

The Girl and The Cat

by Christoffer Zieler

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Girl, girl, girl, called the cat.
But the girl did not come. And the cat left the food
and ran out on the promontory to find her.

4

Egg? the cat asked. But the girl shook her head.
Something has happened, she said. I lost something,
and I will have to go away if I am to find it again. Ooh! A
voyage! said the cat.

5

Go home, puss, said the girl. Go home and eat your
egg. You don't want to go with me this time, trust me.
But I have to go with you, said the cat. I fed you,
you're my responsibility. I can't just leave you to your
own devices.
Furthermore, it continued, I'll be curious to see
what happens.
Alright! said the girl. It's your funeral.
Right, puss?
Okey-dokey artichokey! said the cat.

6

The girl was long and soft like a ferret or a mink.
There was saltwater in her hair. When she thought hard
about things, her eyes turned black.
The cat was of medium height, but very wide.
And there were two things about that cat and that
girl that puzzles me.
Why did they go?
And why did they never come back?

7

Okay! He-llo! The fried egg was cold!
You can never come back – because something in
yourself has changed!
I agree – you've nailed it pretty well.
And actually we're still on our way. We even have a
bear to catch.

8

Yes, they travelled on the bear express. They led the
swanky life. They attended a soirée at Cardinal
Salmonello's. They ate steak and bought
people drinks. And it's not certain that that was wise.
The money ran out quickly, and the girl's coat with
big round buttons was exchanged for a formidable rifle.

9

Now it was them and the wilderness.
I'm going to shoot us a troll, said the girl.

10

Okay! I'm just gonna interrupt! Don't listen to this!
Look, she left – she left for god knows where with this
cat, named after a fucking urinal company – and the
reason she did it is that she was just as fat and pale and
miserable and from fucking Stenløse as I was. Or am.
That's it!
That's a damned lie!
You're disgracing her! She left because she loved me
so much that she couldn't stand it!

11

... The wind had risen, and the girl adjusted her aim
two clicks left.

Won't they be sad? asked the cat. I mean, their
family?

Nah, said the girl. They're just animals. They have
no feelings.

Oh right, said the cat.

12

They grilled the white meat. It sputtered, sizzled
and melted.

There are no more cartridges in the bag, said the
cat.

13

Music bellowed from the black black windows/but
the night looked a bit like a day/shiny ghosts were
atumble all over/and they wouldn't go away. Sang the
girl.

Lalalalala, sang the cat.

16

They rested, and the cat recalled his mentor,
Cardinal Salmonello.

Cardinal Salmonello, my mentor, began the cat.
He always used to say:

You're a good boy, Armitage Shanks.

Or as good a boy as a cat can be.

But you're also just a cat. So if I catch you on the
table again, it's time for the birch rod.

– And that makes me think: Whose is whose? Of
the two of us, mind.

The girl just laughed.

17

... Okay. Said the cat when it had gotten dark.
Then tell me about that grave instead. What was that
about?

It's like I say, said the girl. I lost something and I
can no longer...

... recall what it was. Do you want the weird
potato?

I am really hungry, said the cat.

18

The cat and the girl shared the last potato which
had been lying in the
embers. Now there was no more food. And soon there
would be no more embers.

The air was sharp and clear and full of ice crystals.

19

... So we lost something. But we don't know what it
is. Said the cat. In other words: What we're missing is
a loss.

It smiled.

... which may actually be well and good, yeah?

The girl turned her head and held the cat in her
gaze. Keep your shirt on, puss, she said. I've got a loss
for you, I'm afraid.

20

It's so horribly, horribly cold. I have to take care of
myself, do you understand, puss?

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