



# The Pied Piper of Hamelin

*Russell Brand , Chris Riddell (Illustrator)*

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With this first book in Russell Brand's Trickster Tales series, the famed comedian, actor, and bestselling author delivers a hilarious retelling of an old fairytale favorite that will appeal to adults and children alike.

*Once upon a time, long ago, in a time that seemed, to those present, exactly like now except their teeth weren't so clean and more things were wooden, there was a town called Hamelin. The people of Hamelin were a pompous bunch who loved themselves and their town so much that if it were possible they would have spent all day zipped up in a space suit smelling their own farts. But space suits hadn't been invented yet so they couldn't.*

*Then one day without warning a gang of rats bowled into the town and began causing a right rumpus...*

So begins Russell Brand's wildly funny and surprisingly wise retelling of the classic tale *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*. Whether you're a kid or a grown-up kid, you'll be chuckling the whole way through this zany story that bypasses Brand's more adult humor for the outrageous, the madcap, and the just plain silly.

Maybe you've heard about the Pied Piper before, with his strange music and those pompous townspeople and pesky rats. Or maybe you haven't. But one thing is for sure: you've never heard it quite like this.

## The Pied Piper of Hamelin Details

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Author : Russell Brand , Chris Riddell (Illustrator)

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# From Reader Review The Pied Piper of Hamelin for online ebook

## Markku Kesti says

Painokoneet seis! Vuoden paras kirja on tässä. Hassua sdinänsä, että kyseessä Hamelnin pillipiipari, joka on saksalainen kansansatu salaperäisestä miehestä, joka karkotti rotat Hamelnin kaupungista vuonna 1284. Vuosi piti tarkistaa Wikipediasta. Mutta Russell Brandin tähän päivään päivitetty teksti ja Chris Riddellin kuvitus saivat hihittelemään hölmösti kakkavitseille ja poliittisille epäkorrektiuksille. Hamelnin asukkaat olivat kuin Sipilän SSS-hallituksen koko kaunistelemaan kuva. Tästä ei pienten lasten kirjaa saa kyllä tekemälläkään. Sen verran vaikeaa kieltä, hankalia sanontoja ja väkivaltaa (unohtamatta sitä eritehumoria!) Paras kohdeyleisö löytyisi varmaan yläkouluista ja lukioista. Niin isoista lukijoista, että he ymmärtävät viittaukset tähän päivään, politiikkaan ja ihmisluntoon. Mainitsinko muuten jo kakkajutut? Eli jos eritteet eivät ole sinun juttusi, niin jätä tämä väliin. Suosittelen anarkistihenkisille, epäkorrektiuksista nauttiville ja muuten vain kieron huumorintajun omaaville Reett...anteeksi...ihmisille. Kuusi ja puoli tähteä.

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## Reetta Saine says

Jos Chris Riddell tulisi Suomeen, menisin makuupussissa hotellin eteen, lahjoisin itseni sisään, piiloutuisin sen huoneeseen, odottaisin yötä, hiipisin sängyn viereen, tarjoaisin skumppaa ja valmiiksi lasketun porekylvyn ja pyytäisin sitä piirtämään Pillipiiparin. Ei ole sen hottiksempaa nuortenkirjallisuudessa ollut eikä tule!

Ai niin, se arvostelu. Mahtava. On jakanut lukijoita kuin viikate viljapeltoa, mutta mut saa pistää fanien joukkoon! Satumodaukset on kyllä onnistuessaan ihan parhainta!

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## Fatima says

Really clever and witty. Great story. Kinda hilarious. The illustrations are absolutely gorgeous. Too much toilet humour for my liking. But it's so Russel Brand. If you don't like his humour or whatever, you probably won't like this book. It looks like a children's book, but it definitely isn't for children. It is basically the story of the Pied Piper with some adult opinions and social commentary thrown in. I really liked it. It jumped around a bit - it felt like pages were missing but that wasn't the case. I really liked Sam but kinda wish there was more in the story about him. It was set up like he was going to save the day or something, and he didn't. Not really. Overall though, 3.5 stars. Clever and fun and beautiful illustrations.

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## Zoe's Human says

Talk about neither flesh nor fowl ...

