

The Little Town of Hammelin



A MEDIEVAL APPETIZER

All Flesh Must Be Eaten

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Little Town of Hamlin

An Medieval Appetizer for All Flesh Must Be Eaten

Based on the Pied Piper of Hamelin and featuring the Dead at 1000 Deadworld

Rats were not the real problem in Hamlin. It was zombies. They roamed the streets, attacking peasants, assaulting the stockades and even threatening nobles . . .

Until the Piper came to town. Just as the largest force of zombies Hamlin had ever seen began breaking through the barricades, the Piper arrived and somehow led them away. All he asked at the time was a bit of gold.

When the Piper returned for payment, the Mayor sent him away empty handed.

Based on the Original Concept by

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introduction

Welcome to Little Town of Hamlin, an *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* adventure booster. This material is designed for use as a ready-to-run adventure that may be played through in one or two sessions. It can be run as a special break from a regular campaign, or inserted as part of a larger, longer-running campaign.

Cast Members must be created using the Dead at 1000 setting information (see *AFMBE*, p. 196). Otherwise, the Zombie Master should simply read through the text, gather the players, and start the flesh-fest.

For those planning to play the role of Cast Members in the Little Town of Hamlin adventure, stop reading now. The remainder of this book is for the Zombie Master eyes only.

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September 2003 • Stock EDN8021

The Piper

When Lucius raised the dead, he was not alone in the cemetery (see *AFMBE*, p. 197). His disciples gathered as well, to witness his glory and assist in the ceremony. Among them was a young merchant's son who had a penchant for the flute and greed in his heart. After a chance meeting with Lucius through common acquaintances, the youth realized the nobleman could wield truly great powers and became a devoted follower.

Studying the teachings of his dark master, the Piper, as he came to be called, discovered powers within himself. He found it easier to focus his powers on an object, and transferred a type of enchantment to it. This enabled him to double or triple his power when using the object. For the Piper, the particular object was an easy choice—his flute.

After the rise of the dead at the cemetery that night, almost all of Lucius' disciples were consumed. The piper saw what was coming, however, and escaped. He ventured forth into new and darker world, looking to make his mark. The Piper traveled east, deep into Germany. There, he set up shop, ushering in a new and profitable wave of terror on towns and villages from horizon to horizon.

Using his flute-enhanced powers to lure the walking dead, the Piper would turn them on a village for a few days. When the village was on the verge of crumbling, he would sweep in, lead the dead away and collect a handsome reward for his "brave rescue." By spacing the attacks out over distance and time, the Piper has managed to create a legend among the Germanic people. This only serves to increase profits from his schemes.

Everything was working exactly as the Piper wished until he reached Hamlin and encountered a very greedy Mayor . . . along with our Cast Members.

Taint Pipe

The Piper has imbued his pipe with some of his own Taint Power and uses it to control either the dead or the young. So long as the pipe is intact and the Piper able to play, the dead or children follow his song and simple commands. The bearer of the pipe is protected from any zombies under his control. Should the pipe be taken by someone else or destroyed, the zombies are free and able to do as they wish.

When played, the pipe acts like a dog whistle and is so high pitched that most humans cannot hear it. With a Difficult Perception Test, characters may notice the ringing in their ears that the pipe produces. Animals, particularly those with sensitive hearing, are irritated by the noise, and flee or attempt to drown it out with their own voices.

While the pipe itself is an impressive creation, it has limitations. The pipe cannot be used to control adults. The minds of the dead have rotted, leaving places to be controlled; the minds of the children are still developing, and thus susceptible. An adult's mind is closed off to the effects of the pipe since it has long finished developing and has not yet begun to decay.



The Piper, Dark Mage

Strength 3 **Intelligence** 4
Dexterity 3 **Perception** 4
Constitution 3 **Willpower** 5
Life Points 49 **Speed** 12
Endurance Points 38 **Taint** 37

Qualities and Drawbacks: Artistic Talent 3, Covetous (Wealth) 3, The Gift, Hard to Kill 5

Skills: Acting 3, Cheating 2, Disguise 2, Hand Weapon (Knife) 2, Hand Weapon (Bow) 2, Hand Weapon (Sword) 4, Intimidation 2, Occult Knowledge (Undead) 5, Play Instrument (Pipe) 5, Rituals (Enhance Dead) 3, Rituals (Gateway) 3, Riding (Horse) 4, Survival (Mountains) 2, Tracking 2

Powers

Enhance Dead Invocation: The Piper only possesses this invocation if the Army of the Dead zombies are used (see p. 8). It is only effective on the corpses of warriors who have been slain in battle with the dead. Using 10 Taint Points each, a Dead at 1000 zombie (see p. 199 and 168) is transformed into an Army of the Dead zombie.

Gateway Invocation: The gateway is the Piper's emergency escape option. He has spent some time preparing it, but this tremendous undertaking will not be complete until the crucial cinematic moment. Once opened, the Piper's gateway leads to a prepared safe house in Transylvania, where he plans to play out the same scam on the superstitious population of the back mountain villages. The gateway is not an easy spell to create and the final ingredients include the blood of children.

