

LEVELED Book • K

Ratty Rats



Written by Ned Jensen • Illustrated by Paula Schricker

Ratty Rats



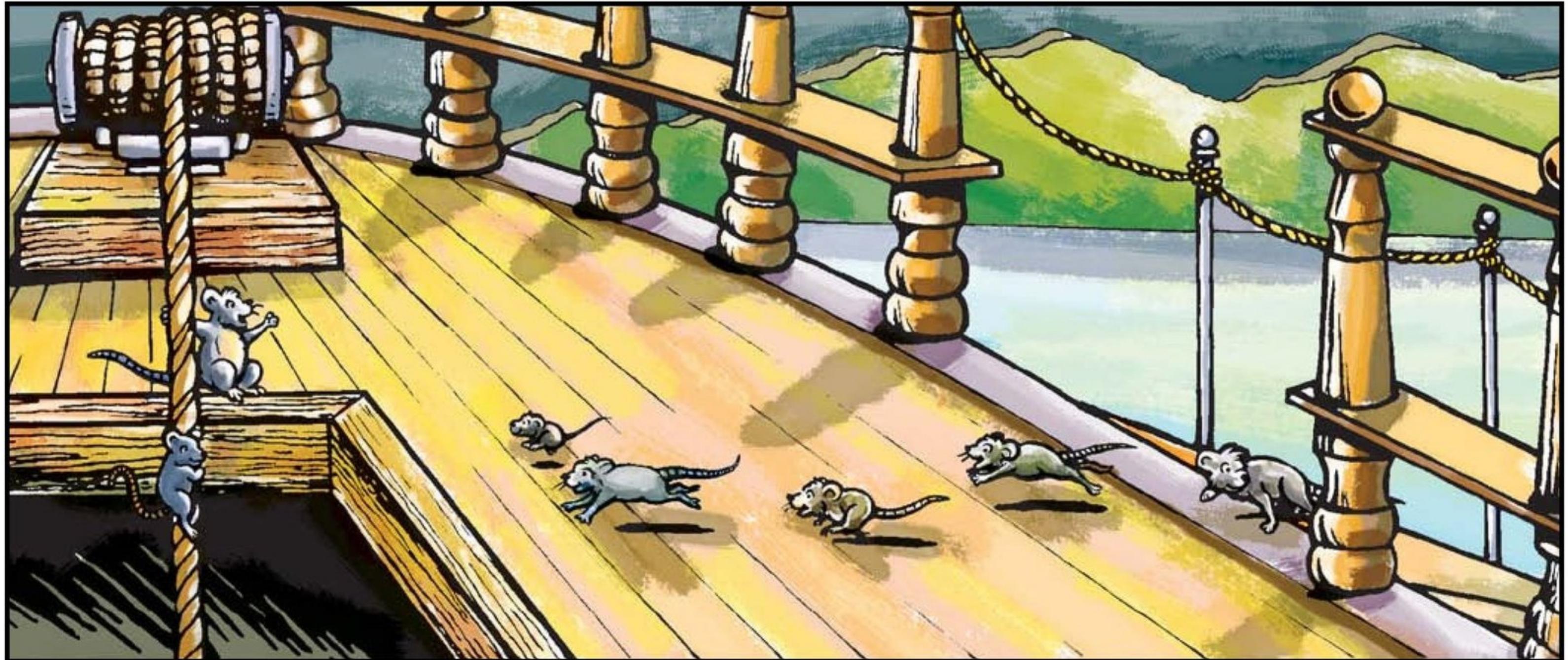
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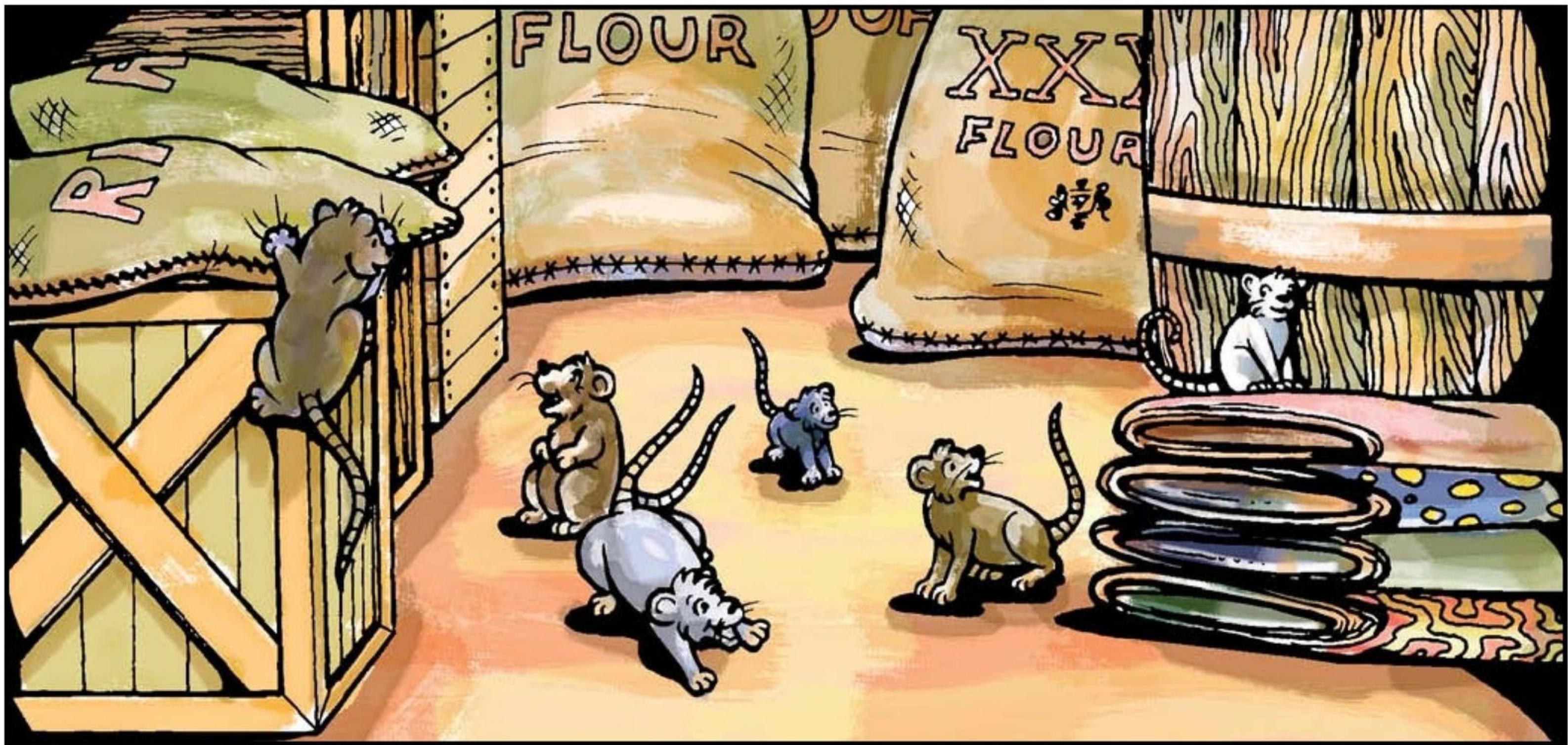
It was night and the crescent moon shone brightly.
The ship was fully loaded and ready to sail.



