

## Tails of Hamelin – Full Production

### Scene I

*{ A Germanic village, and market square, mountains in the distance, and a river can be seen between the houses. There is a fountain centre. The Storyteller moves to centre stage as the overture comes to an end.*

Storyteller            Once upon a time, as all the best stories begin, in the little town of Hamelin, on the banks of the river Weser...

Glocken                *(wheeling on a cart full of cuckoo clocks)* Oi! Are you going to be there for long?

Storyteller            Sorry?

Glocken                Are you going to be there long? It's just that that's my spot.

Storyteller            What?

Glocken                That's my spot. I've got a permit from the council.

Storyteller            A permit?

Glocken                Yeah, you've got to have a permit if you're going to be selling stuff.

Storyteller            I'm not selling 'stuff', as you so eloquently put it.

Glocken                So what are you doing in market square if you haven't got anything to sell? It's pointless if you ask me.

Storyteller            I'm telling a story.

Glocken                And how much is that then?

Storyteller            It's not for sale.

Glocken                Just as well really. You need a permit if you want to sell stuff. Besides, that's my spot.

Storyteller            Can I get on?

Glocken                *(thinking she wants a ride)* Not really the cart's full of clocks. I sell clocks. That's why I need my spot. Place is full of tourists crying out for cheap tat come nine o'clock, so come on, shift it. I got work to do.

Storyteller            So have I. Once upon a time...

Strudel *(entering with a tray full of cakes hanging from his shoulders)* Tasty buns. Get your tasty buns. All fresh today. Big buns, small buns, buns for every budget. *(To Glocken)* Oi, you're in my spot.

Glocken Don't tell me, tell 'im.

Strudel *(to Storyteller, indicating Glocken)* Oi, he's in my spot.

Storyteller What's that got to do with me?

Glocken You're in *my* spot. Move it, buster, you're knocking everything out of whack.

Strudel Yeah, we got stuff to sell. Market opens at nine. *(To Glocken)* Have you got the time?

Glocken *(incredulous and sarcastically indicating his cart)* Really?

*Mechants and customers are starting to fill the market square as. Children play games around them.*

Blumenkohl *(with a box of vegetables)* What's going on here?

Glocken She's in my spot.

Blumenkohl Here, you, you can't just take a man's spot. You need a permit.

Storyteller So I've heard.

Blumenkohl What's she doing anyway?

Glocken Says she's telling a story.

Blumenkohl What's it about?

Storyteller It's about an hour or so.

Strudel Oh, I like a good story.

Blumenkohl Have you heard the one about that little girl and the wolf?

Strudel Ooh, no! Is it romantic?

Blumenkohl Not really. Wolf ate her... and her granny. Bits of them everywhere. Terrible. In all the papers. That's the trouble with wolves, you see. Messy eaters.

Storyteller Can I just tell the story?

Glocken                    That's not the problem, mate. We all like a good old yarn. The problem's not the story. The problem is where you're telling it. Why don't you get over there? It's as good a spot as any.

Storyteller                Fine. I'll go over there. Honestly! Some people! *(Composes herself)*  
Right... Once upon a time...

Strudel                    I hope you don't mind the interruption...

Storyteller                *(exasperated and sarcastic)* Why break the habit?

Strudel                    Well, I'm no storyteller, ducky, but I do know how to get an audience going. I've done a few plays myself.

Blumenkohl                He has. Wonderful posture. Stands ever so still.

Glocken                    That's because he's so wooden. Put him next to a tree and there'd be squirrels going up his trouser leg.

Strudel                    Critics everywhere. Anyway, as I said, I've done quite a few plays. Hamelin Amateur Dramatics, don't you know.

Glocken                    Of course we do. You never stop talking about it.

Strudel                    You're just jealous because I got the lead part in Hamlet.

Glocken                    With the emphasis on the ham.

