

Moved by ...

***Based on the film The Pied Piper of Hamelin of 1957 Hal Stanley
which was based on the poem by Robert Browning
Adapted for Ibadan International School by Tiwatope Oluwaseyi***

CHARACTERS

The Pied Piper

The Local Government chairman

Six politicians

Ayuda – The local government chairman’s daughter

Joeson – The local government chairman daughter’s fiancé – Joeson

Representative from neighbouring village - Mr. Emis

The secretary

The crippled boy

The narrators

The villagers working

The rats as an army

The villagers in the market

People ‘acting’ to the narrators’ poem

Villagers dancing after the rats have been removed from the city

Children following the pied piper

Dancers after children have gone

Dancers after Joeson was made chairman

ACT I Scene 1

EXT – CONSTRUCTION SITE – DAY

*It is a construction site for the structure the people are preparing
for the governor’s emissary.*

CHOIR

JOYFUL SONG

NARRATOR 1

A long time ago in... in... in...

NARRATOR 2

In...?

NARRATOR 1

A lovely place called Cora. There lived many wonderful, friendly,
hardworking people.

NARRATOR 2

Okay, Cora. I remember. That place was very beautiful with lovely
sweet smelling flowers, various types of trees, good roads, wonderful
facilities.

NARRATOR 1

Yes, that was then. Now -

NARRATOR 2

Sorry to interrupt. They are participating in the governor's competition. Aren't they?

NARRATOR 1

Of course, they are. They want to win the plaque that the governor has promised the local government which has the best physical structure that was built this year.

NARRATOR 2

Hmm. That's interesting. Let's see what will happen.

The children come in.

CHILD 1

The Chairman wants the work finished by the end of this week, and there's still a lot of work to be done.

CHILD 2

That's why he said that we should join our parents to work. He wants us to win the prize the governor has promised.

DANCERS

The children will dance as if they are working on the construction site. They will leave. The women will dance as if they are working. They will leave. The men will dance as if they are working. They will leave.

ACT I Scene 2

EXT - OPEN SPACE - DAY

It is a construction site for the structure the people are preparing for the governor's emissary.

NARRATOR 1

The people of Cora worked tirelessly and at the end of the week representatives went to visit the local government chairman.

NARRATOR 2

The chairman was happy at first when he saw the representatives. But when he found out that the work was yet to be completed, he almost blew a fuse.

NARRATOR 1

There was no appreciation for the work they had done so far, work done under the hot burning sun.

NARRATOR 2

Instead he told them to go back to work. There was no time for the children to go to school, no time for them to play. All hands had to be on deck.

NARRATOR 1

This is not good. How can you not allow children to go to school, and all for what?

NARRATOR 2

All for a plaque! I'm afraid something bad is going to happen.

RAT FORMATION

The rats come on stage. They come in randomly. One is dressed as the captain of the army. The rest of the rats are wearing one of three types of clothes.

RAT LEADER

Rat family, we have a new territory to conquer.

RATACON

Yes. This place that was once known as beautiful will be known as ugly.

RATATAT

The people of Cora will see our hands and feet everywhere.

RATADID

We may be small, but they will know that we mighty.

RAT LEADER

And many. *(They all laugh.)* Everyone, position! *(They line up in formation.)*

They do their routine to the beat of a drum.

ACT 2 Scene 1

INT - INSIDE THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

There is a long table and seven chairs around it. The one in the centre is bigger than the others. The politicians are seated and Joeson is standing in front of them. There are empty disposables and bottles or cartons on the table.

NARRATOR 1

The happiest people I know are people who don't even think about being happy. They just think about being good neighbours, good people. And then happiness sort of sneaks in the back window while they are busy doing good.

NARRATOR 2

That is a quote by Harold S. Kushner.

NARRATOR 1

Yes, you're right. *(Pause)* Were the people of Cora happy people? Were they good neighbours?

NARRATOR 2

Well, I guess we'll just have to wait and find out.

