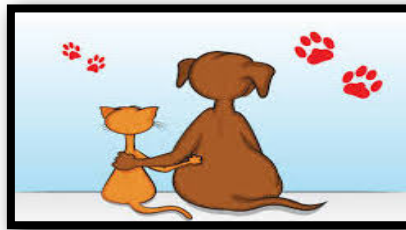


Reservations

A Short Play in One Act

SYNOPSIS

A dog makes an unlikely connection with a cat on their first date.



CAST

TRIXIE ... 30+ Female. Cat ears. Cocktail dress. Streetwise. Bling

WAITER 40 + Male. Formal dress. No nonsense. Has seen it all.

ROVER ... 30 + Male. Dog ears. Casual clothing. A bit naïve.

SET

Upscale Restaurant
Table with two chairs.

Reservations

AT RISE

(Intro music: *La Bamba*, Los Lobos)

(lights up)

(TRIXIE enters left, dances freestyle to the music)

(Unseen by Trixie WAITER enters from stage right. Stares at Trixie with hands on hips.)

(TRIXIE spins around, comes face-to-face with WAITER, stops, recoils) (Music stops)

(TRIXIE Smooths hair back with hand. Stands tall as she tries to regain composure)

WAITER

(Agitated.) Good evening. May I help you?

TRIXIE

(Smooths skirt) Yes, I'm meeting someone for dinner. I have reservations.

WAITER

Yes, don't we all? However you're a .. you're a Cat.

TRIXIE

I'm meeting someone for dinner.

WAITER

But you're a... a **CAT**.

TRIXIE

(Proudly) Yes I am. I'm a rescue cat...and also a therapy cat.

WAITER

(Annoyed) But of course you are. (Glances around room.) Let me seat you at our very best table. It's right over here by the kitchen. (Gestures to table)

TRIXIE

(Sits. WAITER hands her a menu. TRIXIE Glances around room.) Thank you very much.

WAITER

Can I get you a drink while you wait?

TRIXIE

(Continues to scan the room while talking) Milk, please. Warm ... in a saucer...and can you add a shot of cream?

WAITER

Very good, ma'am. I'll get right on it.

(Exits)

TRIXIE

(Examines her manicured paws.) I just hope I don't get stood up.

ROVER

(ROVER enters stage right. Stretches arms in air. Yawns. Scratches underarm. Leg thumps up and down. Scans room. Looks at his wristwatch.) Where is she?

WAITER

(Enters. holds menu and reservation list.)

(Dry, sardonic tone) Good evening, Sir. Let me guess. *(looks at list)* You must be Rover.

ROVER

That's me. I'm meeting a French poodle named Trixie.

WAITER

Sorry sir, there's no poodle here. Just...a cat. We're a bit crowded tonight. Would you mind sitting with her while I find you a table?

ROVER

(Enthusiastically nods. WAITER ushers ROVER to table. He sits at table with TRIXIE. WAITER exits)

(Checks watch with grand flair) Well it's six o'clock. Where could she be? That's dinner time in my book.

TRIXIE

(Leans toward ROVER. Nods admiringly at ROVER's wristwatch) Nice watch you have there.

ROVER

(Sits up. Puffs out. Smug and proud) That's because I'm a watch dog.

TRIXIE

Yes, okay. I guess it stepped in that one.

WAITER

(Enters. Delivers saucer to TRIXIE) Here's your warm milk ... in a saucer.

TRIXIE

(TRIXIE laps some milk.) Excellent, thank you.

WAITER

(WAITER. Turns to ROVER) Sir, can I get you something to drink?

ROVER

(Holds out hands to show the size of a large bowl) A big bowl of water. No ice.

WAITER

Very good, sir. *(Exits)*

TRIXIE

(TRIXIE dabs napkin on lips. Leans toward ROVER.) Are you Rover?

ROVER

Yes, ma'am, that's me! You haven't seen a French poodle have you? With a pink ribbon? Named Trixie?

WAITER

(Enters. Delivers water dish to ROVER) Your water, sir.

ROVER

Thank you! *(ROVER pants excitedly. Slurps water. Licks paws) (WAITER exits)*

TRIXIE

(Extends paw elegantly) I'm Trixie. Pleased to meet you.

ROVER

(Wide-eyed. Scans TRIXIE up and down.) You're Trixie? But you're a ... a **CAT**. You're not who I expected.

TRIXIE

(Brushes back hair with paw) Well, cry me a river. What did you expect? Someone younger I suppose? I'm no kitten but still I'm only on my fourth life. You know, nine lives and all that stuff. Besides, I thought you might enjoy a more mature woman with a little experience.

ROVER

Wait a second. *(Pulls out iPhone. Starts swiping furiously)* An older woman? It's not your age. I wanted a poodle. And you're a ... a **CAT**.