Strudel                    Philistine. *(To Storyteller)* Anyway, I was in last year's outdoor production of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. You might have seen me. Rave reviews.

Blumenkohl                Oh, yes. You should have seen his Bottom in the park. Marvellous.

Strudel                    What you want, dear heart, is bells and whistles...a pinch of pizzazz.

Storyteller                Pizazz?

Strudel                    Yes. Old school musical theatre. Everyone likes a few jazz hands and a couple of step-ball-changes. Give' em something to wake them up.

Glocken                    How about an alarm clock?

Strudel                    Is everything a business opportunity to you?

Glocken                    I have to make a living. No one's been through here in an age. What are we supposed to live on? Air?

Strudel *(To Storyteller)* Look, forget him. You need to wow the crowds. 'Once upon a time' is so last year. Why don't you start with a big opening number?

Storyteller You think so?

Blumenkohl Of course, that's the way to pull an audience. I'll get my jazz shoes.

Storyteller Well, if you'll let me begin, then I'll give it a try.

Strudel Good for you, dear heart. Maybe you'll get a Tony.

Blumenkohl Let's not push it.}

### **No 1 : Hamelin Swing**

**Storyteller** **There's a tiny town near Hanover City**  
**It might be small but, gee, it's pretty**

**Chorus** **Ask any guidebook that it's in**

**Storyteller** **They'll praise the little hamlet of Hamelin**

**Chorus** **Hamelin, hale and pretty hearty**  
**Hamelin, book yourself a party**

**Storyteller** **Take a trip down Hamelin way**

**Chorus** **It's a fun filled, five star holiday**  
**Woo-hoo, Hamelin**  
**Yoo-Hoo, Hamelin**

**Storyteller** **If you like your mountains panoramic**  
**And you like cuisine that's quite Germanic**  
**Pack your bags, and jump right in**  
**To the hale and hearty hamlet of Hamelin**

**Chorus** **Hamelin, if you're in the mood'll**  
**Surely shower you with strudel**

**Storyteller** **For souvenirs, think outside of the box,**

**Chorus** **We do a lovely line in cuckoo clocks**

**Ya, ya, Hamelin**

**Alles klar, Hamelin**

**Storyteller And don't forget your lederhosen**

**To stop your Bratwurst getting frozen**

**Chorus The mountain breeze blows fresh and free**

**It'll freeze your yodel-odel-odel-ay-dee-ee**

**All Hamelin Saurkraut and pickle**

**Hamelin Bier and Pumpernickel**

**Watch the cash come rolling in**

**To the money grabbing tourist trap of Hamelin**

**Storyteller Just one more thing, please bring your cats**

**Chorus What we sort of failed to tell you about**

**Not a thing you want to hear us shout**

**Alright, so you've found us out**

**We've got rats!**

**Filthy rats!**

**Stinking Rats!**

**(spoken) Rats!**

**{ Scene II**

**Blumenkohl Look at this place. It's like a ghost town. Not a single solitary customer.**

**Glocken What do you expect? The place is overrun by rats.**

**Strudel No wonder no one wants to buy our stuff. No one wants an éclair with a rat in the middle.**

**Glocken Call me old fashioned but I'd rather fresh cream.**

**Strudel I don't think I've got anything without teeth marks in it. Not even the wife.**

**Blumenkohl Looks like they've really had a go at her face.**

Strudel                    They bit her legs.

Blumenkohl              Oh.

Glocken                  There's more and more every day. They must think us easy pickings.

Blumenkohl              Most of my vegetable store has been chewed. Look at this. *(She holds out an apple.)* This apple is the only thing that I have left that hasn't been nibbled.

*A rat dressed as a gangster walks by and takes it, bites it and puts it back in his hand and exits.*

Blumenkohl              *(calling out)* Second hand apple. Half price today. One careful owner.

Strudel                    Oh, this is unbelievable. They're not even frightened of us anymore.

Glocken                  I found one in my bed last night. Didn't get a wink of sleep. Kept hogging the duvet.

