

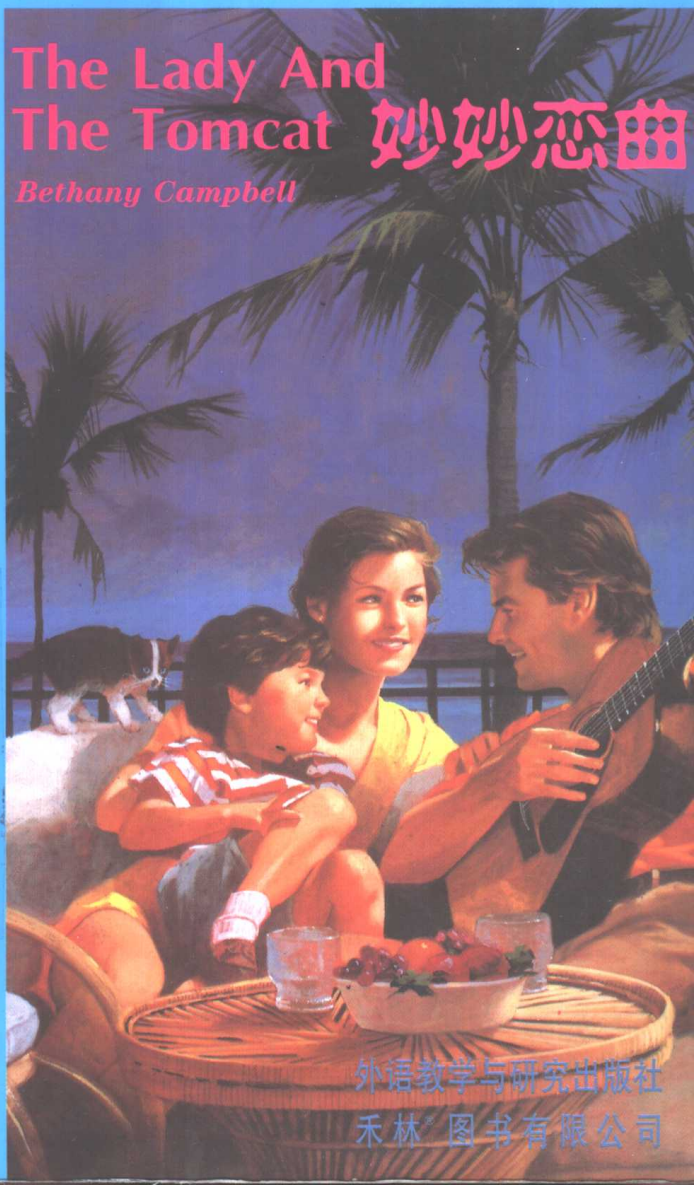
诗露·英汉对照读物

 *Silhouette*



# The Lady And The Tomcat 妙妙恋曲

*Bethany Campbell*



外语教学与研究出版社  
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刘静文(台湾) 译

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# 出版说明

加拿大禾林图书有限公司出版了一套“诗露”爱情小说系列,该系列中的每部小说都讲述了一个曲折的爱情故事,作者非常精心地在小说中安排和构造情节走向,设计情绪节奏和阅读兴奋点,牵引着读者能够以最快的读速在极短的时间里将一部小说读完,并随即翻开另一部。

“诗露”小说在西方极其畅销,这或许不只是说明了该类读物独具的市场生命力,是否还可以认为同样会是一个细致的出版者对当今读者的别样关切?