Equipment: Taint pipe, sword, chain mail, traveling disguise.

Hamlin

*Hamlin 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,
Had not the living gone and died
And risen up, to feast again
On pet, family and on friend.
Thus suffered our poor city.*

Situated in the beautiful mountains of Germany, Hamlin has so far managed to avoid the workings of Lucius and his evil dead army. The principal halt to the spread of the undead has been a series of avalanches which have closed off the passes and routes during the winter. Nevertheless, as the spring thaw continues, the populace of Hamlin begins to fear as refugees and travelers bring news of the dead migrating eastwards from Paris.

Our Cast Members may be some of these travelers, escaping the spreading plague in the west or they may be residents of Hamlin, already known and helping to prepare the town for the inevitable attack by the dead. The Cast Members can also be in the employ of the Mayor, who is constantly looking for strong backs to help defend the town. Either way, the Cast Members spend the day exploring the town, meeting up with other inhabitants such as the Johann Schmidt and Wilhelm Dacher.

The town's important buildings circle the plaza so that the citizens of Hamlin can find them all easily. During the day, an open-air market covers the area, allowing traders, merchants, travelers, and locals to exchange all sorts of goods. Since the dead arose, however, these items have become scarce and the market only opens every couple of days.

Mayor's House

Large and ornate, the Mayors' house is easily twice the size of any other house in town. It faces inwards towards the town square, enabling the Mayor to address the gathered populace from the balcony overlooking the square. Unless he is bustling around town and looking important, the Mayor can usually be found here, working on trading contracts with neighboring towns, settling small disputes, or taking bribes from the Merchants' Guild. The interior is more ornamental than useful, with a large downstairs consisting of the dining room, kitchens, servants' quarters, reception area, and drawing room. Upstairs contains the master bedroom, several guest bedrooms, and the office, which leads to the balcony overlooking the square.



Nikolaus Schultheis, Mayor of Hamlin

Strength 4 **Constitution 4**
Dexterity 3 **Intelligence 2**
Perception 2 **Willpower 3**
Life Points 45 **Speed 14**
Endurance Points 38 **Essence Pool 18**
Qualities/Drawbacks: Hard to Kill 1, Fast Reaction Time
Skills: Brawling 3, Dodge 2, Gambling 2, Hand Weapon (Bow) 2, Hand Weapon (Knife) 2, Hand Weapon (Sword) 4, Intimidation 2, Riding (Horse) 4, Survival (Forest) 2, Tracking 2

A rotund man, with an eye towards the bottom line, Nikolaus Schultheis rose to mayoral stature by knowing when and where to step on peoples toes or cross them. Now that he has attained his seat of power, he slowly becomes blind to whom he can anger and whom he cannot. The Mayor is a slimy man, handing out medals and commendations to please the people but ready to turn and run at a moment's notice. His position as head of the town keeps this in check. His greed for whatever he can siphon from the population overwhelms even his normal cowardly ways.

While he will never admit it, the Mayor has been using the town treasury to hire his own personal men and invest in trade. After Lucius played his little trick in Paris, much of the trade stopped and the Mayor lost it all. He has managed to keep word that the town is bankrupt from circulating thus far, but is desperately aware that, unless he can find some way to replenish his coffers, word will get out.

The Mayor constantly surrounds himself with a half dozen bullyboys. Schultheis is no dummy, and realizes that someday someone may take violent issue with him. The hired men are used as enforcers, tax collectors, bodyguards, and thugs by the Mayor. These boys do not show much imagination, but are still capable of handling themselves should the Mayor order them to go toe-to-toe. They are under orders to stop any would-be attackers while the Mayor makes his escape.

Mayor's Men

Strength 3 Constitution 2
 Dexterity 2 Intelligence 2
 Perception 2 Willpower 2
 Life Points 30 Speed 8
 Endurance Points 26 Essence Pool 13

Skills: Brawling 3, Cheating 2, Gambling 2, Hand Weapon (Knife) 3, Hand Weapon (Bow) 3, Hand Weapon (Sword) 4, Intimidation 2, Survival (Mountains) 2, Tracking 2

Equipment: The men are equipped with short swords and helmets, but little else. Part of their pay is their equipment and very few of them can afford nice armor or shields.

If the Cast Members attempt to assassinate or even discredit the Mayor, they find few allies in the populace of Hamlin. Aside from Schmidt and Dacher, most of the people of Hamlin follow the Mayor and believe in what he is doing. They may or may not realize that his plan is foolhardy and bound to fail, but they still respect and fear him. Because of this, they generally defend him from anyone attacking his body, reputation, or policies. Killing the Mayor in this time of need sends the town spinning into chaos and leaves it open to the rampaging dead. If the Cast Members are party to this murder, the crowd arrests and hangs them soon afterwards.

