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opening extract from
**Classics Illustrated:
The Pied Piper**

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THE PIED PIPER

ROBERT BROWNING



Once upon a time, in the small but wealthy town of Hamelin, a stranger with a wondrously magical pipe taught the rich but stupid townspeople a terrible, terrible lesson. To this day, the people of Hamelin town are not allowed to forget what happened on the twenty-second day of July in thirteen hundred and seventy-six!

DIK
BROWNE

Suddenly, from beneath a market stall, a giant rat rushed over the fallen Willy!



And then, from out of nowhere, a whole gray army of rats invaded the marketplace.



HELP!

Save the food!

SAVE US!

But there was no place to hide from the rats in the homes of the rich . . .



Get them out of here!

Stop bellowing! What can I do?

And in the homes of the poor . . .



They're eating all our winter's food, mother.

Someone will help us, dear. Just keep after them.