The rats gathered at the dock.
They wanted to leave the busy, noisy city.
They wanted to sail away to another land.



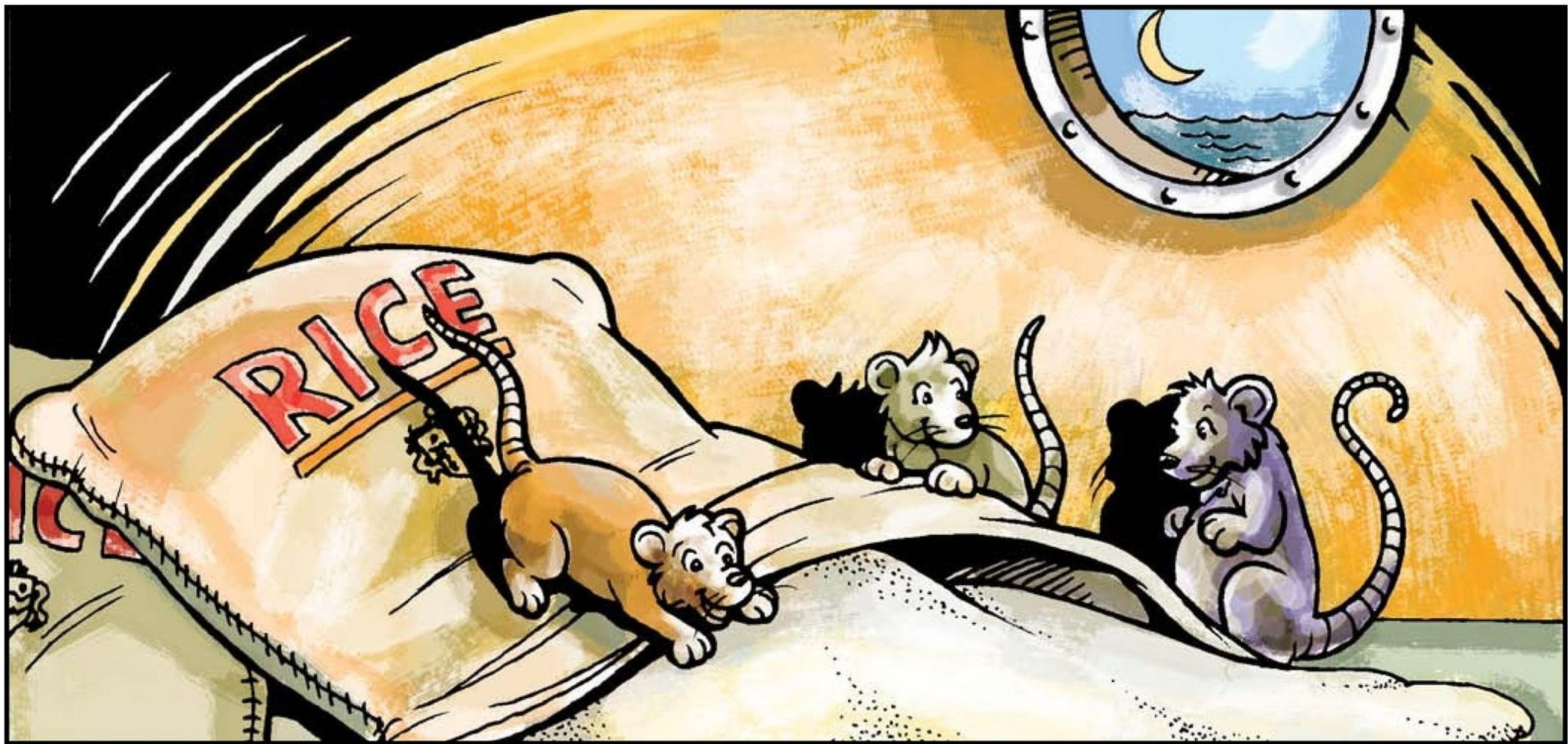
One by one, the rats sneaked upon the ship.
They crept up the wooden gangway.
Then they slid down a rope and into the cargo bay.