Chapel

Also facing the town square, the chapel existed for several decades before Hamlin was officially recognized as a town. Should the dead invade, the chapel provides shelter and some protection from the evil outside. However, unknown to anyone but the pastor, the crypts below are inhabited by two dozen denizens, not yet risen. Of course, this changes once the other dead arrive. The chapel is laid out common to others for miles around, with a large main room containing the altars and rows of pews. A small room behind the altar is shared by the priest's bed and possessions and storage for the day-to-day necessities of the church. A second door off the main room leads to the bell tower, a small room by itself containing only the rope leading up to the church bell.

The crypts below are tiny by comparison to others—a single passage is lined with corpses on both sides and terminates in a small cul-de-sac. Several spaces are still available.

David of Karo, Priest

Use the stats for Priest (see *AFMBE*, p. 200), with the following powers: Blessing Miracle, Touch of Healing Miracle, The Binding Miracle.

Newly arrived from the Vatican itself, David of Karo is new to the real world of caretaking a church. He does the best he can in the worst of circumstances. Word of the dead has reached him, but he is just naïve enough to believe in the Mayor's attempts to fortify the town. He believes the Lord guides his touch and will gladly help in healing those who are pious as well as those defending his chapel.

Blacksmith

This one room shack contains the town's forge and enough blunt, heavy objects to outfit an entire company of soldiers. While short on swords and daggers, Johann Schmidt has recently been working on an order for carpentry and construction tools, leaving several mallets and tools setting on the cooling racks. For unarmed Cast Members, this may be a necessary stop to collect something with which to defend themselves.

Big and loud, Johann is the good-natured owner of the Blacksmith of Hamlin. He works his forge with pleasure every day—rain or shine. His door is always wide open and he welcomes everyone with a burly smile whether they are customers or simply visitors. Johann loves his home and his town and will be at the forefront of its defense when the time comes. He does not believe in the Mayor's plan to circle the town, however, and spends his time creating what makeshift weapons he can instead of working on a wall he knows will not save them.



Johann Schmidt

Strength 4 Constitution 2
 Dexterity 2 Intelligence 2
 Perception 2 Willpower 2
 Life Points 49 Speed 8
 Endurance Points 28 Essence Pool 14

Qualities/Drawbacks: Hard to Kill 3, Resources (Middle Class), Status 3

Skills: Brawling 3, Gambling 2, Hand Weapon (Knife) 3, Hand Weapon (Hammer) 3, Hand Weapon (Sword) 4, Intimidation 3, Survival (Mountains) 2, Craft (Blacksmith) 4

Merchants Guild

Coming in a close second in size to the Mayor's House, the Merchants' Guild houses any traveling traders or guests of local merchants in order to establish good trading relations. The downstairs consists of the dining room, kitchen, servants' quarters, reception area, and drawing room. Also included is the large meeting room, where price negotiations and important business takes place during the merchant's meetings.

A single grand staircase in the middle of the reception area leads upstairs where furnished bedrooms await guests of the guild.

With the rumors that the plague in France is spreading, most merchants have used their fortunes to travel north and across the Channel to England, abandoning the Guild. The staff is down to a few house servants who have been ordered to remain behind and keep the house up. They will protect the guild house but little else.

Thatcher's Hut

The thatcher's hut is no place for the Cast Members to make a stand. Thin walls, a roof made out of thatch, and nothing but blankets and half-woven baskets all add up to make the hut a deathtrap. If things become desperate, and they will, this place can easily become a second or third bonfire to ward the zombies out of the area, possibly allowing the Cast Members a clear run for one of the more defensible and solid buildings.

Wilhelm is a ratty little man whose personality goes hand-in-hand with the Mayor. The two of them make a fine pair and have had several duels of nastiness behind closed doors. Wilhelm is one of the only people who knows what the Mayor has done with the town's money. In turn, the Mayor is privy to the thatcher's indiscretions with some of the still attractive dead. Wilhelm is ready to run from Hamlin at the drop of a hat. He would be even more likely to flee if he were to know that the Mayor has ordered his men to take care of Wilhelm should the dead arrive.

William Dacher

Strength 2	Constitution 2
Dexterity 2	Intelligence 4
Perception 3	Willpower 2
Life Points 26	Speed 8
Endurance Points 23	Essence Pool 15
Qualities/Drawbacks:	Cowardly 3, Obsession (Necrophilia) 2, Status 1
Skills:	Cheating 4, Gambling 4, Hand Weapon (Knife) 3, Hand Weapon (Sword) 4, Intimidation 2, Survival (Mountains) 2, Tracking 2

The Night of the Dead

Zombies!

