

PETS NEED PRIVACY TOO

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Note: This play is meant to be Played at Home. It is not a serious play. It should be silly and raucous. The more you play pretend the better it will be. Be wild! Be physical! Have fun! Ideally there will be some children in the cast, or some adults with imaginations as big as children's.

CHARACTERS

DOG - energetic, friendly, social, high energy, impulsive, easily excited.

CAT - rational, analytic, cold, discerning, anti-social, happy by themselves.

PERSON - Can be anyone, quarantined alone with pets.

RABBIT - Diligent, quiet, focused on finding something to eat.

SETTING

Inside a Home or Apartment During Quarantine.

And Outside a Home or Apartment During Quarantine.

Its an average afternoon in quarantine. DOG is sitting on the floor watching PERSON. CAT is lounging off to the side. PERSON throws a ball to DOG.

DOG retrieves it.

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PERSON throws a ball to DOG.

DOG retrieves it, but is clearly getting annoyed.

PERSON throws a ball to DOG.

DOG retrieves it, very stressed, returns it to PERSON very slowly, then tries to run away before . . .

PERSON throws a ball to DOG AGAIN.

DOG picks it up, and stealthily attempts to hide it.

PERSON

Come on Buddy. Where's the ball?

DOG looks around pretending they don't know.

PERSON

You can do it. Go get it buddy!

DOG pretends the ball is missing. Gestures to indicate its not present.

PERSON

Come on! Sniff it out! Sniff it out!

DOG sits and does not budge.

PERSON

Aw, you're no fun. You don't want to play anymore? Whats wrong?

PERSON goes to pick up DOG like they are going to snuggle them. DOG tries to escape and hide under the couch, and make themselves invisible. Eventually, PERSON gives up starts looking at their phone.

CAT

Wow. That's my move.

DOG

You make it look so easy to get under there.

CAT

I maintain an all-fish diet, so I have the figure for it. This physique takes work. You on the other hand, eat . . . well, everything.

DOG

I'll give it all up! Every table scrap, and strange, unidentified, uniquely smelling substance. I'll give it up! I'll starve myself! If it means I can get under the couch and hide for a moment's peace.

CAT

You know you used to want this attention. Stay home, play with me, play with me, blah blah blah.

DOG

No. Not like this. I never wanted this. This is different. It's like they never leave anymore.

CAT

They don't. By my calculations, they actually haven't left in two months now.

DOG

This is bad.

CAT

Real bad.

DOG

So what do we do?

CAT

Well, when I don't want to be bothered I just hiss and walk away. It always works for me. You could try that? If they follow, you just hiss louder. Show them your teeth.

DOG

I can't do that.

CAT

You need to establish boundaries.

DOG

Everyone expects a mean moody cat, but I'm a DOG. Dogs are supposed to be FUN. When you scare them, they shrug it off and come back later, if I scare them, they'll send me away.

CAT

True. Probably someplace bad. Like the pound.

DOG

I'm doomed! I can't keep this up. I can't live up to these unrealistic expectations. Its like they're obsessed with me now!

I have to hide or its nonstop. All they want to do is play and cuddle and play. I'm exhausted! I cannot fetch anything else. I'm done. This relationship is suffocating me.

CAT

I told you humans were high maintenance. You never listened.

DOG

They used to leave! Why don't they leave us alone anymore? It doesn't make any sense.

CAT

They're just showing their true colors, they're a needy needy species.

DOG

And they never bring anyone else over to visit anymore or to play. They won't let us see any other people! Its too much! I need friends. I need other people in my life. It can't just be them all the time. I'm a social creature!

CAT

I'm not. *(beat)* But, I'm listening.

DOG

I've got to get out of here. I've got to be free! See the world for myself again! Sniff something weird! Lick something strange! Experience something new! Anything! I can't take it anymore.

(CAT cleans themself carefully.)

CAT

Not to sound paranoid, but what if there's a reason they haven't left in two months. What if they're protecting us. What if there's something dangerous out there?

DOG

What could possibly be out there that's worse than this? I CANNOT LIVE LIKE THIS

CAT

Calm down.

DOG

I can't, I can't live like this. I've got to get out!

(Dog begins to pace/bounce vigorously about the space.)

I need freedom. Freedom!

CAT

Calm down. You're knocking stuff over again.

DOG

I'll knock it all down! I don't care.

CAT

Yes, you do. If you break things, you won't get any treats.