The cargo bay was dark. It was full of cargo.
There was spice and rice, and there was flour and silk.



The rats got comfortable in the dark cargo bay.
They knew it would be a long trip.
They needed a good hiding place where
they would not be seen during the entire voyage.



Many days passed at sea. The rats loved being at sea. They had plenty to eat, and no one saw them.



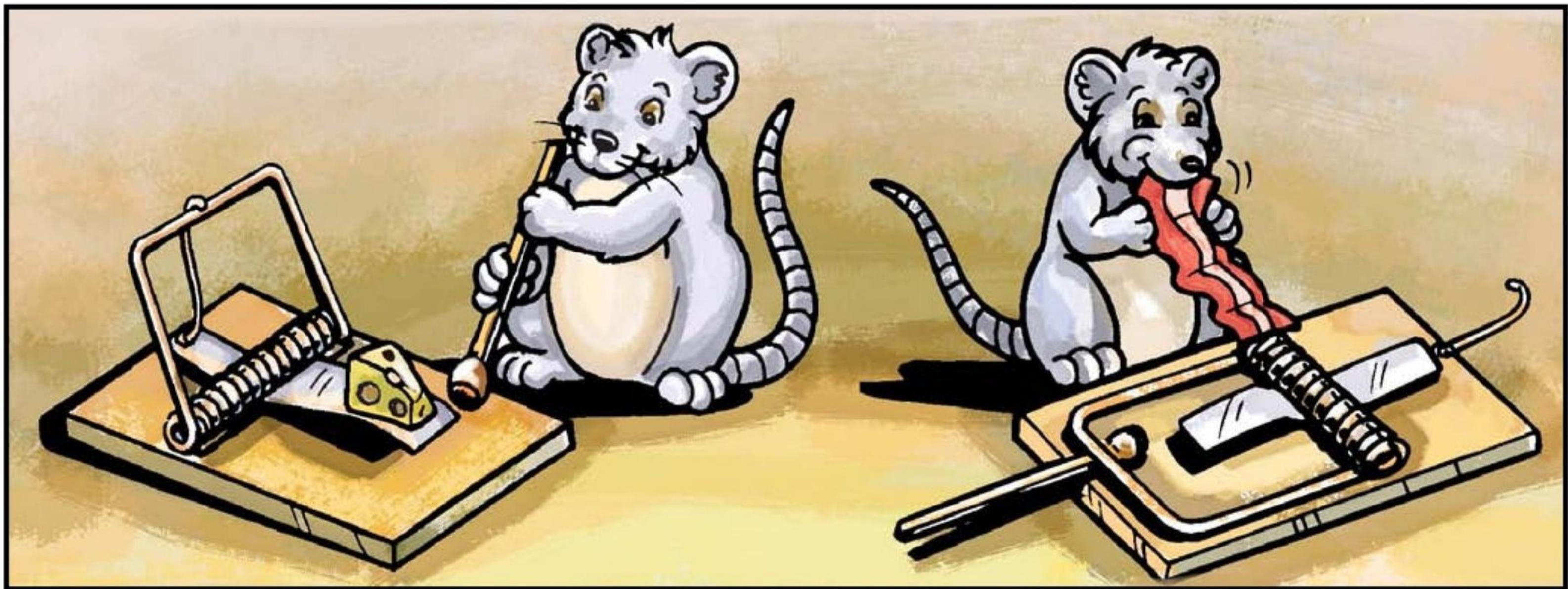
But then the cook began to find evidence of rats.
There were ragged holes chewed in the sacks of rice,
and something had been nibbling the cheese.



