

POETRY SELECTED BY MAGGIE SAWKINS

Doreen Shows Me Her Photos of Hamelin

It was the total lack
of hospitality at Hamelin
that pissed-off the Piper,

all his music, gratis,
plus the rat exodus,
but not a sip of beer,

not a peck of soup,
a town about as friendly
as a childless house.

So be it.
The last child into the mountain
looks back, smiling.

In Doreen's crowded attic
there's a stone rat she souvenired
during her ATS days in Occupied Germany,

she'd like to return it to the tableau
at Hamelin,
with apologies,

but it is much too bulky for her to transport,
at her age.
Over tea, we decide no one will miss

a single stone rat,
not after all these years,
not now that Europe is one big happy family.

Penelope Shuttle