JOESON

But, Chairman sir, it is not fair on the children. They are the future of tomorrow.

CHAIRMAN

Of course they are. Aren't they gentlemen?

POL 1

Of course sir.

POL 2

Definitely sir.

JOESON

But you are not allowing them to go to school. All you are thinking of is winning that prize. And what is the prize? Just a plaque.

POL 3

How can you talk to the chairman like that?

POL 4

Don't you know how important this work is?

JOESON

More important than the lives of these children?

SECRETARY

(The secretary comes in.) Excuse me sir, but you have a very important visitor. He's from Zon and he says that he needs your help. A major disaster has befallen them.

POL 1

Joeson, you will please excuse us. We have an important matter on our hands.

JOESON

I will leave now, but I will be back.

POL 5

Remember to make an appointment with the chairman's secretary next time.

Joeson leaves. Mr. Emis enters.

CHAIRMAN

You're welcome, sir. How may we help you?

MR EMIS

I'm sorry to disturb you, but I come on behalf of the chairman of Zon. We had a major disaster in our area which affected our food supply. Also some of our houses have been destroyed, and a number of our people are in various hospitals trying to recover. There are not enough hospital beds. Some victims have to lie on the floor. It's a terrible time for us right now.

POL 6

So what do you want us to do for you?

MR EMIS

Whatever financial help you can offer will be greatly appreciated. Also if any of the patients can be transferred to your hospitals, it would ease the burdens on the hospitals and doctors. Whatever help you can render will be appreciated.

CHAIRMAN

Ok. We have heard what you have to say. We will discuss the matter and send you a message as soon as possible.

MR EMIS

Thank you, sir. We will be very grateful. *(He bows and leaves.)*

POL 5

What kind of help are we going to give them? We don't have that much money in our treasury.

POL 6

We will still need to spend money on the project. They are yet to finish so we will have to pay the supervisors more money.

POL 4

And we the advisers will need to get more money too.

POL 2

That's right.

CHAIRMAN

Fear not. I know the state of our treasury. We will send a message to them. We will send a letter expressing our sympathy, and how we wish them all the best as they try to put things in order.

POL 5

We'll add that as soon as able we will see what we can do to help them recover.

POL 2

That's a good idea.

POL 5

And that soon as possible will never come to be.

POL 4

But they won't know that.

POL 2

I support the suggestion.

CHAIRMAN

Well, spoken my people. All in favour say 'aye' (*They all say 'aye'.*) All who oppose say 'nay'. (*Nobody talks.*) The 'aye's have it. Let's get that letter out of the way so that we can focus on more important things.

CHOIR

SONG *about being our brother's keeper.*

ACT 2 Scene 2

EXT - AT THE MARKET - DAY

Some members of Cora are at the market with their spoilt wares.

NARRATOR 1

The rats have made their presence known.

NARRATOR 2

Those ugly, smelly, dirty, disgusting animals.

NARRATOR 1

They have put their marks everywhere. How can you sell a fine dress that has holes in it?

NARRATOR 2

Or a chocolate cake that has been made a mess.

NARRATOR 1

Who will pay for photographs that have been chewed?

NARRATOR 2

Or plastics that have been treated as food.

NARRATORS 1&2

No one.

NARRATOR 1

So what's going to happen to the people of Cora?

NARRATOR 2

Let's wait and find out.

All the traders and the few customers **dance**.

ACT 2 Scene 3

It's the town square. The narrators are talking to the people. From time to time someone in the crowd would demonstrate what is being said.

NARRATOR 1

Rats!

NARRATOR 2

Rats?

NARRATOR 1

Yes, rats, rats, rats, and more rats.

They're worse, much worse than the bats.

They're not afraid of anything, not even the cats.

Rats, rats, and more rats.

What can we do?

NARRATOR 2

We went through all the rooms.

Using sticks, using poles, using brooms.

We used rat gum, we set rat traps.