"Oh no," cried the cook. "It's the ratty rats.
They are on the ship, and they are eating our food."



“Set traps and catch the rats,” said the captain.
“I’ll have no ratty rats upon my ship.”



The sailors set traps and loaded them with bacon and cheese. But the rats were much too smart to get trapped. They tripped the traps and ate the bacon and cheese.



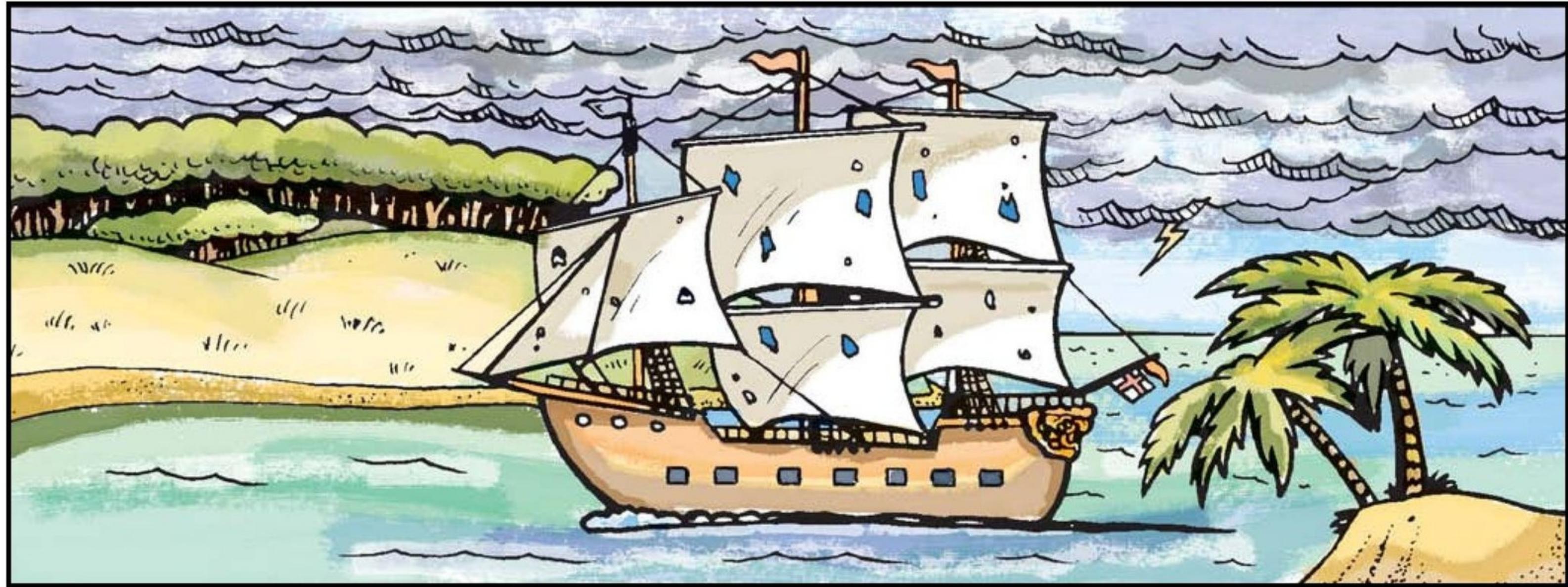
Next, the sailors went to hoist the sails.

“Oh no, more evidence,” said the first mate.

“The ratty rats have chewed holes in the sails.”



“Sew the sails and bait more traps,” said the captain.
“I’ll have no ratty rats on my ship.” But once again,
the rats tripped the traps and ate the bait.



Next, a terrible storm blew up.
The ship was tossed around in the rough waves.
The captain sailed the ship into a quiet bay,
and he ordered the sailors to drop the anchor.



“Oh no, still more evidence,” cried the anchorman.
“The ratty rats have chewed through the anchor rope.”

“That’s it,” screamed the captain. “I have had enough.”



The captain lowered a lifeboat.
He climbed into the lifeboat and paddled to shore.
“Burn the ship,” he cried as he paddled away.
“Destroy the ratty rats.”

But the sailors did not burn the ship.



Back on the ship, the rats and the sailors were making peace. They agreed to sail together to the new land. Together they mended the sails and rope. Together they sailed across the sea.

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