



**Murray J. Rivette**

A wacky adaptation of the German legend

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**BIG DOG PUBLISHING**  
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## THE PIE PIPER OF HAMBALONEY

**FARCE.** The City of Hambaloney has rats! Lots and lots of rats! But the mayor and city council voted to give themselves raises last year, so the city coffers are empty. Desperate to rid the city of rats, a city council member contacts a weird flute-playing guy, the Pie Piper, who lives in a cave outside the city. Not only is the Pie Piper the cousin of the infamous Pied Piper, he works real cheap...as in no money. All he wants is one pie a day for a year. After the Pie Piper drives the rats away with his horrendous flute "music," the mayor discovers that all the bakers have left for a pie convention and there are no pies anywhere. To get back at the town officials, the Pie Piper lures all their children away. The only problem is that the citizens of Hambaloney aren't sure if they want their kids back!

**Performance Time:** Approximately 45-60 minutes.

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A painting of the Pied Piper, based on a glass window from 1300 that was located in a church in Hamelin.

## ABOUT THE STORY

The Pied Piper is first mentioned in a legend from Hamelin, Germany in which a piper that is dressed in multicolored ("pied") clothing is hired by the town to lure the rats away with his magic pipe. The earliest mention of the legend dates to a stained glass window (1300) located in a church in Hamelin. A watercolor painting by Freiherr Augustin von Moersperg (pictured above) depicts this window, which was destroyed in 1660. It is thought that the window was created to commemorate a tragic historical event when many Hamelin children died or disappeared. The addition of rats to the legend was not added until 1559, and some scholars theorize that the legend could refer to a mass emigration to Eastern Europe in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, or that an epidemic, a drowning accident, or a landslide lead to the demise of the children.

## CHARACTERS

(4 M, 4 F, 1 flexible)

**PIE PIPER:** The cousin of the infamous Pied Piper who loves all pies except coconut custard; a terrible flute player; wears a small black mask and cape; male.

**BEAUREGARD B. SHINBONE:** Mayor of the City of Hambaloney who loves to invite others over for karaoke; male.

**ELVIRA SHINBONE:** The Mayor's wife; female.

**HYACINTH O. ROMA:** Deputy Mayor who is constantly brushing her hair; female.

**SIDNEY ROMA:** Hyacinth's husband; male.

**ALFRED P. SWEATBOX:** Council member who just sits around doing nothing like a potted plant; sits back with his arms folded over his stomach; male.

**POLLY SWEATBOX:** Alfred's wife; lives on Elm Street with their son Freddy and isn't sure if she wants her son back; female.

**LUCIUS L. PALLIACHI:** Assistant to the Deputy Mayor; has worked on a Rubik's Cube for more than a year and still hasn't solved it; flexible. (If female, change name to Lucia.)

**SHIRLEY DILIGHTFUL:** Council member who loves to chew gum and work on her nails; female.

## SETTING

City of Hambaloney.

## SET

**Mayor's conference room.** There is a conference table, chairs, and a window.

## SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

**Scene 1:** Mayor's conference room.

**Scene 2:** Conference room, the next day.

**Scene 3:** Conference room, one day later.

**Scene 4:** Conference room, one week later.

**Scene 5:** Conference room, one day later.

**Scene 6:** Conference room, the next day.

**NOTE:** Because the entire play takes place in one room, you may place an easel on one side of the stage and, as one of the characters in the upcoming scene enters, he or she place a placard on the easel showing the time lapse from the previous scene.

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PROPS

Rubik's Cube

Money

Flute

Spyglass

Umbrella

## SOUND EFFECTS

Horrible flute music  
Beautiful flute music  
William Tell Overture



"ARE WE SURE  
WE WANT  
THE KIDS BACK?"

—POLLY

SCENE 1

(AT RISE: City of Hambaloney, the Mayor's conference room. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Hyacinth, Lucius, Shirley, and Alfred are seated around the conference table, texting and in general discussion. The Pie Piper enters, wearing a small black mask and cape. He is unseen by the others. The others freeze when he speaks.)

