GENERAL

a video of what does the fox say

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Introduction

When the summer of 2013 rolled around, the internet was suddenly awash with a bizarre, catchy tune that seemed to have no place in the mainstream music charts—until it did. “What Does the Fox Say?” by the Norwegian comedy duo Ylvis captured the world’s attention with its absurd lyrics, quirky animation, and the eternal question that has haunted nature enthusiasts for decades: **a video of what does the fox say**. The clip quickly became a global phenomenon, amassing millions of views within days and spawning countless memes, parodies, and even scientific studies. Yet, behind the viral spectacle lies a fascinating intersection of pop culture, animal behavior, and internet folklore.

In this comprehensive guide, we’ll explore the origins of the video, its cultural impact, the science of fox vocalizations, and why the song continues to resonate with audiences worldwide. Whether you’re a music aficionado, a wildlife lover, or simply curious about the viral magic that turns a simple question into a worldwide obsession, this article will take you on a deep dive into the world of the fox and its unexpected musical legacy.

The Origin of the Video

The Creators: Ylvis Brothers

The Ylvis brothers—Bård and Vegard—are known for their satirical approach to humor and their penchant for blending absurdity with clever wordplay. Prior to the fox hit, they had already made a name for themselves with songs like “The Fox” and “The Elephant.” Their knack for creating content that was simultaneously entertaining and thought-provoking set the stage for the viral success of “What Does the Fox Say?”

The Concept and Production

The idea for the video began as a playful exploration of the mystery surrounding fox vocalizations. The brothers, intrigued by the lack of a definitive answer to the question, decided to turn their curiosity into a musical experiment. They wrote a catchy, repetitive chorus that featured a series of nonsensical sounds—“Ring-ding-ding-ding-dingeringeding!”—to mimic what they imagined a fox might say. The music video’s animation was crafted by a small Norwegian studio, featuring bright colors, dancing foxes, and a whimsical narrative that kept viewers entertained while they searched for the answer.

The Viral Phenomenon

How It Spread

Within 24 hours of its release on YouTube, the video had already reached millions of viewers. Social media platforms amplified its reach, with users sharing the clip across Facebook, Twitter, and Reddit. The song’s infectious hook and the universal intrigue of the question made it an ideal candidate for viral spread. By the end of 2013, “What Does the Fox Say?” had become the most viewed video on YouTube at the time, a record that would be broken only by a few years later.

Cultural Impact

The video’s influence extended far beyond the realm of music. It became a meme staple, inspiring countless

remixes, dance challenges, and parodies. The phrase “What does the fox say?” entered everyday conversation, often used humorously to ask about anything unknown or mysterious. The video also spurred a renewed interest in wildlife documentaries and animal behavior studies, as viewers sought authentic information about fox calls.

Memes and Covers

From YouTube covers by amateur musicians to TikTok dances, the song’s reach was universal. Artists from various genres—rock, hip hop, EDM—released their own interpretations, each adding a new layer to the meme’s longevity. The video’s soundtrack was also used in commercials, television shows, and even political campaigns, underscoring its cultural penetration.

Understanding Fox Vocalizations

Natural Calls of Foxes

Unlike the exaggerated sounds in the music video, real foxes produce a wide array of vocalizations that serve distinct purposes: mating calls, territorial warnings, or communication with pups. The most common sounds include:

- Howls—used during the mating season to attract partners.
- Yips—short, high-pitched noises that indicate excitement or alertness.
- Whines—soft, low-pitched sounds often used by mothers to soothe their young.
- Growls—a warning signal when a fox feels threatened.

These sounds are far from the whimsical “ring-ding-ding” that Ylvis popularized, but they are crucial for fox survival and social interaction.

Scientific Perspective

Wildlife biologists have studied fox vocalizations for decades. Research conducted in Scandinavia and North America has shown that fox calls can vary significantly by region, species, and even individual. The *Arctic fox*, for example, uses a distinct “whistle” to communicate over long distances in snowy landscapes. In contrast, the *Red fox* relies more on yips and growls in forested environments. These findings highlight the complexity of fox communication—an area that the Ylvis brothers only lightly touched in their comedic rendition.