外语教学与研究出版社始终致力于我国外语的普及,孜孜以求掀起外语阅读的风气。外语学习也许不必尽是辛劳的苦事,不苦不累、轻轻松松、且又乐在其中的外语阅读已为越来越多的外语学习者所欢迎。因此,“edutainment”(寓教于乐)就成了外研社在图书出版中做出的一种新的尝试。这次外研社与禾林图书有限公司达成出版协议,以谨慎的态度推出这套系列小说的英汉版本(配设译文),此为原因之一。同时还应说明的是,选择了爱情小说作为这种读物的内容,其目的并不在于营造温馨浪漫,推销款款情语。因为,读者可能注意得到,言情类型小说的语言尽管大半缺乏风格,语言大半缺乏创造

性,但是它的通俗流畅和透明,倒是值得我们英语学习者品味品味的。爱情小说免不了涉及人类多种多样的情绪心理。某种意义上说,爱情小说是人类丰富情感的展示“橱窗”:相思之苦,别离之伤,误解之涩,相拥之喜,生死之痛,所有这一切情感的表达方式和词汇,都交汇在言情小说里,因此言情小说应该被我们视为一种语库,而为读者系统并具规模地提供这种语库,正是外研社出版“诗露”系列的第二个原因。

爱情小说尽管少了些凝重和深沉,但小说中叙述的男女两性的情感生活,也能或多或少地传达出一些西方世界爱情与婚姻的文化。前些时候美国言情小说《廊桥遗梦》风靡中国,并引发了国人对婚外恋情的讨论。这一现象表明,即使是言情类型小说,也能够敏感地传达出一个时代里人们价值观念的细微变化。正是在这层意义上,禾林爱情系列小说在一定程度上便拥有了文化的内涵,读者可以从小说中触探到西方社会生活价值观念的迁变。是为原因之三。

值得一提的是,这套系列英语读物的译文别具一格,它并非与原文字字对应。译者都是台湾译坛上的妙手,他们采取的是一种宽松的意译方法,行文通俗流畅。译者们如此处理,只希望不致引起读者的误解,同时我们也希望读者在禾林提供的爱情故事中品尝悲喜苦乐,在明快畅晓的小说叙述语言的环绕中坐看云起云消……

## *She said she'd do anything to keep the cat!*

"Day before yesterday," Max said in a tone that was both ironic and mesmerizing. "I thought I'd lost both the cat and the contract. Oh, I could get the contract—but I lack one thing. But now, now that you're here, maybe it's no longer lacking. Look at you. It's believable. A man might—indeed he might."

"A man might what?" Lindsey breathed. His hand on her hair had gone still, and she stayed motionless herself, too apprehensive to move.

"A man might want you enough to marry you," he said, his eyes resting on her lips. "And I might just get that contract. All I have to do is seem to have one thing."

She blinked as his smile grew more ironic. "One thing?"

"Right," he said. "I need a respectable woman. To live with me—as my wife. For about a week. I said we'd work something out. You want the cat? Fine. But for the next week, my dear little Mrs. McCoy, you're mine. All mine."

## Chapter One

When Lindsey McCoy rented the cottage at Dolphin Court, she hadn't known it came with its very own pelican.

Next to Lindsey's cottage was a small communal swimming pool, framed by a strip of grass and trees. The pelican, which had a crippled wing, often walked there.

A loner, he stayed apart from the other pelicans that haunted the edge of the nearby ocean. He was almost tame and did not fear the people in the cottages, because many of them fed him. His nickname was Mooch.

Lindsey, widowed for a year and a half, had moved to the Florida Keys in desperate hope that the change of scene would help her five-year-old son, Todd.

Todd was a handsome little boy who resembled his mother. He was slender and fine-boned, with wavy dark hair. Both Lindsey and her son had blue-green eyes, which in happier times had twinkled mischievously.



But for months Lindsey had seen no hint of merriment in her child's eyes. Since his father's death, Todd had been moody, quiet and given to nightmares. He had turned into the most serious, silent little boy she had never known.

When they'd first moved to Florida from Minnesota, Todd had hardly seemed to notice the ocean or bright masses of flowers. He kept to himself and said less than ever.

Only Mooch, the pelican, sparked his interest. Each morning and evening Lindsey and Todd went to the pool and fed the bird sardines.

Then a miracle happened. One afternoon when Lindsey and Todd were out, a gray cat appeared on the patio of their cottage. She had no collar, her ribs showed and she frequently scratched at her fleas.

Nobody knew where the cat came from and several people tried to shoo her away. She slinked off only to return minutes later to Lindsey's patio. All day she stayed there, staring into the cottage as if waiting for something.