Is this children's or no? While the language, style, and structures are certainly well within the ability of middle-graders to read and understand (especially with a glossary and definitions provided), *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* is both subversive and loaded with social commentary. Some adults may find it entirely too

subversive for young people, but, more importantly to me, the social commentary is predominantly beyond the middle-grade experience. Yes, it's also loaded with 'toilet' humor, which we as a culture have decided is juvenile even though no one worth knowing doesn't appreciate a good fart joke. I would categorize this as young adult.

Is this a graphic novel? No. A graphic novel is a story told in both pictures and words with the art and text having, at a minimum, equal roles in the storytelling, and often with the art playing the dominant role. You could remove all of the images from this story\*\* and still have a complete tale. It is told by text. This is an illustrated story not a graphic novel or comic.

Is it good? It's funny. It's subversive. It's well-illustrated. So yes, I like it. It's not mind-blowing, but I enjoyed the hell out of reading it and laughed out loud several times. (Though I could have done without the fat, mean kid stereotype. That's so old and stereotypical, and I'm just tired of seeing shit that makes correlations between physical appearance and goodness or badness. Can we just get over that?)

\*\*Though you shouldn't. The illustrations are marvelous.

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### **Gabrielle says**

RUSSELL BRAND SHOULD READ EVERY AUDIOBOOK EVER.

This should have been more popular than it is because it is honestly perfect. I can not fault this book at all. It has the perfect about of kid/bum jokes and adult humour and trite satirical commentary.

Amazing book, amazing audiobook.

All around the best. yes.

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### **Sarah Churchill says**

Ok, two things we need to get straight before we start; this is NOT for children and it's not going to be to everyone's taste.

Brand is essentially telling a tale to ya/adults AS IF they're children. And I wholly believe that was the purpose.

We're told the age-old tale of the Pied Piper, with a huge dose of social commentary. Sexism, elitism, greed, bullying, sexuality, prejudice against disability, the homeless and anyone who dresses differently AND some digs at the rich and the recession, all squished into a 136 page picture book. That's a lot of opinion. That's Russell Brand.

Plus there's more than enough (much more) toilet humour for any person over the age of five.

Oh, and Riddell is still an illustrating god.

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## Betsy says

If there is a trend to be spotted amongst the celebrity children's books being released these days then I think it boils down to a general perception on their part that books for kids aren't subversive enough. This is a bit of a change of pace from the days when Madonna would go about claiming there weren't any good books for kids out there. Celebrities are a bit savvier on that count, possibly because the sheer number of books they publish has leapt with every passing year. Now their focus has changed. Where once they pooh-pooed the classics, now they're under the impression that in spite of masters like Shel Silverstein, Jon Scieszka, Tomi Ungerer, and the like, books for kids are just a little too sweet. Time to shake things up a bit. At least that's the only reason I can think of to justify what Russell Brand has done here. When I heard that he had a new series out called *Russell Brand's Trickster Tales* I admit that I was intrigued. Tricksters! What's not to love there? Plus the man has talent and imagination. This kind of thing would really work. Add in the art of Chris Riddell and you might have something clever and worth reading on your shelf. I probably could have continued thinking in this manner if I hadn't made the mistake of going so far as to actually read the book. Oh me oh my oh me oh my. In this, the first book in his series, Brand goes headlong in the wrong direction. Needlessly violent, humorlessly scatological, with really weird messages about disability and feminism thrown in for no particular reason, you can say lots of things about Brand's foray in to the world of children. One thing you cannot say is that it's actually for kids.

You think you know the story of The Pied Piper? Think again. In the town of Hamelin, the children are the future. Which is to say, the pretty children are the future. Kids like Sam, a child born with a withered leg, are ostracized and have to avoid being chased by the other kids' zombie roadkill robots and such. The adults are little better with their misspent love of physical perfection and money. To this sordid town comes a hoard of nasty rats, each worse than the last and within a short amount of time they take over everything. As you might imagine, when a mysterious Piper arrives offering to do away with the hoard the townspeople agree immediately. He does but when he comes for his payment the town turns on him, rejecting his price. In response he takes away the kids, all but Sam, who is allowed to stay because he's a different kind of kid. A good one.