TRIXIE

Why do people keep saying that? *(Rests elbows on table and clasps hands together. Places chin on folded hands. Shrugs. Smiles)* That's right I'm a cat. But what's not to like about a cat? *(Makes suggestive purring sounds)*

ROVER

(Points accusingly at TRIXIE) Don't you purr at me. You don't look anything like your photo. *(Shows phone to TRIXIE)* That's clearly a dog on the sofa. A French poodle with a pink ribbon!

TRIXIE

(Grabs phone. Points. Shows phone to ROVER) Wait a minute, Pal. As a watch dog, you should have noticed the tail behind the sofa. Right there. Back of the sofa. That's my tail. Hey! One more thing, you said the poodle has a pink ribbon. I thought dogs were color blind.

ROVER

Shhh! Dogs can see color, we always have. It's just one of our little secrets. Those stupid humans think they're so smart--like they know everything. We dogs get a big laugh when they say dumb stuff like that. And another thing, I can read. Really. Mostly three letter words. But, hey, don't change the subject. *(Continues to tap phone)* The website is called "Dog Discretionary Dating Service". Note the word "Dog" in there? I want to meet someone like me. A D-O-G, dog. *(Waves paw across chest)* And you are not that. You are a C-A-...*(thinks)*...a C-A...*(thinks)*

WAITER

(Pokes head around curtain.) **Cat, C-A-T. Cat!** *(retracts)*

ROVER

(points) Yeah, what he said. You lied to me.

TRIXIE

Oh get over it. Besides, I only lie to people I really care about. Yeah, I'm a cat. But just think of me as a friend if that works. *(Waits a beat)* Hey, wait a minute. I know what it is. You've never had a cat have you?

ROVER

(Recoils defensively) What are you talking about? I've known plenty of cats. Some of my best friends are cats. Hey, I even saw the movie.

TRIXIE

Yeah, you and nobody else. Even I didn't see that turkey. Wait a sec. You're a rookie when it comes to cats. Well, I never would have guessed.

ROVER

OK that's it. I should go. *(Moves chair back)*

TRIXIE

Oh, come on, don't you know when someone is pulling your leg? *(ROVER looks at leg)*
Actually, we have more in common than you think. For example, do you like to sleep?

ROVER

(Wiggles with excitement) Well sure! I love to sleep that's my favorite thing.

TRIXIE

And do you like dinner?

ROVER

(Gets excited. Wiggles. Sniffs air) Dinner? Dinner? Did someone say dinner? Did I hear a can opener? I love dinner. *(WAITER enters)*

TRIXIE

(Nods toward approaching WAITER) I meant here comes the waiter.

WAITER

Ready to order? What would you like ma'am?

TRIXIE

I'm a fish-lover. I'll have the salmon. Rare please, and could you top off my milk.

WAITER

Very good. And you, Sir?

ROVER

What do you have for meat-lovers?

WAITER

Steak, chicken, a very nice pork loin.

ROVER

Lets' see. *(Puts on reading glasses. Contemplates the menu)* I'll have a sirloin. Rare, please. And can you cut that into small pieces?

WAITER

(Rolls eyes) Yes. I'll inform the cook. Thank you, sir.

TRIXIE

(Leans forward) Personally, I don't eat anything that has four legs. Cows, chickens, pigs. They deserve to lives that are as free and happy as mine.

ROVER

Chickens have two legs by the way. And what about fish? They're living creatures too.

TRIXIE

They're delicious, that's what.

WAITER

(Clears throat) Will there be anything else, sir?

ROVER

No, that should do it.

WAITER

Very good, Sir. Excellent choice. *(Writes order on pad. Bows)* *(Exits)*

TRIXIE

As I was saying, we have more in common that you may think. Do you like to take walks?

ROVER

Oh, yes! I love walks.

TRIXIE

And playing games? Tennis balls?

ROVER

I love tennis balls. And especially the green ones.

TRIXIE

Yes, okay, "the green ones" I get it. So it's all settled. I'll move in tomorrow.

ROVER

Whoa! Slow down. Don't get me wrong, but when I started looking for a companion, you weren't exactly what I had in mind.

TRIXIE

That's OK. Actually I've known you for years. I've had more than one life, you know. I'm that same cat who lived next door to you when you were just a pup.

ROVER

You're that cat from next door? The one that hissed at me when I walked by?

TRIXIE

I was just keeping my kittens safe. I was so much younger then.

ROVER

(wide-eyed expression, concerned) Kittens? You have kittens?

TRIXIE

Oh no. Not anymore. That was years ago...In my second life. I had tons of kittens back then. *(Aside)* I was a bit wild and crazy back in those days. But let me tell you, Motherhood isn't all its cracked up to be. Kids! They never call! They never write!

ROVER

(Pauses in thought, puzzled expression) Well, maybe they just--

TRIXIE

(Sighs with exasperation) --and then there was the time I sent them outside to play. But wouldn't you know it. Those three little kittens. They lost their mittens. *(Lifts paws in air in frustration)*

ROVER

(Lets TRIXIE's line hang out there. Finally directly addresses audience—out of character and deadpan. Shakes head in negative) Oh no, I'm not going to comment on that.