*They fought the dogs and killed the cats,
And bit the babies in the cradles,
And ate the brains out of their heads,
And licked the gore from bodies fatal,
Split open the bowels of bloody guts,
Made nests inside abandoned huts,
And even spoiled the women's chats,
By drowning their speaking
With moaning and screaming
In fifty different sharps and flats.*

*"Unacceptable," cried the Mayor,
"Our fair town has been walled in,
To keep us safe from the dead's sin.
The food we keep will not last,
Our living shall join their ranks fast,
To rise again and feast on us.
There must be some with battle lust,
They will be our main defense
until the rise can make some sense."*

*A group arose, with swords for battle,
Wishing to fight, ignoring the prattle.
"We will stand against the dead,
And pray they shall not come to head
Our might together shall prevail
And open up a death free trail,
Away from here and to safety
Us and you and the town shall flee."*

*The group strengthened the walls
And barred the doors,
Readied weapons and stocked the stores.
The dead returned, greater than before,
Ranks filled with travelers, nobles and whores.
The group fought bravely throughout the night
And then a man entered, dressed such a sight.*

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The Warning

Reports of the dead on the move have reached the Mayor's ear. Early one morning, he summons everyone to the town square.

"My good citizens of Hamlin town, the plague of France continues to spread. I have heard tales of the dead within our borders and I fear there will come a time when even our little town must face these creatures. I ask all of you to bend your backs to help raise the walls and pickets around the town and to defend your homes with every ounce of courage you have! My men need every strong worker to raise the walls around our homes and I call upon you all to help them."

The Mayor is more right than he realizes. The Piper has been exploring the town for several days now and his army of the dead is already within striking distance.

Any of the Cast Members who choose to watch the main road notice the flow of people tapers off around mid afternoon, with no one approaching for hours. This would not be unusual typically, but with Lucius' advance, the stream has continued day and night for weeks. When dusk begins to fall, a solitary rider, whipping his horse as though death itself was chasing him, drives hard down the road and through the gates, yelling the entire way.

"The dead are coming! Thousands! Abandon your homes and run for the dead are coming! A half days walk and coming this way!"

The rider careens straight down the main street, shouting his message and stopping only upon reaching the town square, where the Mayor has come out onto his balcony to listen to his words.

"The dead are on their way M'Lord, hundreds, thousands of them marching here. They have already sacked three other towns in the past week!"

Many of the refugees nod to confirm this. After delivering his message, the rider mounts his steed again and rides, seeking to warn towns further north.

The Preparations

The Cast Members have a single night to prepare the town's defenses. Possibly time is even shorter than that.

Travelers passing through the town immediately pack up and start moving on, accustomed to fleeing at a moment's notice. Several residents also begin packing their own belongings and following the refugees' lead. The Mayor's men begin rounding up every able bodied person to shore up the defenses, build pickets and walls, and move supplies such as food and barrels of water to safer, more secure locations around town. Conscripts are given less pleasant jobs, such as shoring up walls, while volunteers receive more opportunity to interact with the Mayor's men and even the Mayor himself, who oversees the work from his office.

There is not enough material on hand for the walls and little time to gather it from nearby woods. The night drags on, leaving no time for sleep, or eating. Walls need to be reinforced, windows barred and doorways blocked, especially in all of the houses on the outskirts of town. Doors, furniture, and anything else the defenders can get their hands on inside the town can help, but there is no way they can cover every possible road fully. The Mayor keeps strict control at all times and the thought of losing any part of the town galls him to no end. This forces him to set defenses around the outermost buildings instead of the more defensible inner areas. Nothing the characters say changes his mind on this and repeated questioning of his orders is a surefire way to get put on the first line of defense when the dead arrive.

With news of the dead circulating around town for several weeks, some positions have already been finished—the town square and the houses and shops surrounding the area. Serving as a fallback area should the outer defenses be breached, the houses surrounding the plaza have been stocked with food and water, while dry wood has been stored in what used to be the fountain, for use as a bonfire. The entire square has had stone walls erected blocking off the alleys and small entries, allowing easy access only through the four main entrances to the plaza, each entrance corresponding to the points on the compass.

In a brilliant flash of insight (for him at least), the Mayor has also had several houses throughout the town stocked and fortified. They can serve as temporary safehouses in case the defenders fall back but cannot make it all the way to the town square. Unfortunately, most all of these houses are poor, one-story hovels. The Mayor feared theft of the supplies and decided people would be less likely to steal from these houses compared to the richer, more prosperous areas. Due to this, the houses are very poor defensively and easily become a deathtrap for anyone holed up there.

While the Cast Members themselves could simply barricade a single building and shelter themselves inside, this would not do anything to help protect the people of Hamlin. Unless they do it secretly and out of sight of the Mayor's men, any prolonged activity like this is cause for the men to round them up and get them working under close supervision.

The Arrival

The stench of the dead becomes noticeable around midnight, growing steadily worse and soon joined by the moans of walking corpses. First they come only from the south, where the flow of travelers had been arriving from earlier. Later, they sound from all directions. Spotters who watched refugees stream out of town earlier now notice some of them returning in the undead mob. With only torchlight to guide them, the defenders ready whatever weapons and barricades they have managed to secure.

