



PIPPY: Hi there! Did I get here in time for pluttification?

NARRATOR 1: Tommy and Annika had told their teacher that Pippi was coming. She had decided to do all she could to make Pippi happy in school.

TEACHER: Welcome to school, Pippi. I hope you will enjoy yourself here and learn a great deal.

PIPPY: Yes, and I hope I'll get some Christmas vacation. That is the reason I've come. It's only fair, you know.

TEACHER: If you would first tell me your whole name, I'll register you in school.

PIPPY: My name is Pippilotta Delicatessa Windowshade Mackrelmint Efraim's Daughter Longstocking, daughter of Captain Efraim Longstocking, formerly the Terror of the Sea, now a cannibal king. Pippi is really only a nickname, because Papa thought Pippilotta was too long to say.

TEACHER: Well, then, we shall call you Pippi, too. But now suppose we test you a little and see what you know. Pippi, can you tell me what seven and five are?

PIPPY: (shocked) Well, if you don't know that yourself, I'm certainly not going to tell you!

OTHER CHILDREN: (gasp)

NARRATOR 2: All the children stared at Pippi in horror.

TEACHER: (gently) Pippi, we don't answer that way in school.

PIPPY: (sincerely) I beg your pardon. I didn't know that. I won't do it again.

TEACHER: No, let us hope not. And now I will tell you that seven and five are twelve.

PIPPY: See that! You knew it yourself! So why are you asking?

NARRATOR 1: The teacher decided to act as if nothing had happened.

TEACHER: Well, now, Pippi, how much do you think eight and four are?

PIPPY: Oh, about sixty-seven.

TEACHER: Of course not! Eight and four are twelve!

PIPPY: Well now, really, that is carrying things too far! You just said that seven and five are twelve. There should be some rhyme and reason to things, even in school!

NARRATOR 2: The teacher decided there was no point trying to teach Pippi any more arithmetic.

TEACHER: Tommy, if Lisa has seven apples and Axel has nine apples, how many apples do they have together?

PIPPY: Yes, you tell her, Tommy, and tell me too, if Lisa gets a stomach-ache and Axel gets more of a stomach-ache, whose fault is it, and where did they get those apples in the first place?

NARRATOR 1: The teacher decided to give up on arithmetic altogether.

TEACHER: (getting frustrated) Pippi, maybe you would prefer to learn reading. Here is a picture of a wild goat called an ibex. And the letter you see in front of the ibex is called

"i".

PIPPY: That I'll never believe. I think it looks exactly like a straight line with a little fly speck over it. But what I'd really like to know is, what does the ibex have to do with the fly speck?

NARRATOR 2: The teacher took out another card.

TEACHER: (trying to stay calm) And here is a picture of a snake, with the letter "s".

PIPPY: Speaking of snakes, I'll never ever forget the time I had a fight with a huge snake in India. (acting out her story) You can't imagine what a dreadful snake it was—fourteen yards long and mad as a hornet—and every day he ate up five Indians and then two little children for dessert, and one time he came and wanted me for dessert, and he wound himself around me—uhhh!—but I've been around a bit, I said, and hit him in the head, bang!, and then he hissed uiuiuiuiuiuiuiitch, and then I hit him again, and bingo! he was dead, and indeed, so that is the letter "s"—most remarkable!

NARRATOR 1: The teacher's patience had come to an end.

TEACHER: Children, go outside so I can talk to Pippi alone.

OTHER CHILDREN: (go out)

NARRATOR 2: When Pippi and the teacher were by themselves, Pippi came over to her.

PIPPY: You know what? It was lots of fun to come to school to find out what it's like. But I don't think I want to come anymore—Christmas vacation or no Christmas vacation. There are altogether too many apples and ibexes and snakes and things like that. It makes me dizzy in the head. I hope you won't be upset, Teacher.

TEACHER: I certainly am upset, Pippi, but I'm upset that you won't behave properly! Any child who acts as badly as you do wouldn't be allowed to come to school no matter how much she wanted to!

PIPPY: (astonished, almost starting to cry) Have I behaved badly? Goodness, I didn't know that. You understand, Teacher, don't you, that when you have a mother who's an angel in Heaven and a father who's a cannibal king, you don't know just how to behave in school, with all the apples and ibexes.

TEACHER: (calming down) I understand, Pippi. I'm not annoyed anymore. Maybe you can come back to school when you're a little older.

PIPPY: (happily) I think you are awfully nice, Teacher. And here is something for you.

NARRATOR 1: Pippi took from her pocket a lovely gold watch.

TEACHER: Pippi, I can't possibly accept such a valuable gift!

PIPPY: But you have to take it! Otherwise, I'll come back tomorrow, and you wouldn't like that, would you?

NARRATOR 2: Then Pippi rushed out to the schoolyard and jumped on her horse. All the children waved goodbye.

PIPPY: (waving and riding off) So long, kids. I won't be back for awhile. But always remember how many apples Axel had—or you'll be sorry!