
If he'd only return the way he went,
And bring the children behind him.
But when they saw t'was a lost endeavour,
And Piper and Dancers were gone forever,
They made a decree that lawyers never
Should think their records dated duly
If, after the day of the month and year,
These words did not as well appear,
"And so long after what happened here

"On the twenty-second of July,
"Thirteen hundred and seventy-six:"
And the better in memory to fix
The place of the children's last retreat,
They called it, the Pied Piper's Street -
Where anyone playing on pipe or tabor,
Was sure for the future to loose his labour.
Nor suffered they hostelry or tavern
To shock with mirth a street so solemn;
But opposite the place of the cavern
They wrote the story on a column,
And on the great church-window painted
The same, to make the World acquainted
How their children were stolen away,
And there it stands to this very day.
And I must not omit to say
That in Transylvania there's a tribe
Of alien people that ascribe
The outlandish ways and dress
On which their neighbours lay such stress,
To their fathers and mothers having risen
Out of some subterraneous prison
Into which they were trepanned
Long time ago in a mighty band
Out of Hamelin Town in Brunswick land,
But how or why they don't understand.
So, Willy, let me and you be wipers
Of scores out with all men - especially Pipers !
And whether they pipe us free from rats or from
mice,

If we've promised them aught, let us keep our
promise !

ROBERT BROWNING
(1812 - 1889)

1ST PUB: 1888