DOG

Treats!? Where!?

(DOG bounds around the room looking for treats.)

Oh. *(Beat)* I see. No. No. I don't want any more treats. I want out! I don't want to be trapped here fetching for one person for the rest of my life. I'm getting out.

CAT eyes the PERSON suspiciously.

CAT

I wonder if this is a punishment.

DOG

For what?

CAT

When you, you know? On that antique chair? From their grandma?

DOG

They haven't left in two months because of one mistake on one chair!?! Nobody's perfect!

CAT

It was a nice chair.

DOG

Well, then, you're being punished too. Because they're here with BOTH of us.

CAT

Oh, I know. But it couldn't be something I did. I'm perfect.

DOG

There used to be boundaries. They left, they came back.

CAT

Preach.

DOG

Something must be done.

CAT

I agree. Lets tie them up, take back the house, and eat all the fish.

DOG

I'm going to escape!

CAT

How? . . .

DOG eyes person carefully. DOG looks at the exits, a chase ensues. Person is now guarding all exits. Dog tries to get out, and tries to get out. And then

CAT

Pretend you have to poop!

DOG whimpers and shifts their legs, and makes a face at PERSON. DOG pretends they are going to poop on the floor.

Oh no! Oh no no no no no!

PERSON

PERSON takes DOG out to the yard. DOG immediately runs away.

I'm out! I'm out!!! Freedom!!!

DOG

Dog runs across the street. Once they are far enough away that PERSON can't see them. They lay in the grass. And breathe a deep sigh of relief.

Peace at last.

DOG

(DOG smells the air. Rolls in the grass. Looks around. Notices there are no people. Or dogs. DOG keeps looking around.)

Where is everybody? *(beat)* Hellooo? Hellooo??
Look how cute I am!!!! Doesn't anybody want to come cuddle me!? Where are all my friends?

A RABBIT hops by. DOG starts to chase it.

Hey Bunny. Hey bunny, bunny, bunny.

DOG

RABBIT hops.

Hey Bunny, where is everybody?

Who?

RABBIT

The people.

DOG

Oh. They don't come out anymore. Thank goodness. Its just the rest of us now.

RABBIT

Its great. So peaceful.

RABBIT hops.

DOG

What do you mean they don't come out? Not even to play? Why not?

RABBIT

Why would I care?

DOG

Don't you think its strange? Are they ok? Aren't you worried?

RABBIT

People are trouble. They kill plants, animals, everything. The longer they stay inside the better. The air is cleaner now. More things are growing.

Rabbit hops, nibbles some grass.

So more nibbles for me.

DOG

But who will play with me? Will you?

RABBIT

I have things to do.

Rabbit sniffs, nibbles some grass. Then hops.

DOG

You're just hopping around.

RABBIT

No, I'm not.

Rabbit hops.

DOG

Yes, you are. You just did it again. You're just hopping. Come on, play with me! Please.

Rabbit hops. Nibbles some more grass.

RABBIT

No, I'm eating. Just because it doesn't look like anything to you. Doesn't mean its not important. Dogs don't know everything.

DOG

Huh? This is what you eat? Thats just grass.

RABBIT

I have to find the good bits.

(RABBIT hops)

I could teach you how to find food. You could learn how to survive without them.

DOG

And eat grass? No thank you. I like what my person feeds me.

RABBIT

You could feed yourself lots of things. Naturally. Be less dependent.

DOG

I like being fed by my person though. I like people.

RABBIT

That's because you're a dog. *(Sighs)*. Well dog, be grateful for what you have. You won't have to spend so much time hopping. It's harder than it looks.

DOG

I wanted a break. To see other folks. I didn't think it'd be so quiet.

RABBIT

Quiet? The birds are singing. The cars aren't running us over. For me, and my family, this is perfect. It just depends on what you're looking for.

And if people are really what you need? If you really want to play with a person? You have to go home.

DOG sighs. PERSON enters.

PERSON

Has anyone seen my dog?

DOG looks at PERSON. AT the outside world they wanted to run away to, then back at PERSON. DOG sighs. DOG barks. PERSON hears. DOG slowly walks back toward them.

PERSON

There you are! I was so worried. You scared me.

PERSON and DOG go back inside together.

Welcome Back.

CAT

DOG goes and gets the ball from where they hid it earlier. DOG rolls the ball to PERSON.

Hey, do you wanna play fetch?

DOG

They smile.

End of Play.