Before any specific objections can be lobbed in the book's general direction, I think the important thing to note from the start is that this isn't actually a book for kids. It's not published by a children's book publisher (Atria Books is a division of Simon & Schuster, and does not generally do books for kids). Its author is not a children's book author. And the writing is clearly for adults. When I read the review in Kirkus of this book I saw that it called it, "A smart, funny, iconoclastic take on an old classic," and recommended it for kids between the ages of 8-12. Now look here. I like books that use high vocabularies and complex wordplay for children. You betcha. I also like subversive literature and titles that push the envelope. That's not what this book is. In this book, Brand is basically just throwing out whatever comes to mind, hoping that it'll stick. Here's a description of the leader of the rats: "Even though they called themselves an anarcho-egalitarian rat collective (that means there's no rules and no one's in charge), in reality Casper was in charge . . . In his constant attendance were a pair of ratty twins – Gianna and Paul – who were both his wives. In anarcho-egalitarian rat-collectives, polygamy (more than one wife) is common. It's not as common for one of the wives to be male but these rats were real badasses." It's not just the content but the tone of this. Brand is speaking directly to an adult audience. He does not appear to care one jot about children.

Of course when Brand decides to remember that he is writing a children's book, that's when he makes the story all about poop. Huge heaping helpings of it. There's a desperation to his use of it, as if he doesn't trust that a story about disgusting rats infesting a town is going to be interesting to kids unless it's drowning in excrement as well. Now poop, when done well, is freakin' hilarious. Whether we're talking about Captain

Underpants or The Qwipick Adventure Society, poop rules. But as the authors of those books knew all too well, a little goes a long way. Fill your book with too much poop and it's like writing a book filled with profanity. After very little time the shock of it just goes away and you're left feeling a bit bored.

Other reasons that this ain't a book for kids? Well, there's the Mayor for one. Brand attempts to curtail criticism of his view of this woman by creating a fellow by the name of Sexist Bob. See, kids? Bob is sexist so obviously Brand can't be. Not even when he has the Mayor crying every other minute, being described as a spinster who was mayor "a high-status job that made her feel better about her knees and lack of husband." Then there's the world's weirdest message about disability. Our hero is Sam, the sole child left in the city of Hamelin after the children are whisked away. He's the one described as having a "gammy leg all withered like a sparrow's". Which is fine and all, but once you get to the story's end you find that Sam gets to have a happy ending where he's grows up to become Hamelin's mayor and his disability is pretty much just reduced a slight limp. So if you're a good person, kiddos, that nasty physical problem you suffered from will go away. Better be good then. Sheesh.

Now Chris Riddell's a funny case here. He's a great artist, first and foremost. Always has been. Though I feel like he's never been properly appreciated here in America, every book he's done he puts his all into. Riddell doesn't phone it in. So when he commits to a book like *The Pied Piper* then he commits, by gum. For better or for worse. Honestly, Brand must have thought he died and went to heaven when they handed him an artist willing to not only portray drops of blood dripping from a child's pierced nipple but robot gore-dripping animal corpses and sheer amounts of poo. In this book he really got into his work and I began to wonder how much of a direct hand Brand had. Did Brand tell Riddell to make the Piper look like a member of the film version of *A Clockwork Orange*? No idea. Whatever the case, Riddell is as much to blame for some aspects of the book (the Mayor's mascara comes to mind) as Brand, but he also is able to put in little moments of actual emotion. There's a shot of Sam hugged by his mother early in the book that's far and away one of the most touching little images you ever will see. Just the sweetest thing. Like a little light bobbing in the darkness.

The kicker is that beneath the lamentably long page count and gross-out factors, there might have been a book worth reading here. Playing the old "blame the editor" game is never fair, though. Editors of celebrity children's books are, by and large, consigned there because they performed some act of carnage in a previous life and must now pay penance. No one goes into the business saying to themselves, "But what I'd really like to do is edit a picture book by Howard Stern's wife about a fat white cat." And so we cannot know how much input the editor of this book was allowed to give. Perhaps Brand took every note he was handed and hammered and sawed this book into its current state. Or maybe he was never handed a single suggestion and what he handed in is what we see here. No idea. But it's difficult not to read the book and wonder at what might have been.

