

THE KENNEL CLUB

A short dramedy by
David Muncaster

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

SALLY, a wise old Golden Retriever.

MOLLY, a nervous English Spaniel.

SAM, a hyperactive Jack Russell.

BRUNO, an Alsatian cross.

A pair of humans "enter" and "exit" during the course of the play, and the dogs should behave as if they are real, but they are invisible to the audience and not meant to be played by actual actors.

SETTING

A rescue kennel.

PRODUCTION NOTE

No attempt should be made to make the characters look like dogs.

(Rescue kennels. SALLY and MOLLY share a kennel. To their right is a vacant kennel. To their left is Sam's kennel, currently empty. To the left of Sam is the kennel containing the sleeping BRUNO.)

SALLY: Will you stop pacing about. What is wrong with you?

MOLLY: I can't help it. I'm nervous.

SALLY: Pacing up and down the kennel isn't going to change anything.

MOLLY: I don't know how you can just sit there, Sally. Do you think she will be alright?

SALLY: Who?

MOLLY: Pixie of course.

SALLY: She'll be fine.

MOLLY: I hope so.

SALLY: She will be. They looked like a nice couple. She'll be fine.

MOLLY: I'm going to miss her.

SALLY: Don't worry about her, Molly.

MOLLY: Who do you think we'll get next door now.

SALLY: Stop panicking. I'm sure that whoever moves in to her old kennel will be nice.

MOLLY: How can you say that?

SALLY: There's no reason to believe anything else.

MOLLY: This is a rescue centre, Sally! We don't all come from loving homes you know. Some of us have problems.

SALLY: I know. But most of the guys are OK aren't they?

MOLLY: What about Bruno?

SALLY: Bruno's OK.

MOLLY: He's not exactly well balanced is he?

SALLY: He's alright.

MOLLY: Alright? Barking like a mad thing every time he hears a car is alright? Growling at the staff is alright? Howling the whole night is alright?

SALLY: He's never hurt anyone. He's had a hard life.

MOLLY: And it's not about to get any better.

SALLY: Don't say that. Molly, how can you say that?

MOLLY: Nobody would have him though would they? Even if people believe he's all bark and no bite they are not going to take him home.

SALLY: Ssshh. He'll hear you. And don't say that. There's hope for all of us.

MOLLY: Yeah right.

SALLY: We have to have hope.

MOLLY: Why? What's the point?

SALLY: There's hope for all of us. Pixie found someone.

MOLLY: Pixie is cute. A cute little ball of fluff, that's what they called her. Bruno isn't cute. Bruno is just scary. And what about us? Who's going to want us? 'Cannot be separated' That's what it says about us. Who is going to want to take both of us? I mean, look at you. You're on your last legs Sally. Sorry to be blunt about it but it's true.

SALLY: You wouldn't go without me would you? *(Pause.)* Molly?

(A human, seen only by the dogs, leads SAM to his kennel, then exits.)

SAM: *(Spoken at a furious pace:)* Hello Molly, hello Sally, I've been for a walk. I smelt rabbits and I saw birds and, and I saw a squirrel, well I think it was a squirrel, and more rabbits and more birds and, and there was a stick, but I couldn't reach it, but I've remembered where it is, and, and, oh yes, I heard a noise and I forgot I was on a *(It is also acceptable to use "leash":)* lead and I went to run after the noise and Catherine, she was walking me, said "Oh Sam" just like that, you know, "Oh Sam," and I looked up at her and she just laughed so I know she didn't mind, but I've remembered where the stick was and, and...

SALLY: You've been for a walk have you, Sam?

SAM: Yes, oh I love walks.

SALLY: I think we've gathered that.

SAM: Love them. Has anyone seen my, oh there it is.

(Sam occupies himself with a toy.)

MOLLY: I don't know where he gets his energy.

SALLY: It's in his breeding isn't it? They're supposed to be little bundles of energy.

MOLLY: Yeah, but he never gives it a rest.

SALLY: A bit like you.

MOLLY: What?

SALLY: Will you sit down for God's sake.

MOLLY: Oh.

SALLY: That's better.

BRUNO: (*Suddenly, booming:*) Someone's coming!

SAM: Oh good, good, good.

SALLY: Alright Bruno, thank you.

BRUNO: Someone's coming, someone's coming. I heard a car.

SALLY: They might not be coming into the kennels.

MOLLY: Was it a car or a van?

SALLY: I don't know, I didn't hear. Ask Bruno.

MOLLY: You ask him.

SALLY: Oh Molly!

MOLLY: Please.

BRUNO: Someone's coming.

SALLY: He's fine. Just ask him.

MOLLY: Please.

SALLY: Ask him.

MOLLY: Er. Bruno?

BRUNO: Someone's coming. What?

MOLLY: Would you mind.

BRUNO: What is it?

MOLLY: Well, do you know, er...

BRUNO: Spit it out for God's sake.

MOLLY: Was it a car or a van?

BRUNO: What?

MOLLY: A car or a van.

BRUNO: A car. I think. Or a small van. What does it matter?

MOLLY: Could it have been the van?

BRUNO: The van?

MOLLY: You know. The van.

BRUNO: Oh no. It wasn't the van.

MOLLY: Oh thank God.

SALLY: Happy now?

MOLLY: I'm just not ready. OK. I haven't got used to Pixie going yet. I don't want a stranger moving in just yet.

SALLY: Pixie's only been gone ten minutes. I don't think they'll move someone in today. Anyway, you had better get used to standing up for yourself, if you're thinking of getting out of here without me.

MOLLY: Sally, I didn't...

BRUNO: Someone's coming. Someone's coming.

SALLY: There is as well. Positions, everyone.

(A second human, again only seen by the dogs, walks from one side of the stage to the other, then back during the following dialogue, which should overlap.)

BRUNO: Hello. *(Beat.)* Hello. *(Beat.)* Hello.

SAM: Hello. Hello. Hello. Hello. Hello. Hello. Hello. Hello.

SALLY: Lads, please.

BRUNO: Hello. *(Beat.)* Hello.

SAM: Hello. Hello. Hello. Hello. Hello.

SALLY: For God's sake.

SAM: Hello. Hello.

(The second human exits.)

SALLY: She's gone, Sam.

SAM: Hello. Hello.

SALLY: She's gone.

BRUNO: Wait!

SALLY: Too late — she's gone. Thanks, lads.

SAM: What did I do?

SALLY: Bloody cacophony of sound every time someone walks in here. It's no wonder nobody stays long.

SAM: I just wanted to say hello.

SALLY: I think you just about did that. *(Beat.)* She'll be in the next block now choosing a nice quiet dog.

SAM: I couldn't help it, I just...

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