What — or whom — she waited for, apparently, was Todd. Lindsey and Todd came home, and as soon as Todd opened the patio doors to feed Mooch, the cat was there. She purred and

rubbed against Todd's bare legs, trying to reach the plastic bucket of sardines.

Todd looked at Lindsey, a stricken expression on his face. His green eyes were haunted, silently pleading with her. But, of course, he didn't speak.

She knew what the boy wanted. "Go ahead," Lindsey sighed.

Todd reached into his bucket and fed the cat a sardine.

That was all it took. At that moment, the cat decided she had found a home, at least for the time being. That night she slipped under the pool shed where the cleaning equipment was stored. The next morning, she reappeared on the patio, thinner, if possible, than before. Her body and her actions made it clear she was no longer alone. She now had newborn kittens hidden under the shed.

For the first time in months, Todd seemed genuinely excited. He fed the mother cat and eagerly waited for the hidden kittens to emerge from their home.

Lindsey told him firmly that they could keep neither the cat nor the kittens. Pets weren't allowed at Dolphin Court. She and Todd could watch the kittens until they were old enough to leave their

mother, but then homes would have to be found for them — and the mother.

Todd nodded agreement, but looked sad. Lindsey felt guilty, but she knew that they couldn't move from the cottage just because of a stray cat. The house was cramped but otherwise perfect — it was both near the ocean and *unbelievably* priced.

Todd seemed to understand. But he was still eager to see the kittens. Lindsey, too, was curious.

At last, when the kittens were almost four weeks old, the mother cat made a formal presentation of them. Todd and Lindsey had come out to feed her. When she crept from under the shed's foundation, a round fuzzy bundle dangled from her jaws.

It was a calico kitten of orange, gray and white. The cat set it before Todd, then returned to the shed and brought out another calico kitten. And another. And another.

Four lovely calicoes — Lindsey was impressed. The kittens were so prettily marked it should be easy to find them homes. Todd, delighted, sat in their midst, playing with them.

But the cat was not yet through. She went back under the shed for the fifth time. Todd's jaw dropped when he saw the last kitten, and Lindsey's eyes

widened in amused disbelief. She'd never seen such a bizarre-looking cat.

The mother set the fifth kitten directly on Todd's lap. He laughed in amazement. Then his face grew somber again, and he looked up at Lindsey with yearning in his eyes. "Mom. . . ?" he said softly.

His pleasure and that single word pierced Lindsey through. Never in all the months since Jerry's death had Todd wanted anything enough to *ask* for it.

With a plunging heart, she knew she was doomed. There was no way in heaven or on earth she could ask Todd to give up the fifth kitten. He was the runt of the litter. In contrast to the Technicolor glory of the calicoes, his coat was only basic black and white, but his face was that of a lovable clown.

A black patch covered his right ear and eye. An identical patch marked his left ear and eye. The rest of his face was white, except for his nose. Marking its tip was a black spot the exact shape and size of the ace of spades.

He looked like a cross between a panda and a playing card. On either side of his black nose, his blue eyes stared out with a wild expression, as if even *he* was surprised by how odd he looked.

On each white foreleg he sported a black elbow patch. He wore a cape of black, and when Todd turned him over to pat his stomach, the kitten seemed to be wearing black swim trunks, as well. With one exception.

Lindsey couldn't help laughing. The strange little cat had a patch of white over his private parts, as if he wore a fig leaf pinned to his black shorts.

"Mom. . . ?" Todd said again, looking up at her. Lindsey nodded and ruffled Todd's dark hair. Yes, she told him. Somehow they'd find a way to keep the kitten.

Lindsey made a long and expensive call to the absentee landlord, Mr. Hidalgo, who lived in Miami. She explained to him about Todd. Then she begged, pleaded and very nearly groveled in an effort to keep the kitten.

Mr. Hidalgo relented at last. Todd could have the animal, he said grudgingly, but only if it stayed outside. If he heard that Lindsey was harboring it in the cottage, he would boot out all three of them, mother, child and cat.