(Back in character) Well, I spend my time protecting my owners. I protect them from those thieves and murderers that come to the front door every day.

TRIXIE

(Preens. Admires self in reflection of spoon) Like who? You live in a safe neighborhood. Can't be that many killers walking around.

ROVER

Well, for starters, there's that guy who drives that brown truck, wears shorts and drops mysterious packages on the porch.

TRIXIE

Or gal.

ROVER

Huh?

TRIXIE

A gal! Women can drive trucks, too, you know. Who else?

ROVER

There's that other guy in a white truck. He keeps stuffing things in the mail slot.

TRIXIE

Aha! This is getting better. Who else?

ROVER

Well, lately, here's this guy in a dark gray truck with a smile on the side. Keeps dropping off boxes. No matter how much I bark he keeps coming back. I have a perfect record, too. No one has ever been murdered in my house.

TRIXIE

(Grins widely. Shakes head back and forth) What would you say if I told you that they never hurt anyone and it's their j-o-b to deliver stuff?

ROVER

(Raises eyebrows. Sits up straight. Startled. Trembles. Points and waves accusing finger at TRIXIE) What would I say? Well, well, I would say that...that you have a shallow view of the world. Evil lurks everywhere.

TRIXIE

(Continues to preen. Pauses and smiles broadly) So you say. Let's talk about my favorite subject. Me and my problems! My owners are moving to Canada. Hard winters up there and not really my cup of tea. I'm staying put. All the things I need are here in sunny California. Except, of course, for those annoying wildfires and pesky blackouts.

ROVER

That's not a decision I'd make. I would follow my humans to the ends of the earth. I say that home is where the heart is.

TRIXIE

That's nice, but not everyone is a dog. I have to look out for number one. I say that home is where my next meal is.

ROVER

How will you survive without them?

TRIXIE

(Fingers her pearls) Without who?

ROVER

Your humans, that's who.

TRIXIE

Oh! You mean my captors?

ROVER

Don't you think your humans will be brokenhearted if you don't go with them?

TRIXIE

They might miss me for a while, but they'll get over it. Right now, you might say I'm house hunting.

ROVER

Is that what this is all about? You finding a place to live? Are you just after me because I can provide you food and shelter? Am I just one big security blanket?

TRIXIE

Yes. Pretty much. A girl has to look out for herself. What is it that you're looking for?

ROVER

I want someone who loves naps, long walks on the beach, and riding in car.

TRIXIE

I love naps. But car rides? No, Not so much. *(Waves hand dismissively)*

ROVER

Now that I think about it, my humans really do love me. They might love you too.

TRIXIE

Ahem. I do the choosing. *(Taps fingers on table impatiently)* Do your humans eat much fish? I only eat fish—canned fish. Fresh fish. And, of course, I love goldfish.

ROVER

I eat everything. What does that make me?

TRIXIE

(Shrugs and mocks ROVER with her deadpan tone) A pig? Or maybe a dog?

ROVER

That's right. I'm a dog. I'm a GOOD dog. Everyone says so. They always pet me on the head and say: "Good Dog, Good Dog."

TRIXIE

No doubt about it. You're my new best friend.

WAITER

(Enters. Places plates on table.) Enjoy your dinners. Is everything to your liking?

TRIXIE

(Glances at Rover) Yes, I believe it is. *(Sniffs plate)* Are you sure this salmon is fresh?

WAITER

(Patronizing) Fresh? Oh yes, very fresh. As soon as the cook read your order, he ran down to the river and hooked a 12-pound Chinook. *(Lifts nose in air, exasperated. Exits)*

ROVER

Stop twisting your tail in a knot. No offense, Trixie, but we have nothing in common.

TRIXIE

Oh, come on now. Like I said, we both like to eat. We both like to sleep.

ROVER

Let's just finish the meal and call it a night.

TRIXIE

Easy for you to say. You have a home with people that aren't moving to the land of snow and hockey. So, when can I see you again?

ROVER

I don't know. Maybe next week. (*Ponders*) Okay, let's try Friday. It's Clam Chowder Night.

TRIXIE

Great. And if you play your cards right, I might spend the night.

ROVER

Ah, does this mean you moving in? (*Slow feed in, Music Sinatra: Young at Heart*)

TRIXIE

Well, yes. That's the plan. I'll give my 3-hour notice. And one more thing.

ROVER

What's that?

TRIXIE

No more of this going out on Friday nights with that pack of dogs you hang with. I think we should stay home and watch the Cooking Channel.

ROVER

(*resigns*) Yes, of course.

TRIXIE

And another thing. ...And let's get this straight. I get the middle of the bed.

ROVER

(*Sighs. Shrugs. Tilts head*) Yes, dear. Whatever you say.

(Lights starts to fade, music fades)

END