The zombies should differ depending on what sort of party your Cast Members create. A peasant militia, armed only with pikes, swords, pitchforks, and torches will be hard pressed to



Army of the Dead

Strength 4 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 3 **Intelligence** 2
Perception 1 **Willpower** 2
Dead Points 15 **Speed** 18
Endurance Points n/a **Essence Pool** 6
Qualities/Drawbacks: Hard to Kill 1, Fast Reaction Time
Skills: Brawling 3, Hand Weapon (Sword, Mace, or Axe) 3
Equipment: Since they were gathered from the battlefields of France, the zombies in the Army of the Dead carry the weapons they used in life, generally swords (damage D8 x 4(16)), clubs (D10 x 4(20)) and axes ((D8 + 1) x 4(20)), and wear whatever is left of their armor, typically leather (AV D6 + 1(4)).
Attack: Bite damage D4 x 2(4) slashing, or weapon
Weak Spot: Brain; Blessed Objects
Getting Around: The Quick Dead
Strength: Strong Like Bull
Senses: Like the Dead; Life Sense
Sustenance: Weekly; All Flesh Must Be Eaten
Intelligence: Long-term Memory, Problem Solving
Spreading the Love: Only the Dead
Special: Acid Blood (4 points of damage per Turn)
Power: 48

defend themselves from an oncoming horde of Dead at 1000 zombies (see *AFMBE*, p. 199 and 168). This is exactly as it should be. They are in a desperate position, defending their towns and livelihoods for the sake of a greedy, worthless Mayor who refused to hire professional defense forces.

If the party is mainly nobles or powerful individuals, use the Army of the Dead zombies among the regular Dead at 1000 grunts. Gathered from the fallen on the battlefields of France and altered through dark magic and alchemy, the Army of the Dead zombies are the Piper's own personal creatures. Improving on Lucius' dead, these creatures are far more fearsome and dangerous than the dead raised in Paris. These creatures appear one in ten for low powered parties, and one in five for high-powered groups.

The tide of dead is inexhaustible, with wave after wave crushing forward, clawing at any living souls they can see and pressing through any open areas they find in order to feast inside the village. Although the Cast Members may experience some small victories in their areas of defense, others are bound to fall since the Cast Members cannot be everywhere at once. The situation is grim from the onset.

Hell's Bells

Every hour on the hour after the zombies attack, the priest chimes the bell in the church to keep morale up and remind the defenders that God watches over them. Of course, these chimes stop once the dead in the crypts below drag themselves through the door and into the church. The Piper has already spent a few days inside of Hamlin and knows of the crypt below the church.

The dead contained therein were already awake but their shrouds kept them from moving too much. Using his powers, the Piper placed these creatures in a trance and undid their shrouds. Commanding them not to attack the town until the bell tolled three times the following night, the Piper left this nasty surprise waiting beneath the church.

If the Cast Members successfully hold off the hordes until the third bell, the creatures emerging from the church, behind the defensive works, are an unwelcome surprise. They immediately begin attacking and devouring the closest group of defenders, already having dispatched the priest.

If the Cast Members fall back and take shelter in the church, the situation is even worse. With the dead outside pushing against a splintering doorway, the appearance of two dozen from inside the church causes panic, mayhem, and death—especially among the peasants who have also taken shelter within its supposedly hallowed walls. These can be the creatures finally putting the town at the mercy of the dead outside, killing off defenders, or opening up places for the dead outside to enter. At this most terrible moment, the Piper appears.

Enter the Piper

*“Stand fast, my friends,” the man did say,
“I shall save you this very day.
For but a sack, and chest of gold,
I shall drive the dead from this here fold.”
The Mayor did agree to pay
Such sum to take the dead away.
The stranger smiled, and produced
a reed of silver, a simple flute.*

*His tune carried o’er dead and living.
Children heard and started singing.
The dead turned blind gazes to this man
Who held the flute and played by hand.
Soundlessly they turned and shuffled.
The flute played on, never muffled.
The ranks of risen walked away,
The flute allowing none to stray.*

*And once they’d gone, disappeared to the east,
A cheer rose up and brought forth a feast.
The stores were opened, bread and wine,
Served to the group who’d bought the time
For the man to appear and save the village
From those that the dead would pillage.*

The dead have broken through the outermost barricades. They sweep the streets. Defenders fall and then get back up again to join the rotting tide. Our Cast Members are being pushed back, whether into the safe houses or the plaza. The Mayor stands furious and impotent on his balcony shouting orders at every man, woman, and child within earshot. The priest, if still alive, sends prayers to the heavens for a savior.

Slipping into the Mayor’s house amidst the confusion and disguised as just another traveler, the Piper proposes a deal. The Mayor quickly agrees to pay the Piper’s price should he actually lead the dead away from his overrun town.

Leaving the Mayor’s house and noticeable only to those who specifically pay attention, the Piper begins to play his soundless pipe. The Cast Members cannot hear the tune, but with a Difficult Perception Test, they notice a high ringing in their ears. This same ringing comes every time the Piper blows his pipe.