It's more ambitious than your average celebrity children's book, I'll grant you that. And yet it feels like nothing so much as a mash-up of Roald Dahl and Andy Griffiths for adults. Lacking is the kid-appeal, the tight editing, and the reason why we the readers should really care. Our hero Sam is the hero because he's essentially passive and doesn't much act or react to the events going on in the tale. The Piper is there to teach a town a lesson, does so, and the story's over. Brand would rather luxuriate in nasty kids, adults, and rats then take all that much time with his rare decent characters. As a result, it's a book that might have been quite interesting and could even have been for actual children but in the end, isn't. Here's hoping Mr. Brand's future forays in storytelling don't forget who the true audience really is.

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## Malissa says

I think actual kids will like this more than I did. It was entertaining and funny at points, but there are too many poop jokes for even me. But, as evidenced by Captain Underpants, kids love irreverent humor and so will probably be highly entertained. The piper himself looks and sounds a bit like Brand himself, but I suppose the author reserves the right to do things like that. Points for making big vocab words fun! Maybe that will eventually get it a high rank for things like AR and Lexile.

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## Tom Loock says

Let's see: I've come to appreciate Russell Brand lately, I think Chris Riddell is a good artist, the 'Pied Piper' was one of my favourite fairy tales when I was a kid and I have even been to Hamelin (or 'Hameln' as it's actually called).

Good reasons for picking up *The Pied Piper of Hamelin: Russell Brand's Trickster Tales*, right?

I wish I hadn't. The writing (*which is not suitable for children, as even those who like this book agree*) leaves a lot to be desired. Brand's additions to the tale are all wrong:

- That whole poop thing stops being funny once you approach puberty.
- The reduction of all celebrations to one annual vanity contest is not just boring (for the reader as well as for the citizens of Hamelin) but a giant mistake because the issue in the original is the contrast between the fake piety, honesty and decency of the so-called 'good citizens' on the one hand and their behaviour of betrayal of the exterminator/trickster on the other.
- Introducing the character of Sam serves no purpose to the story other than to show that Brand is politically correct and the citizens are bad, including the children. In the original the children represent innocence and the 'shocker' at the time of publication was that these innocents were abducted.

As for Chris Riddell: I don't read children's books these days, but I am familiar with his excellent work for the 'Edge Chronicles' and I like his work here, BUT ... if the hero has an underdeveloped thin leg it doesn't really help if Sam himself and several other characters have comically spindly legs in the first place and you can't see the disability, does it?

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## Arja-täti says

Luinka koska Markku. Ja koska Markku niin ennakko-oletus oli. Ja ihan oikea. Jos olisi ollut väärä, olisi ollut huono ja yök kirja. Nyt tiesin, mitä odottaa. Olipas kiva. Hauska. Karmee. Siis yök. Ehdottomasti lähtee ainakin kokeilun about 5-7-luokkien vinkkauksiin. Katotaan vaan millon, koska just nyt pieni vinkkaustauko.

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## Selvianty Selvianty says

Review berbahasa inggris udah banyak jadi kukasih yang berbahasa Indonesia aja.

Alamak buku ini kocak banget. Dengan bahasanya yang sarkastis dan sinis, rasanya nggak cocok buat anak-

anak hahaha tapi cocok buat sayaaaaa. Ceritanya sih seperti cerita Pied Piper pada umumnya dengan moral story ciri khas buku anak. Ilustrasi Riddell tetep juara dan cocok banget dengan gaya nulis Russel Brand. Btw, iya lho ini Russel Brand yang itu, yang seleb itu. Buku ini juga mungkin gak cocok buat semua kalangan karena kasar. Banyak bahasa ala British yang gak familiar but no worries karena di bagian belakang dikasih penjelasannya.

Overall buku ini bagus buat dikoleksi (meskipun saya sendiri boleh minjem). Jarang2 ada dongeng anak yang diceritakan dengan penuh nyinyir begini hahahaha i like it \*kasih jempol\*

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### **Federica says**

Meravigliose come sempre le illustrazioni di Chris Riddell, che fanno durare la lettura più del dovuto tanto rimani incantato a guardarle... e potete immaginare quindi quanto mi costi lasciare solo tre stelline a un libro con dentro i suoi disegni! Ma questa volta non posso farne a meno, perchè per il resto... per il resto c'è troppa cacca. Letteralmente.