PIPER: (To audience.) Hello, there. They call me the Pie Piper. Don't confuse me with my cousin, the Pied Piper. He's from New Jersey, and I'm from all over the world. I've lived in some pretty strange places. I've lived on a raft on the Amazon River. Have you ever heard the expression, "up a creek without a paddle"? Well, I didn't need a paddle because I had a Pole. His name was Stanislaus, and he was the finest guide in the entire Amazon Basin. I've also lived in a yurt in Mongolia. When I first arrived at a local tribe's village, I was sleeping on the ground in a sleeping bag, and they asked me if I wanted a yurt. I thought it was something to eat, so I said, "Sure, let me have two." Later, I found out that a yurt is a small house, and they made two of them for me about a mile apart. I used the more northern one as my summer home because it was cooler there and the more southern one as my winter home because it was warmer. I've also lived in a tent in the Sahara Desert. But every time I stuck my head out of the front flap of the tent, I got something in my eye. I think it was sand. But enough about me. Let's listen in to their discussion, shall we?

(Others unfreeze.)

MAYOR: (Jumps to his feet.) Rats!

ALL: (Except Pie Piper and Mayor.) What?

MAYOR: That's what I said, "rats"!

HYACINTH: (Brushing her hair.) Yes, Mr. Mayor, we know what you said, but why did you say it?

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LUCIUS: *(To Mayor, playing with a Rubik's Cube.)* Yes, sir, why?

MAYOR: Can't you guess?

SHIRLEY: *(Chewing gum noisily.)* I don't think so.

ALFRED: *(Sitting back with arms folded over stomach.)* Me neither.

*(General hubbub. All adlib, "Beats me," "I don't understand," "What's he talking about?" etc.)*

MAYOR: Not one of you understands what I'm saying?

HYACINTH: Oh, yes, sir. You said, "rats."

MAYOR: No, no, no—

LUCIUS: Oh, yes, sir. *(To others.)* We heard you plain as day, didn't we, people? *(Others nod. To Mayor.)* You said, "rats."

HYACINTH: *(To Mayor.)* Yes, that's right.

SHIRLEY: *(To Mayor.)* You said it.

ALFRED: *(To Mayor.)* We heard you.

MAYOR: Am I dealing with idiots?!

SHIRLEY: Yes, sir, absolutely. *(Realizes.)* I mean, no, sir, absolutely not.

MAYOR: But not a one of you can tell me why I said "rats"?

*(General hubbub. Others are confused.)* Okay, I'll explain.

*(Shouts.)* We have rats! Lots and lots of rats! They are all over our fair city of Hambaloney, and they are into everything: the schools, the fast food places, the department stores, the churches, and even our hospital!

ALFRED: Oh, how true! They're disgusting little creatures!

HYACINTH: They're disgusting *big* creatures!

LUCIUS: Right! Big!

SHIRLEY: Absolutely! Big!

ALFRED: Well, all the ones I've seen are pretty average.

OTHERS: They're *big*, Alfred! *(Shouts.)* Big, big, big!

ALFRED: Oh, okay. They're big.

OTHERS: Right!

MAYOR: The question is...how do we get rid of them?

*(General hubbub. Others adlib, "I don't know," "Gee, that's a tough question," "No idea," etc.)*

HYACINTH: Maybe we can offer a bounty. For every dead rat you bring in, you get a dollar.

SHIRLEY: That sounds like a good idea.

ALFRED: Except for one little detail: We don't have enough money in our treasury to pay that.

LUCIUS: *(Gets an idea.)* Hey, wait a minute!

MAYOR: Why?

HYACINTH/SHIRLEY/ALFRED: Yeah, why?

LUCIUS: I know a guy.

HYACINTH: So what? I know a guy, too.

SHIRLEY: So do I.

ALFRED: Me, too! Everybody knows a guy!

MAYOR: Wait a minute, people. Wait a minute. Lucius, do you mean you know someone who can help us with this situation...someone who can rid us of rats?

LUCIUS: Yes, yes, I think I do.

MAYOR: Who is it?

**[END OF FREEVIEW]**