Trader 1                  Someone needs to do something. They're eating us out of house and home

Trader 2                  My cat is a nervous wreck. I caught her eating a ball of wool this morning.

Trader 1                  What happened?

Trader 2                  She had mittens.

*Suddenly a number of different clock chimes and alarms are heard loudly. The others cover their ears. Glocken runs around his cart furiously turning them all off.*

*The alarms stop one by one.*

Glocken                  There we go. Sounds like it's time to shut up shop.

All                          You don't say?

Glocken                  Another market day finished and not a single sale. Even if we had the money to buy food, there's none to be had. The rats have had the lion's share.

Trader 1                  They're terrorising us. I'm afraid to go out at night.

Trader 2                  This place used to be full of tourists. Wallets overflowing and money to spend on anything we had to sell.

Trader 1                    More money than sense. Those were the good old days.

Blumenkohl                Ever since the rat king moved in with his mob, no one comes to Hamelin.

Strudel                     Little wonder. You're not going to have the best of holidays if you keep getting robbed in the street by a horde of rats. It gets wearing.

Glocken                    They don't want Old Hamelin nowadays, not with its wall-to-wall, hot and cold running rats.

Trader 2                    They're all opting for all inclusives in Corfu these days

Strudel                     Sun, sea, sand and all the hummus you can eat.

Trader 1                    I hear it's quite reasonable.

Trader 2                    I've seen the brochures. Some lovely destinations.

Trader 1                    Barbados... Mauritius... Hull. (*Substitute the last with somewhere that few people would holiday*)

Strudel                     Who cares? They're going anywhere other than here.

Glocken                    Who can blame them? No one likes a rat in their swimming trunks. Gets a bit nippy.

Trader 2                    You know, I've had enough. I'm packing it in. There's got to be something more rewarding to do. Maybe I'll emigrate.

Trader 1                    That's a bit drastic.

Trader 2                    I haven't sold anything for months. I'm so poor these days, burglars break in to my house and leave me stuff.

Strudel                     I could do with a drink. Anyone? Who fancies a beer?

Blumenkohl                The rats have had it all.

Strudel                     Wine?

Blumenkohl                (*whines*) The rats have had it all.

Strudel                     We may as well go home, then.

Glocken                    Yeah, I want to get back before the rats do. Maybe I can keep hold of the duvet tonight. }

### **No 2: Villager's Lament**

**Storyteller**            **What a dreadful situation to be in**

**Chorus**                **All our tourist trade is growing rather thin**

**Who would want a nice vacation**

**With a heavy rat migration**

**From a stinking sewer just outside Berlin?**

*{ The traders make their way off sadly as it gets dark. Rats start to creep on, all dressed as rat-eared mobsters in black and white with whiskers, trilbies and spats.*

### **No.3 The Rat Pack**

**Rats**                    **When Old Man Trouble comes to find you**

**Take a look just right behind you**

**It's the Rat Pack**

**The Rat Pack's back**

**If something vicious grabs attention**

**Just be sure it's time to mention**

**The Rat Pack**

**The Rat Pack's back**

**Ev'ry scuttling scratching we determine**

**Comes from that partic'lar type of vermin**

**With disease that could be catching**

**All our darkest plans are hatching**

**It's the Rat Pack**

**The Rat Pack's back**

**So when there's dirty deeds a doing**

**You can bet you'll be pursuing**

**That deadly pack we've sung about before**

**It's the Rat Pack**

**The Rat Pack**

**The Rat Pack**

**Come knocking at your door**

*Scabs (spoken) And here he is, the one you've been waiting for, old red eyes himself, the Rat King*

*The Rats cheer and applaud.*

**No.4 Good to Be Bad**

*Rat King enters, like a Chicago gangster.*

**Rat King**            **It's time to make my mark**  
**Like all the bad guys do**  
**So here's a special little song**  
**That's going out to you**  
**I'd rather be a sinner than a saint**  
**You may think this ditty pretty – well, it certainly downright ain't**

