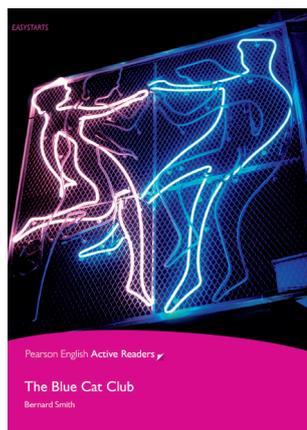


The Blue Cat Club

Bernard Smith



Summary

The Blue Cat Club is a story about a young couple, James and Chantal, who go to a night club.

Everyone enjoys Merlin, the Man of Magic's show. But James thinks Merlin is too friendly with Chantal.

Merlin does a trick with a box and five swords. He chooses Chantal as a volunteer but James says 'no'. Chantal persuades James to volunteer instead.

When James is inside the box, Merlin pushes the swords through the box. On pushing the last sword through, James shouts 'Aaaaagh!' Is he hurt?

Merlin opens the door. James's eyes are closed and his shirt is red! But then James walks out, smiling and holding up a tomato juice bottle! He has played a trick on Merlin. Chantal smiles at James and assures him that he will always be her 'Mr Magic'.

Pages 1–7: Chantal and James are at the club. The Magician plays some tricks on Chantal, which James does not like.

Pages 10–13: James unwillingly volunteers for a trick. He's inside a box while the Magician pushes four swords through the box.

Pages 16–19: When Merlin pushes the fifth sword in, James shouts. Merlin opens the box and finds James's shirt covered in blood. But James smiles and shows a bottle of tomato juice. He has played a trick on the Magician!

Background and themes

Illusion: Illusion is fun when we know it's a trick.

Jealousy: It can lead people into doing silly things.

Romance: James tries to impress Chantal, as he thinks this is important for her to love him.

Discussion activities

The following teacher-led activities aim at **discussion and extension**.

Section 1, pages 1–7

Before reading

- Discuss:** Have students discuss clubs.
Do you go to clubs? What can you do at a club in your city? And what do you think you can do in The Blue Cat Club?
- Predict:** Ask students to look at the cover.
Is this a happy story? Who are the man and the woman? Who is the man in black? What's he doing?
Have students take down notes of their predictions so that they can go back to them once they finish reading.

While reading

- Predict:** Ask students to look at the following pages.
What are the characters thinking in each picture?
 - James, on page 5
 - Chantal, on page 5
 - James, on page 7, picture 2
 - Chantal, on page 7, picture 2

After reading

- Pair work:** Ask students to describe the characters including some wrong information for another student to detect.

Section 2, pages 10–13

After reading

- Discuss:** Ask students to compare the two male characters.
Who would they like to have as a friend? Who would they like to spend their free time with? Why?

Section 3, pages 16–19

After reading

- Check:** Have students go back to their predictions before they read the book. Were they right?
- Discuss and write:** Ask students whether they think James should apologise to Merlin. They can also write a note of apology which James can leave on the table. group with the most points at the end wins.