With each note, the moaning of the dead becomes less and less pervasive. Defenders around what is left of the town cheer, as the dead become passive, cold eyes turned towards the square. The change is almost immediate. It spreads across the village quickly and within minutes the entire horde stands still instead of lunging and eating. Attacks against the entranced zombies break the hold, and those attacked respond. After a Turn or two, however, the music takes hold again.

The tune changes and the entire horde walks toward the Piper, who in turn heads them towards the north side of town. Once gathered there, the Piper leads them away from the village and into the mountains. The town’s panic turns to relief and cheers rise up over the roof-tops. When the last of the dead move out of town at dawn, the barrels of beer and stocks of food are brought out as everyone comes forward to celebrate this victory, no matter how small it may be.

The Cast Members may be exhausted, but this is a huge party—a chance for them to relax and cut loose for a little while, probably their first in a long time. Wine, women (or men), and song are all available so the Cast Members can run wild for a bit.

The Payment

*The Mayor decided, in the depths of his mind,
“We could’ve won, our troop was fine,
If this Piper should ever return,
His reward I’ll not give him. I’ll leave him spurned.”
Sad that the Piper would return the next night,
And upon the Mayor’s neglect, promise a fright.*

Around mid-morning, the Mayor summons the Cast Members to his offices to commend them and present any rewards promised—as long as it does not involve anything of real value.

The Piper returns for the payment from his deadly swindle. Sneaking quietly through the crowd, he enters the Mayor’s house directly and asks for his payment. Shown in and announced, the Mayor welcomes him, shaking his hand and being as friendly and jovial as can be. Medals, praise, and thanks flow quickly from the Mayor. He does not mention payment until the Piper broaches the subject.

“I’ve come for my payment M’Lord. I would be most pleased if you would deliver it to me quickly as I have other towns to visit that surely suffer the same plague of death as you did.”

The Mayor hems and haws around it, offering free room, food, and noble title to the Piper, but the musician presses for the money only. The final request by the Piper brings another refusal from the Mayor.

Finally the Piper breaks. Furious and cursing the Mayor and his greed, the Piper storms out and disappears into the crowds.

The Price

Moments later, a new tune floats over the town and the moans of the dead soon join it. Angered by the Mayor's actions, the Piper has recalled his army and the town is left open for attack. The dead pour through the holes punched in the wall the previous night and any who fell and have yet to be buried rise and feast on the living.

This is just a distraction though. The Piper's tune changes quickly as the defenders hold desperately against the new horde. As soon as all of the adults are busy, the Piper begins to play a second song. The children of the town flee from their hiding places in a rush, following an odd opening in the flood of dead and marching mindlessly towards the mountains to the north. The Cast Members can try to stop them, but unless tied to something too heavy for them to drag, the children continue to walk until the Piper commands them to stop.

The Piper does not enter the town himself, but stands watch from cover on a nearby hill overlooking Hamlin. He guides the dead into town and the children out afterwards. Exposing himself to danger would be pointless if he wants to continue plying his trade.

Once the children are out of sight over the horizon, the flow of dead stops. The zombies still active in the town continue, but the villagers easily overcome them.

Any thought of cheer is overwhelmed by the wailing of women, especially in the Plaza. Stuck to the Mayor's outer door with a skull-headed dagger is a note.

"What you have not paid in gold, I have taken in children."

The Plea

Panic sweeps through the streets as desperate mothers and vengeful fathers raise torches and pitchforks outside the Mayor's office, demanding explanations and solutions. The Mayor acts quickly.

"People of Hamlin, a terrible ordeal has come over us this day and the cruel snatching of our children is the final grievance. I will handsomely reward any worthy who step forth to return our children from the hands of this wicked man!"

The Mayor pointedly looks at our Cast Members in particular when he says the above, and then returns to his offices. If they do not appear voluntarily, he sends one of his surviving men to summon the Cast Members. When they finally arrive, the Mayor addresses them briefly and with emotion on his face.

"My good men. You have proven yourselves in our battle against this tide of darkness and now I ask you to retrieve our children, stolen, as you know. We will provide you with any goods you need for the journey. We will remain here to comfort the grief-stricken and rebuild our defenses should the dead come again. Please go forth and quickly, we do not know what this madman intends for our children but they are the life and soul of our poor town."

The Mayor answers any questions as honestly as possible for a few moments before bidding them to hurry, as the day grows short. This includes the reasons he did not pay the Piper. The Mayor confesses to squandering the town's funds if pressed, breaking into tears as he does.

If he survived the night, Johann Schmidt outfits the Cast Members with whatever he has on hand. If the Cast Members raided his forge the previous night, his stock is down to almost nothing. He has a pair of swords brought in for sharpening, and a spade and scythe ordered for a farmer new to the area. Otherwise all he has is horseshoes and his own tools, which he does not give up to anyone.

