

# Story



Pied Piper of Mamelin

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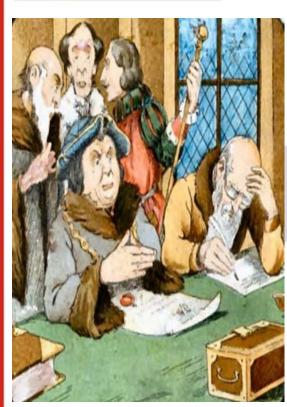




Hamelin was a small town in Germany. The city was full of rats. They were in houses, inns, shops, schools and in every street.

The mayor often held meetings with the town folks to discuss this problem. At the beginning they had thought that cats would drive away the mice. However, it was very tough to find huge numbers of cats. They were in a real dilemma.

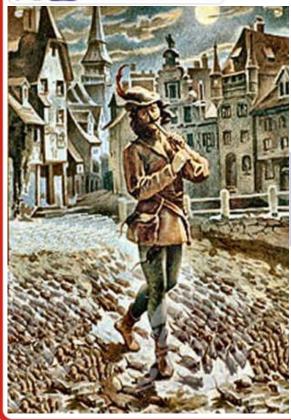




One day, a stranger came to the town of Hamelin. He carried a flute along with him. He walked straight to the mayor's building. He faced the mayor of Hamelin and said, "It is well known around Germany that Hamelin has a problem with rats. I will get you rid of all the rats. What would my reward be?" For a moment the mayor was stunned. It was difficult for him to believe a man's claim of driving away all the rats from the city.

"Ten Thousand gold coins from our treasury if you can do as you promise," said the mayor. The stranger nodded his head and said, "In a day's time Hamelin will have no rats."





The stranger walked out in the street, pulled out his flute and started playing it. An eerie sound floated in the air. People of Hamelin could hear the beautiful tune from every corner of Hamelin and were paralyzed hearing this enchanting tone.

All of a sudden, there was a 'whirring' noise. Thousands of rats came all the way from various directions. They followed the eerie sound that came from the Piper's flute. It seemed that the rats were mesmerized with the delightful tone of the flute. The stranger headed towards the sea, with all the rats of Hamelin behind him. It was an extraordinary sight for the folks of Hamelin.



The stranger was continuously playing the flute and walking right into the sea. The rats followed him and all of them were caught by the waves which dragged them into the sea. All the rats of Hamelin were drowned. The strange piper had got Hamelin rid of all the rats and kept his promise.

The stranger then approached the mayor for his reward. The mayor and the town's people were very happy but the mayor had changed his mind. When the stranger went to him, he said, "It is a wonderful task you have accomplished but isn't ten thousand gold coins a hefty reward for a day's work? I will pay you five hundred gold coins." The stranger looked at the mayor and then walked out.

In the street he pulled out his flute again and started playing it. This time the sound that came from the flute was different but was eerie as well. All the children of Hamelin started following the stranger.





The stranger walked out of town and disappeared into the mountains. Children followed him. The parents of the children wept and were inconsolable. They went to the mayor and complained about it. The mayor was helpless. He knew that he had been dishonest with the stranger.

The stranger returned to Hamelin but children didn't accompany him. The mayor rushed to him and begged for forgiveness. He pleaded to the stranger to get the children back. Without uttering a single word, the stranger turned and walked away. He returned after a few hours, this time with all the children.

The stranger was rewarded with his ten thousand gold coins. The mayor had learnt his lesson.





Highlights

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