We tried so many things, even using our special caps.

But nothing. What can we do?

NARRATOR 1

We asked for help from my cousin

He gave us a special rat poison.

It didn't work on those rats

Those that were skinny nor those that were fat.

NARRATOR 2

They drink our water, eat our food.

They make us cry, spoil our mood.

We need new shoes, new bags, new clothes.

We need our houses to smell as sweet as a rose.

NARRATOR 1

They chew our tables and our chairs.

They have increased all our fears.

They enter our bathrooms, enter our kitchens

They climb on our beds. Tickle our chins.

NARRATOR 2

They go around the market with a squeak.

I can assure you, those rats are not meek.

If they've been near you, you would have felt their nails.

I wish we could cut off their heads and their tails.

TOWNSMAN 1

So what are we going to do?

(The Pied Piper comes up to them.)

TOWNSMAN 2

(Startled.) Who are you?

PIED PIPER

I'm the Pied Piper. I'm from a neighbouring state. So what is the problem?

TOWNSMAN 1

We are being overrun by rats. They have destroyed everything.

TOWNSMAN 2

We've tried all we know, but we can't get rid of the rats.

PIED PIPER

Hmm. I just might have what you need.

TOWNSMAN 1 & 2

You do?

PIED PIPER

He nods and smiles. Yes.

ACT 2 Scene 4

INT - INSIDE THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

There is a long table and seven chairs around it. The one in the centre is bigger than the others. The politicians are seated.

NARRATOR 1

The representatives of the people had just left the chairman's office when the pied piper came.

NARRATOR 2

They had complained about the way rats had destroyed everything, and the chairman had promised to look into it, offering a reward to anyone who was able to get rid of the rats.

NARRATOR 1

The people had left hoping that something would be done during the week. They were expectant.

NARRATOR 2

The chairman didn't know what to do, but was happy that the people had accepted what he had said. Now all he needed was someone to get rid of the rats.

SECRETARY

Sir, there's someone to see you.

CHAIRMAN

Can't you see that I am very busy?

SECRETARY

He said that he can help us to get rid of the rats.

CHAIRMAN

Why didn't you say so in the first place? Send him in.

PIED PIPER

(Enters slowly.) Good after, sirs.

CHAIRMAN

Good afternoon. I was told you can help us to solve our rat problem.

PIED PIPER

Yes, I can. I know just the thing that will settle it once and for all. Once we have agreed on my fee, I will put things into place that will make it seem as if the rats never came to your local government.

CHAIRMAN

And how much would you like to collect?

PIED PIPER

How much do you want to pay?

CHAIRMAN

Well, money is a little tight at the moment, and although we would love to pay you well, you will have to manage...

PIED PIPER

Manage what? Let's not waste time. I'll collect just a tenth of the amount you spend on the structure you are working on. *He turns as if to leave and then he turns back again.* Oh and I would like part of the money now and I'll collect the balance after.

POL 6

That's not possible. You could run off with the money without doing anything.

POL 4

Or the rats could go for one day and return.

POL 5

You have to wait for at least two days to get all your money.

POL 2

That's right.

CHAIRMAN

So how soon will you be able to get rid of the rats?

PIED PIPER

Before tomorrow morning, sir, they will all be gone.

CHARIMAN

I won't ask you how you'll do your work, but if it's done well, you'll get your money day after tomorrow.

POL 2

Well spoken, sir.

PIED PIPER

As you wish sir. I will be back the day after tomorrow to collect my entitlement.

POL 3

See you in two days' time.

ACT 2 Scene 5

EXT - TOWN SQUARE

The pied piper plays a song and the rats come on stage. They come randomly and jump around stage. They then follow the pied piper off stage. As the piper goes off stage, a few of them run on stage and then follow the others. We hear splash from time to time as the rats fall into the river. *(sound effects)*

Joeson, Ayuda, POL 3 come on stage following the straggler rats. After the last rat has entered the water, they face themselves.