Todd was ecstatic. He'd named the kitten Bozo, after a clown in one of his favorite books. After all,

the kitten's spotted nose did indeed make him look like a clown.

Lindsey was delighted each time she heard Todd say the kitten's name. The boy really was starting to talk again — almost always to the kitten, and rarely for long. But he was talking. She could have wept with happiness and relief.

As Lindsey hoped, placing the four other kittens was easy. She put an ad in the paper saying, "Free to loving owners: healthy beautiful calico kittens." By the end of the week, they were all in new homes.

Placing the mother cat was more difficult. But at last, through a local vet, Lindsey found a family that was looking for a nice, affectionate, adult cat. They said they would love to have her.

Lindsey and Todd drove the mother cat to the family's house in nearby Key Largo. The two little girls oohed and ahed so happily that Lindsey knew the cat had found a good home.

Still, as they drove back toward Vaca Key and the cottage, Lindsey felt sad that the mother cat was gone. Todd, too, was subdued. She hoped he wouldn't cry because the big cat was gone.

But when they got home, Bozo was nowhere to be found. None of the neighbors had seen him. Bozo

had vanished. Todd waited all afternoon for him and well after dark. The cat never appeared.

Todd was so desolate that Lindsey was scared. She held him tightly that night, trying to console him. "He'll come back," she promised, running her hand over the boy's dark hair. But when she looked into his eyes, they swam with tears, and he would not speak for fear of crying.

A neighbor, Mrs. Feldman, the only other permanent resident in the cottages, recalled seeing a pair of raffish-looking men arrive in a black Jeep the afternoon Bozo disappeared. She said they'd headed toward the villa, which was situated farther down the beach, south of the cottages.

The villa, once a hotel, was now being renovated for private use.

Naomi Feldman hadn't seen the men leave. She remembered thinking they might be workmen, though they looked none too reputable. The Jeep had had a bumper sticker that advertised a charter-fishing service in Key West. That depressingly slender clue was the only one Lindsey had.

Todd plunged back into his old grief. His sorrow racked Lindsey; he was a child who had experienced

too much loss in too short a time. Desperately Lindsey sought Bozo.

She called every vet in the middle Keys, asking if anyone had brought in a black-and-white kitten with eccentric markings. Nobody had.

She put an ad in the "lost" column of the local paper and contacted the radio station, asking for help in finding Bozo. Nobody responded.

Lindsey promised Todd another kitten. He refused, tears filling his eyes again. Lindsey understood. Bozo had been born practically on their doorstep. Todd was the first human being who'd ever touched Bozo, the first, basically, who'd ever seen him. He didn't want another cat. He only wanted Bozo.

Lindsey would look at him, so faraway and silent again, and curse herself for leaving Bozo outside. Why hadn't she defied Mr. Hidalgo and put the cat inside, where he would have been safe? What was wrong with her? Did she have no sense at all?

Lindsey and Naomi Feldman had grown close since Bozo's disappearance. Both women watched one evening as Todd played near the edge of the sea, endlessly sifting sand, never looking up, never



smiling.

Naomi was a short, buxom, pretty woman with a shining cap of blond hair. She shook her finger at Lindsey. "You've got to stop worrying," she said. "How can you make the boy happy if you're not happy yourself?"

Lindsey smiled wanly and shrugged. Naomi was right, but what else could Lindsey do but worry?

Naomi crossed her tanned legs. "Before that cat came, you talked about taking some paintings down to that gallery in Key West — which one?"

"The Whistling Lizard," Lindsey said, shaking her head in bemusement. She was lucky she had a profession she could practice anywhere. She was a free-lance artist who sold commissioned paintings to greeting card companies. But she was shy about her work and had never had the nerve to try to place any of it in a gallery.

Naomi reached over and swatted Lindsey's knee affectionately. "Get down to The Whistling Lizard and take some paintings. Life goes on. Have you even *been* painting lately? Except for the card companies?"

Lindsey shook her head. "No. I was so wrapped up in the cat and kittens, they were all I painted. I