The Road to Ruin

The Piper has lead the children to a cave hideaway he prepared should something like this ever happen. In a hurry to take the children for revenge, the Piper has not been as careful about covering his tracks as normal. A successful Perception and Tracking Task enables anyone to follow the children's footsteps to the cave entrance. The journey takes half a day but with the children under his control and no zombies to distract him, the Piper makes his way quickly to the cave.

Though he hurries away from Hamlin, the Piper has left several groups of undead behind to distract and destroy any followers who might be on his trail. Forty of his dead servants patrol the route between the town and his hideout under his command (this amount may be supplemented by "free" zombies wandering the area if the ZM wants to make things more challenging). The creatures previously commanded by the Piper have been ordered to remain in groups of six to twelve, and either patrol the woods and trail or lie in wait for passersby.

The Cave

Once the heroes arrive at the cave, a counterbalanced stone covers the entrance and death awaits anyone who enters.

Inside, the tunnels branch out to multiple rooms, some looping around each other, others leading to dead ends. The Piper is in the corral, chanting and preparing to open the portal. The halls echo with his voice, so locating him purely on sound is very difficult. Observant Cast Members notice the pitch of the chanting grows louder and more frantic as the time of the portal opening draws nearer. During his ritual, the Piper does not want visitors.

Each intersection marked by a number has several undead buried beneath it, each of them commanded to rise and take any intruders by surprise. Each time the Cast Members enter any intersection, roll D10 + 5. This is the number of undead that crawl their way forward from the floor and walls. The Piper is deep enough in concentration not to notice the sounds of any skirmishes between the Cast Members and the dead. Still, only a short while remains before the portal opens. As the time grows closer, the Piper's chanting and the hum of the surrounding walls grows louder.

The Piper's Chamber

A simple camp bed, some perfumed oil lamps, and several nearly indecipherable books on the dark arts occupy this chamber. Only silk curtains divide this room from the rest of the cave, as the Piper believes he has nothing to fear while here.

Since the kidnapping of the children is a last minute plan, several unsent letters and quickly laid out maps lie on his table. These documents detail the arrival area in Transylvania and the intended hiding spot for the children once they arrive.

Stores

Human fare—grains, breads, and meats all reside in this cool room, enough for several days if a siege should occur. A simple wooden door covers the entrance and keeps the cool air inside to help preserve the food.

Corral

This is where the children are being kept and where the Piper prepares the portal to Transylvania. A stockade fence, with a large piece of lumber mounted on the inside to block the door, is the only way in. With no simple lock to pick, the party has to rely on brute force to smash the door and make their way inside. Treat the fence as a four-inch wood wall (see *AFMBE*, p. 110).

Dead Pens

The Dead Pens hold the Piper's reserve forces of undead. With 50 each in the smaller outer chambers and 100 in the large rear chamber, the Piper is prepared to unleash a horde at a moment's notice. The dead stay behind unlocked stockade doors similar to the corral—even if these doors are blocked, they are strong enough to push them open. Until their summoning, the dead lay inactive in the pens.

The Rescue

The children are kept in the largest area of the cave system, locked behind a wooden stockade but otherwise unguarded. They remain under the Piper's trance, staring at the rock walls surrounding them and completely unaware of their situation.

The corral is only accessible through the stockade door and is the furthest room from the cave entrance. The Piper has occupied this room since they arrived, preparing the ritual to open the portal to Transylvania. There he plans to sell the children into slavery or use them as sacrifices.

The ritual requires only a child's death to complete before the Piper orders the children through. When the Cast Members arrive at the stockade wall, the Piper is literally moments away from completion. A child sacrifice stares blankly at the knife he is about to drive through her heart. Even now, a swirling vortex is appearing along the wall behind the Piper.

As the Cast Members arrive at the fence, the Piper lets loose with anything he has in order to keep the children and escape. He slays the girl immediately to open the portal, then directs the

children through. He begins piping in order to raise the creatures in the Dead Pens. A personal guard of twelve Army of the Dead zombies moves to protect him.

The Piper defends himself if he is attacked, but spends most of his time ushering the children through, and calling the zombies. With 50 children present, each one takes a few seconds to reach the portal and disappear through it. If the Cast Members are slow or distracted, the entire group can move through the gateway in five minutes. At this point, the Piper passes through and the portal closes. The Piper defends himself until all of the children are gone, and then runs for the gateway as soon as the last child is through. If his Army of the Dead zombies are unable to keep the Cast Members at bay and he appears in mortal danger, the Piper cuts his losses and escapes through the vortex.

The Aftermath

If the Cast Members kill the Piper, the children remaining in the corral regain their consciousness and begin crying for their parents. The dead outside the door forget their commands but still hunger for the fresh meal waiting inside the corral. The vortex remains open but the gate only swings one way. Once through, there is no turning back.

The dead from the pens know where their victims are and, after rising, go straight to the corral, trying to force their way in if the Cast Members barricade the doors again. This traps the Cast Members. Fighting through the dead is possible, but the odds are not good and the door eventually breaks in. The press of dead outside makes running for it nearly impossible, especially with the children in tow.