JOESON

Did you see that? All the rats are gone.

AYUDA

Just like the Pied Piper said.

JOESON

He deserves the pay he's going to get.

POL 3

Hmm. These rats aren't coming back.

AYUDA

We can now live in peace.

ACT 3 Scene 1

EXT - TOWN SQUARE

It's the following morning in the town square.

AYUDA

Good morning, everyone. Today is a day of joy.

JOESON

All the rats have gone. We don't have to worry about them anymore. They all drowned.

THE CRIPPLED BOY

There was no new rat marks on my crutch and I slept well.

AYUDA

So let's be grateful to the piped piper and let's rejoice.

The people of Cora start dancing. They dance until the song almost ends.

SECRETARY

Enough! Enough of this dancing! The chairman has a very important announcement to make.

All of them stop dancing and they listen to the chairman.

CHAIRMAN

Good morning, my good people. It's a good thing all the rats have gone. A good job has been done. However, this is not the time to celebrate, not yet. We still have a lot of work left on our structure. The rats slowed down the work. So everyone, please relocate to the venue and let the work continue. We are going to win the governor's prize. Time is short so we have to work quickly.

JOESON

Is that all you can think about, the governor's prize? You're not thinking about the lives of our children or the health of your people. Let's put a hold on the work on the structure.

AYUDA

Yes, Dad, he's right. Let's have a public holiday to rest and rejoice that the rats have gone. Tomorrow we will go back to work.

CHAIRMAN

Nothing of the sort. There is no time to lose. Everyone back to work.

The people leave but Joeson goes to meet the chairman.

JOESON

Excuse me sir, but can you please release the children for today? They need to practice the presentation they have for the governor's emissary. They have not been able to practice in over a week.

CHAIRMAN

Nonsense. Who told you that they will be entertaining the governor's emissary at the reception we have for him.

JOESON

But, sir, we should have representatives of the children to present something.

CHAIRMAN

Humbug. Children are meant to be seen and not heard. In this case, they don't need to be seen at all.

JOESON

But sir, our children are an important part of our community.

CHAIRMAN

If you don't have anything important to say, you will please excuse me. I have more important things to do. *(Walks off and Joeson goes in the opposite direction. As he walks off he soliloquizes.)* Yes, I have more important things to do. What is more important than drinking cold juice and eating freshly baked bread with bacon and eggs this wonderful morning?

ACT 4 Scene 1

INT - INSIDE THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

There is a long table and seven chairs around it. The one in the centre is bigger than the others. The chairman and his council members are seated.

PIED PIPER

Good afternoon, sir. I have come for my money.

CHAIRMAN

You're welcome. Just have your seat and sign this document. You can then have your money.

POL 2

Brings the document which is four pages long.

PIED PIPER

What is this?

CHAIRMAN

We're giving out government money. It has to be accounted for.

PIED PIPER

I don't have a problem with that, but this document is long.

POL 1

Then don't trouble yourself reading it. Just sign and be on your way.

PIED PIPER

I'm not signing anything without reading it first. Thank you. *(He looks at the first page.)* What is this? It says that you are paying me only half of the amount we agreed upon.

CHAIRMAN

You don't expect us to pay you the full amount for a work that took you just about an hour to do?

PIED PIPER

Our agreement had no time limit attached to it. *(He looks at the second page.)* What is this? That if the rats return within three months I must return all the money I collected and if they return within six months then I'm to repay half?

POL 4

That's just a warranty. You know, like when you buy a phone or a fridge. They come with a warranty.

PIED PIPER

Hmm. *(He scans the rest of the page and turns the page.)* How about this. I am to pay tax of 20% of the money since I am not a citizen of this local government.

POL 5

Of course. You know it's the tax that people pay that we use to run this local government.

PIED PIPER

OK. *(He turns the page and scans it.)* What is the meaning of this last point?

