

The great cat massacre by robert darnton



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BUSTER**

1. How do we know the perpetrators of the massacre are "joking" about the print master and his wife Upon the beginning of the story, Contat gave thereaders a view of their pitiful condition in the shop. He made remarks about the inequality between the workers and the bourgeois in terms of work, food, and sleep. They wanted their master and mistress to suffer as they are. That led to contriving a trick of pestering their master by imitating cat's cries next to the bedroom of the bourgeois and the bourgeoisie. By goading him with cat calls, they provoked the print master himself to authorize the massacre of the "malevolent" cats.

The cat massacre served as a clever and afflictive attack on the print master and his wife. By killing the cats, the laborers get back at the master of the shop. The workers hated the cats because their masters love those animals and nurture them more than the workers. By first killing the mistress' beloved cat "la grise," the workers emblematically raped the bourgeoisie. It is a clear display of insult and threat as the workers assured her that no one would be capable of such a crime because they have too much respect for the house. Simultaneously, they caused the sovereign insult to their master- his wife being his most precious possession just as her cat was hers.

2. How do the apprentices let the viewer in on the joke or reveal the "hidden meaning" of the events to the community around them

The workers amused themselves with Lveill skillfully reenacting the horrible scene over and over during the following days. The mime was an atrocious and humiliating attack at the expense of the master's entire household. It provided entertainment for the men. It must be taken into account the unity of the workers against the masters.

By executing the cats with such elaborate ceremony, they condemned

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master guilty-guilty of the unjust management of the shop towards apprentices. The cats were a representation of the masters, who were declared guilty of poor labor practices. In trying, confessing, and hanging a collection of half-dead cats, the workers meant to ridicule their master. Perhaps the whole act intended to frighten their master that they were capable of fighting for their rights if necessary. They also used it as a witch hunt, which provided an excuse to kill his wife's cat and to insinuate that she herself was a witch. The master became the victim of the workers' ridicule without him realizing it and the perpetrators got off free.

The entire massacre disguised the insult of the workers brought about by their extreme hatred of their master that had spread among all the workers. The workers found the massacre funny because it gave them a way to turn the tables on the bourgeois.

3. How might the event have simply been the outcome of a culture of cruelty to animals and not liking cats

In the story, the author arrogated that the cat massacre as an extreme cruelty toward animals was a practice deriving from the Middle Ages. The nasty and brutish cultural attitude is classified by Darnton as medieval in origin.