

The Owl and the Pussycat

Tekst/illustrasjoner:

Edward Lear/Edward Lear, Clipart.com

Filosofiske spørsmål:

Anne og Ariane Schjelderup, Øyvind Olsholt

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Edward Lear (1812-1888) is an English landscape painter who is more widely known as the writer of an original kind of nonsense verse and as the populariser of the limerick. "The Owl and the Pussycat" is Lear's most famous poem. It tells the story about an owl and a cat who want to get married! (From E. Lear: "Nonsense songs", R. J. Bush, London 1895.)

I

The Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat,
They took some honey, and plenty of money,
Wrapped up in a five pound note.
The Owl looked up to the stars above,
And sang to a small guitar,
'O lovely Pussy! O Pussy my love,
What a beautiful Pussy you are,
You are,
You are!
What a beautiful Pussy you are!'

II

Pussy said to the Owl, 'You elegant fowl!
How charmingly sweet you sing!
O let us be married! too long we have tarried:
But what shall we do for a ring?'
They sailed away, for a year and a day,
To the land where the Bong-tree grows
And there in a wood a Piggy-wig stood
With a ring at the end of his nose,

His nose,
His nose,
With a ring at the end of his nose.

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'Dear pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling
Your ring?' Said the Piggy, 'I will.'
So they took it away, and were married next day
By the Turkey who lives on the hill.
They dined on mince, and slices of quince,
Which they ate with a runcible spoon;
And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand,
They danced by the light of the moon,
The moon,
The moon,
They danced by the light of the moon.

Philosophical questions

1. Is it strange for an owl to fall in love with a cat? Do animals fall in love just like humans do? If so, how can we tell if an animal is in love? Have you been in love yourself? How can you be sure about that?
2. The owl and the pussycat brought with them honey and money. What would you have brought with you on a long journey like this: books and crooks? boys and toys? girls and curls? clothes and woes? teachers and preachers? Other things?
3. Why is the wedding ring so important when people marry? What does the ring symbolise? Can you think of other ways to symbolise a marriage? Could a piece of music or a beautiful thought serve as a symbol of a lifelong marriage? Or must the symbol always be a physical object?
4. They were married by a turkey! Who would you like to marry you when/if the time comes? A priest? A good friend? Your favourite pet? Your mother? Your teacher? Or would you rather like to do it all on your own, in secret?