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### **Melissa Chung says**

This book was incredibly silly. Full of toilet humor and other words that kids like to laugh at like the word fart, and boogies. My favorite two words were bum custard. It's totally gross and I laughed out loud. I gave this re-telling of the Pied Piper 3.5 stars.

The illustrations by Chris Riddell were the best. Loved all the bright colors. The story was good too in a silly and gross way. If you have read or heard about the Pied Piper this book has the essence of that fairy tale or legend. The pied piper does come to town to take care of the rats and in turn leaves with all the towns children. But of course it's Russell Brand so it's weird and gross with a positive message at the end.

"...if you go to Hamelin now, you'll find a very peaceful town, pretty but not fussy. Strangers are always welcome and people of all shapes and colours are accepted and loved."

I will definitely pick up the second book in this series if anything to see more illustrations by Chris Riddell and...yes toilet humor to me is still pretty funny ;)

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### **Vilya R says**

Vanhan sadun painajaismaiset uudet vaatteet.

Russel Brand ja Chris Riddell tuovat vanhan tutun pillipiiparisadun ällöttävään uuteen muotoon ja nykyaikaan. Tarinan kaikki hahmot asuvat inhottavassa, maireassa pikkukaupungissa. Ajattelin ensin lukea tämän kuvakirjan lapseni kanssa, mutta kansien sisällä oli liian rajua kamaa ja pienempi lukija valitsi toisen kirjan. Luin tarinan loppuun yksin. Luulen, että tämä kirja toimii paremmin itse luettuna kuin jonkun muun ääneen lukemana. Vaikeat termit on selvitetty viitteinä ja lopusta löytyvässä "koijarisanastossa", joiden



lukeminen ääneen katkoo tarinan flow'ta.

Mutta itse asiaan. Brand ja Riddell tosiaan ovat tehneet työtä käskettyä ja pillipiipari on muuttanut muotoaan. Tarina ja kerronta koettelevat sen rajoja, minkälainen kerronta on sallitua lastenkirjallisuudessa. Teoksen mainoksessa viitattiin itse lastenkirjallisuuden rajojarikkovaan mestariin Roald Dahlin, joten mainospuheiden takia ajattelin tämän kirjan olevan suunnattu myös lapsiyleisölle.

Riddellin mestarillinen kädenjälki houkuttelee katsomaan tarkemminkin ja vie mennessään aina syvemmälle tarinan uumeniin. Kuvitus onkin ehdottomasti tämän teoksen valttikortti. Huikean kiehtovat, ja sekopäisellä tavalla omituiset ja painajaismaiset yksityiskohdat pitävät otteessaan.

Tarinan pääosassa on koko luodun maailman nurinkuruisuus ja päättömyys. Hulluttelut, outoudet ja ällötykset esittävät suurinta roolia ja tekijät tietävät, mikä huumori naurattaa pikkulapsista lähtien. Vai mitä itse tuumaatte Hamelnin hemaisevin kersa -kilpailusta tai maantien varren eläintenraadoista rakennettu mekaanisesta metszombiearmeijasta? Hamelnin pillipiiparissa käsitellään kipeitä aiheita, kuten kiusaamista ja ulkonäköpaineita, nurinkurisen huumorin keinoin. Kaiken tämän keskellä tarinan päähenkilö, itse pillipiipari jää jotenkin etäiseksi hahmoksi.

Luin teoksen Tuomas Nevanlinnan suomentamana. Suomennoksen kieli oli nerokasta, värikästä ja soljuvaa.

(Arvostelu julkaistu Nörttityttöjen blogissa:  
<http://geekgirls.fi/wp/blog/2017/06/0...>)

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## **Melanie says**

Loved this short but entertaining fairytale of sorts! It reads like you're watching a Russell Brand interview - fast paced and no full stops lol A great overall message, lots of British slang but there's a glossary to help ya out! Quick and entertaining read, loved the illustrations and there's a rat attack

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