Misconceptions and Myths

Before the viral video, many people mistakenly believed that foxes had a unique, mysterious sound. The internet’s fascination with the question often led to misinformation, with some claiming that foxes “screech” or “scream.” The Ylvis video, while entertaining, inadvertently reinforced these myths. However, the scientific community has worked to clarify these misconceptions, providing accurate information through documentaries, educational programs, and public outreach.

The Video''s Music and Lyrics

Song Structure

The composition follows a classic pop format: verse, chorus, bridge, and outro. Each section features a playful blend of electronic beats, synth melodies, and the iconic “what does the fox say” refrain. The repetition of the chorus ensures the song’s catchiness, while the verses add a layer of comedic narrative, describing various “fox sounds” that range from “Gering-ding-ding-ding!” to “Gow-wow-wow-wow!”

Lyrical Analysis

While the lyrics are intentionally nonsensical, they serve a broader purpose: to engage listeners through humor and

absurdity. The repetitive nature of the chorus acts as a mnemonic device, making it easy for audiences to remember and sing along. Additionally, the lyrics subtly critique the human tendency to anthropomorphize animals—turning a complex natural phenomenon into a simplistic, entertaining format.

Musical Style

Musically, “What Does the Fox Say?” incorporates elements of electronic dance music (EDM) and pop. The driving bass line, upbeat tempo, and synth hooks give the track an energetic feel that makes it suitable for dance floors and radio playlists alike. This fusion of genres contributed to the song’s accessibility, appealing to a broad audience range from children to adults.

Watching the Video Today

Where to Find It

While the original video was uploaded to YouTube, it remains available on multiple platforms:

- YouTube—the official channel of Ylvis hosts the original upload and various remixes.
- Spotify—the audio track is available for streaming, allowing listeners to enjoy the song without the visual component.
- Apple Music—provides high-quality audio and curated playlists featuring the track.
- Other streaming services—Amazon Music, Tidal, and Deezer also carry the song.

Best Platforms

For those who enjoy the full visual experience, YouTube remains the best platform, offering the original animation and fan-made covers. If you prefer a high-fidelity audio experience, Spotify and Apple Music are ideal. For educational purposes, many wildlife documentaries have incorporated the video’s theme song as a playful introduction to fox behavior.

Viewing Tips

To fully appreciate the humor and cultural significance of the video, consider the following tips:

1. Watch the video with subtitles to catch every quirky lyric.
2. Compare the animated fox sounds with actual fox recordings to understand the difference.
3. Explore Ylvis’s other works to see how they blend satire and music.
4. Check out fan-made remixes to see how different cultures interpret the original.

The Legacy

Awards and Recognition

The video earned Ylvis several accolades, including nominations for the *MTV Europe Music Awards* and a nomination for the *Golden Raspberry Awards*in the “Worst Original Song” category—an ironic nod to its success. Additionally, the track topped the charts in multiple countries and was certified multi-platinum in the United States, United Kingdom, and Norway.

Influence on Music Industry

The success of “What Does the Fox Say?” demonstrated that a viral video could translate into a commercial hit. Record labels began to actively scout for content with viral potential, leading to a surge in music videos that blend humor with catchy hooks. The track also paved the way for other artists to experiment with unconventional themes, proving that authenticity and creativity could win over global audiences.

The Fox in Popular Culture

Beyond the music industry, the fox has become a staple in popular culture. From animated series like “The Fox and the Hound” to video games featuring fox protagonists, the animal’s image has evolved. The Ylvis video amplified this trend, making the fox a symbol of curiosity and mischief. In recent years, the fox has even been adopted as a mascot for environmental campaigns, symbolizing adaptability and resilience.

Conclusion

From its humble beginnings as a comedic curiosity to its status as a cultural touchstone, “What Does the Fox Say?” remains a testament to the power of humor, music, and the internet’s ability to unite people around a shared question. Whether you’re watching the animated clip for the first time or revisiting it after all these years, the song invites you to laugh, sing, and perhaps, take a moment to appreciate the real sounds of the wild—one that a video of what does the fox say has helped bring to the forefront of our collective imagination.

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