*Scabs*                *Tell it like it is, Boss*

*Rat King*            *Did I say you could squeak?*

*During the song, the Rat King manhandles, beats, hits and generally pushes Scabs about*

**Rat King**            **I've got a yearning to be evil**  
**Always find something up my sleeve'll**  
**Terrify you and make you raving mad**  
**Rather not be the chap who's sat in chapel**  
**Better be he who stole that ole forbidden apple**  
**Look at me: I've a smile that's winning**  
**Nobody knows the sin I'm sinning**  
**A - Number-One', a cutthroat, thief and cad**

**How can it feel so good**

**Being a no good hood**

**Hey, don't it feel so good**

**To be bad**

*Scabs*

*Excellent rhyming, chief*

*Rat King*

*Are you still here?*

**I can do anything that pleases**

**Spreading a thread of dread diseases**

**Some of you think it might be just a fad**

**Top of the heap, I'm still the reigning master**

**What other creep could make you weep with this disaster**

**We're gonna take your food and houses**

**Make no mistake we ain't no mouses**

*Scabs*

*(correcting) Mice!*

**Rat King**

**Just take a bite of what we've never had**

**Oh, ain't it just so good**

**Being a no-good hood**

**Hey, don't it feel so good**

**To be bad**

**Rats**

**To be bad**

**Rat King**

**Making you mad and now I think of it**

**Leading you to the very brink of it**

**Rats**

**Mayhem and fuss the order of the day**

**Villainy is our thing and betcha we**

**All got a PhD in treachery**

**These're our streets and we are here to stay**



Rat King            You gonna stop interrupting? Whose moment is this? This is my moment. Who's King? I am.

Scabs                You are.

Rat King            Who am I?

Scabs                The Rat King.

Rat King            That's right and don't you forget it. And stop that scratching.

Scabs                I'm a rat. It's what we do. Besides, my scabs are itching.

Rat King            That's disgusting.

Scabs                *(proud)* Thank you.

Rat King            Back to the matter in hand... I want to take this opportunity to thank you for all your work so far, but we got more to do. Oh yes, so much more.

Scabs                Yeah. We're gonna run those pestiferous villagers right out of this town.

*Rats cheer.*

Rat King            That was my line.

Scabs                Sorry, boss.

Rat King            As for that fat cat mayor, he ain't gonna be sitting pretty for much longer. Soon, we're gonna take over city hall and they're gonna have to answer to us. One last push and the world's our oyster!

Scabs                One small scuttle for rat, one great leap for ratkind.

Rat King            Yeah, what he said.

Rat                    You think they're gonna lay down without a fight?

Rat King            No they ain't so I want every scabrous, scaly, disease ridden rodent here on their guard. That Burgomeister Shmalz is one slippery customer so keep your eyes peeled and your whiskers twitching.

Scabs                Now go do some mischief, minions of mayhem!

Rat King            Are you deliberately trying to make me lose my cool? That's my line.

Scabs                Sorry, boss.

Rat King            Go do some mischief, *my* minions of mayhem!

Scabs                      Nice!

*Rats cheer and scuttle off. Rat King turns on Scabs.*

Rat King                  How many times do I have to tell you, don't mess with my speeches?  
You don't mess with the King. Get it?

Scabs                      Got it.

Rat King                  Good. Sometimes, Scabs, I think you got eyes on my job.

Scabs                      No one could do it like you, boss. You got charm. You got grace, you  
got... (*batting at him*) ...fleas.

Rat King                  That's what I like about you, Scabs. You're such a grovelling little creep.

Scabs                      I aim to please.

Rat King                  You see? Where's Ratzella? I got a date with her round the back of the  
trash cans.

Scabs                      Who knows? That dumb broad is probably staring at orange juice again.

Rat King                  Why?