POL 6

(Looks over his shoulder) Oh, that one. Out of every money that is paid out, 5% is returned back to the treasury for a special development fund. The present structure we're working on is the structure for the governor.

POL 3

So you will be contributing to the winning structure. You should feel proud to be part of that.

PIED PIPER

Proud? You people don't want to pay my money. We had an agreement and you are going back on it. I will not sign this document.

CHAIRMAN

Then you will not get your money.

PIED PIPER

How much will the money be after all your deductions?

POL 3

At least it will be better than nothing.

PIED PIPER

I can't sign this document. I will be back in twenty-four hours. Let my money be ready, complete and in cash. I will not accept a cheque.

ACT 4 Scene 2

EXT - THE TOWNSQUARE - DAY

The children are listening to Joeson when the pied piper comes along.

JOESON

Pied Piper, we are grateful for the work you did for us, getting rid of all those rats.

CHILDREN

Thank you Mr. Pied Piper.

PIED PIPER

You are grateful, but your chairman is not. He refused to pay me the money he promised me.

JOESON

What? No. I won't take this sitting down. I'll go and meet him right now. *(He gets up and leaves.)*

PIED PIPER

If you think that will change his mind. Meanwhile I'll just talk with the children for a while.

(He sits down where Joeson was sitting before.)

Children, do you know that you can achieve great things if you really want to? Let me tell you a few things.

CHOIR

Song - He Lives In You

The choir, the children and the pied piper leave.

ACT 4 Scene 3

INT - INSIDE THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

There is a long table and seven chairs around it. The one in the centre is bigger than the others. The chairman and his council members are seated.

JOESON

(He barges in) Mr. Chairman, sir. What you are doing is not right.

CHAIRMAN

What is the accusation you have against me this time?

JOESON

You have not paid the pied piper the money you promised him.

CHAIRMAN

We offered to pay him, but he refused to collect the money.

JOESON

Just like that?

POL 3

Well, he has to sign the document to collect the money and he refused to sign.

JOESON

Was the money complete?

POL 4

Of course you know there are deductions to be made first.

CHAIRMAN

Enough! Enough of this chitter chatter. Joeson, you have no right to barge into my office like that, and you have no right to demand explanations from us.

JOESON

But, you promised him. He did a wonderful job.

CHAIRMAN

Take this man away. He wants to give me a headache. I have more important things to do.

The secretary comes in and leads him away.

POL 5

Like deciding where to spend his next leave.

POL 2

That's important.

They all have a good laugh.

ACT 4 Scene 4

NARRATOR 1

Joeson tried all he could to get people to follow him to convince the chairman to pay the pied piper, but all of them claimed that they were too busy. Those that didn't say that they were too busy said that they didn't have any right to talk to the chairman.

NARRATOR 2

Joeson tried. He really did. He even spoke to his fiancée, Ayuda, to talk to her father about it. Although she agreed that the pied piper should be paid, she felt that her father should know better in this situation.

NARRATOR 1

Finally, Joeson had to give up. Well he didn't quite give up. He decided to go back to the chairman again. He was not happy that he was going alone, but he felt that he had no choice.

NARRATOR 2

Joeson had a good heart and he was brave. However, where did that land him? In prison. The chairman got him arrested. What were the charges? Disturbing the peace.

NARRATOR 1

Ayuda didn't know what to do at first. After she had cried for a while, she went to her father so that he could release Joeson. Her father turned deaf ears.

NARRATOR 2

I fear for the people of Cora. The twenty-four hour ultimatum given by the pied piper is up. He went to see the chairman, but the chairman refused to give him audience. What is going to happen?

ACT 4 Scene 5

EXT - TOWNSQUARE - EVENING

The pied piper plays a tune on his flute, and the children dance around him. The crippled boy sits to one side. After a few minutes the pied piper leaves and the children follow him. The crippled boy goes as well. Some of the children overtake him as they follow the piped piper.