If the Cast Members and the remaining children pass through the vortex, they exit inside a similar cave in Transylvania, though luckily for them it has not been stocked with the dead yet. The trip home can easily lead into more adventures as the Cast Members shepherd their young charges back to Hamlin.

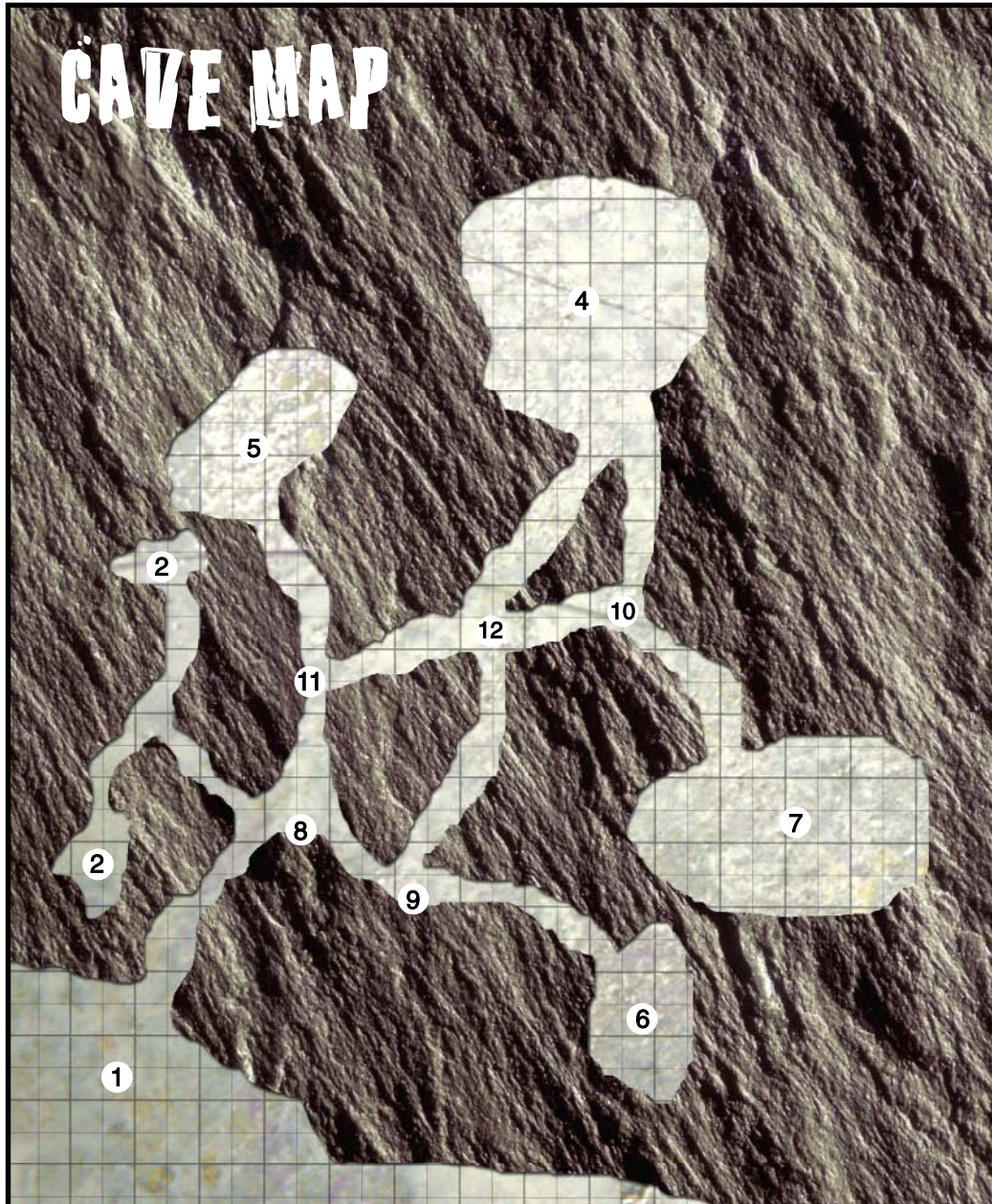
If the Cast Members manage somehow to fight their way out of the caves with some of the children, they return to Hamlin as heroes. Those whose children do not return are devastated, and make life difficult for the Mayor, and later the Cast Members. The Mayor makes good on whatever he had to promise them, although money is slow in coming due to his losses.

If the Piper escapes through the vortex, who knows what mischief he may try and raise in other towns. With the dead marching out from France, the Cast Members should realize that the last thing the world needs is another person capable of controlling the zombie hordes. Hunting the Piper down can easily lead to many adventures. Any children he took with him become slaves, sacrifices, or worse. These children are lost forever if the Cast Members do not act quickly.

If the Cast Members fail, the Piper steals the children or the children become fodder for the dead and then march on the town again. This is a grim ending, as Hamlin cannot resist another massive attack so quickly after the recent near-defeat.

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|--------------------|-----------|
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