NARRATOR 1

A few adults saw the children leaving their houses. At first they thought that they just wanted to go out and play, and for whatever reason, they did not think of stopping them.

NARRATOR 2

When the children started following the piped piper, some adults saw them, but still, no adult thought of following them.

NARRATOR 1

Two adults even laughed when they saw the path the children were following. It went up the hill, but it was a dead end.

NARRATOR 2

The children will surely go up the hill and turn back. So they thought.

NARRATOR 1

Let's sit back and find out what really happened.

THE CRIPPLED BOY

(Comes in crying.)

The politicians are there.

POL 3

What's the problem?

THE CRIPPLED BOY

All the children are gone.

POL 4

Gone? How can they be gone?

THE CRIPPLED BOY

We all followed the pied piper. The music mesmerized us and we followed him. When we got to the top of the hill, it opened and all the children entered. I was slow and before I could get to the entrance it closed. I was the only one left behind.

POL 6

This is a serious issue. Let's discuss it with the chairman. Boy, go on home. We'll look into this issue.

They are about to leave when some townsmen come in wailing. They are looking for their children.

*A sad **dance by the townsmen.***

ACT 5 Scene 1

EXT - TOWNSQUARE - MORNING

CHAIRMAN

My people, I am very sorry for the great loss that has come upon you. If not for Joeson this would not have happened. He was the one who kept supporting the pied piper, and now the pied piper has taken our children. For this we will deal with him.

JOESON

My fellow people. My heart weeps at the loss we are all experiencing. However, sending me to jail will not bring your children back.

CHAIRMAN

Our children can't come back, but we'll design a plaque in their honour and put in right here where I am standing.

JOESON

What will the plaque do to ease the pain of all the parents that have lost their children?

TOWNSMAN 1

So what do you suggest we do?

JOESON

Our neighbours came and said that they needed our help. What did we do for them? Nothing.

POL 5

That's not true. We did something.

JOESON

What did we do?

POL 1

We sent a letter of condolence.

Murmuring in the background.

AYUDA

Is that all?

JOESON

I'll have you also know, that even before we lost our children to the pied piper, we had lost them. Many of them said that they didn't know much about their parents because their parents didn't have time for them. How many of you know your child's favourite colour, best friend, and favourite activity? How many of you can tell when your child is hurting and how to encourage him or her?

POL 3

What do you want us to do?

JOESON

Let's adopt the children of our neighbours and take them as our own. Let's adopt our neighbours who are in trouble and take them as our brothers.

TOWNSMAN 2

That's a good suggestion.
There's murmuring of support.

POL 3

There's something I believe we must do first. It's going to be difficult but... *He moves towards the chairman to take the staff of office.*

SECRETARY

What do you think you are doing? *He tries to stop POL 3.*

POL 3

We need new leadership. The baton is changing hands. *The secretary tries to stop him, but the chairman indicates that Pol 3 should be given the staff of office.*

I believe I have the support of the people if I hand the staff over to Joeson. I believe he knows the best thing for us. He sees beyond himself. He's not greedy and he cares for us.

AYUDA

You definitely have my support.

TOWNSMAN 1

And mine

TOWNSMAN 2

And mine.

There's a round of applause from the villagers.

JOESON

I am honoured. As a sign of agreement, let us all join hands together and pray. We will then start our work. We shall soon have children singing and dancing in our streets.

They all join hands together. There's silence for a few seconds. The sound of a pipe is heard faintly.

THE CRIPPLED BOY

I hear the sound of music.

JOESON

So do I.

POL 2

Yes. What does this mean?

The children that followed the pied piper come in. One enters first and runs to one of the villagers. Then two come in. Then all of them come in and hug one person or the other. Joeson hugs some of the children and then he goes back to Ayuda. He hugs her and the chairman. The pied piper comes in, smiles, waves at the people, gives his flute to Joeson and leaves. As Joeson plays the pipe, the villagers begin to dance. There is a celebration dance.

THE END