

Schrodinger's Cat meets Pavlov's Dog

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Characters

CAT – Schrodinger’s Cat

DOG – Pavlov’s Dog

Set in an experimental facility, Schrodinger’s cat is resisting attempts to get it into the infamous box. Enter Pavlov’s dog that mysteriously appears from a neighbouring room and eventually demonstrates to the Cat that the box is indeed harmless but may possess mind altering properties. But is it that simple?

The characters can be any age or sex. Their costume and makeup should suggest what they are without overdoing the look.

A bare room except for a large box upstage left or right. The box may be constructed of stage cubes but must have some form of lid (either hinged or sliding). The back of the box (away from the audience) is open but covered with a curtain and facing in to the wings to allow an actor to get into it unseen. There is also a football and maybe some other “cat” toys. On lights, Cat is standing downstage centre.

CAT: *(Looking up as if towards a balcony)* Is this the silent treatment? I know you’re there. What? Cat got your tongue? *(laughs)* This is not going to work, you know. I’m not going anywhere, especially not in there *(indicates box)*. I might just lie down and clean myself, have a nap, play with this ball but then again, I might not! I’m a cat! I don’t have to do anything I don’t want to do. So whenever you want, just send in the food.

There is a faint buzzing sound from somewhere nearby and shortly after Dog enters

CAT: Where did you come from?

DOG: Where's the food?

CAT: How did you get in here?

DOG: There's always food! Hey wanna play?

Dog starts jumping around excitedly etc

CAT: Woah! Relax. You didn't answer my question.

DOG: You can be my new friend. Hey, you look different to the others (*sniffing Cat*) and you smell funny.

CAT: You can talk.

Dog is still excited

CAT: Sit. Stay. Lets park the "where did you come from" part, we'll get back to that. As for friends, I can see a number of difficulties here. You're a dog, I'm a cat and traditionally we're sworn enemies. We're not meant to be friends.

DOG: I was with you until you mentioned dog.

CAT: That's you.

DOG: What?

CAT: You. You're a dog

DOG: Oh! I didn't know that.

CAT: You're kidding me right?

Dog shrugs

CAT: And I'm a cat.

DOG: Oh right (*shaking head*) No.

CAT: I heard you guys weren't supposed to be smart but this is ridiculous.

DOG: I can chase a ball. Want to see?

CAT: No! I suppose my original question is pointless but I do have to ask. Where did you come from?

Dog shrugs

CAT: Thought so.

DOG: It did look a bit like this place.

CAT: And how did you get in here?

DOG: I didn't know I was coming in here. I just wanted food.

CAT: But how did you get in? There isn't a door.

DOG: Door?

CAT: (*Making broad gestures*) Something that opens up. You step through it to get to somewhere else.

DOG: Oh that! I think I can explain that.

CAT: (*Aside*) This should be good.

DOG: You see suddenly a What did you call it? A door opens.

CAT: Where? How?

DOG: I'm not good on fine detail and I'm not really sure but this has been going on for a while. I can't remember exactly how long but I think

CAT: Just get to the point.

DOG: I'm trying to, if you'll let me.

Cat makes an exasperated sigh

DOG: So, I'm brought into a place that looks a lot like this. I don't have one of those things (*pointing to box*). When they give me food, I'd hear a noise. It's not a nice noise but I've got used to it.

CAT: I've heard a strange noise coming from the next room. It's like a bzzzz (*makes a buzzer noise*)

DOG: That's it! Then after a long time, the noise would come on when there was no food and shortly after that a bright thing lights up on the floor. It's like a like a

CAT: A light!

DOG: That's it. A light! I didn't know what to do for a while. Then I got curious and I went over and pressed on the light. Then the strangest thing happened.

CAT: I can hardly wait!

DOG: This little door? Yeah? This door opens up and inside there's lots of food.

CAT: Hold on! This sounds familiar. What's your name?

DOG: Name?

CAT: What do they call you?

DOG: Yes, exactly.

CAT: What?

DOG: Well you. They call me you. Come here you. You stay. You sit.

CAT: There's a tag around your neck. (*Laughs*) They tried to put one of those on me. They won't do that again!

Makes a swiping claw action

CAT: Let me see.

Cat goes to Dog and inspects name tag

CAT: I knew it. You're Pavlov's dog.

DOG: Who's Pavlov?

CAT: I heard about this. It's some kind of experiment.

DOG: A what?

CAT: It's a way to condition you (*sees Dog is lost*) ... to train you to do things.

DOG: (*Lost*) I get food!

CAT: That's your reward for following the routine. You associate the buzzing sound with food.

DOG: The food is always good.

CAT: You're being forced to do things without realising what you're doing.

DOG: I don't see any food in here.

CAT: Will you just forget about the food.

DOG: I'm hungry!

CAT: You don't have to do this. They'll feed you anyway. They won't let you starve. You're just being used.

DOG: I don't mind. The food is good.

CAT: You're playing their game. That's what they want you to do. Take my advice; never do what they want you to do.

DOG: It doesn't bother me.

CAT: You won't find me following any rules. I know what they want. Well, they can swing for it. (*again talking up as if to a viewing balcony*) Do you hear me? You'll have a long wait!

DOG: Who are they?

CAT: Them .. out there. Watching us. They're probably all in the same club.

DOG: So what happens here?

CAT: What?

DOG: What are they trying to get you to do?

CAT: It's complicated.

DOG: I'd like to know.

CAT: You wouldn't understand.

DOG: Try me.

CAT: OK ... I'll try and keep this simple. You see in my case, it's more of a philosophical question ...

DOG: Philo what?

CAT: Point taken. To put it simply, they want me to go into that box.

DOG: Why?

CAT: That's where it gets philosophical

Dog is puzzled

CAT: Anyhow, I don't want to do it. You see, I know things. I know that I only have a fifty fifty chance of coming out alive.

DOG: I'm not sure what you just said but I think fifty is a big number.

CAT: That's not the point. Anyway, I refuse to get into the box.

DOG: Why?

CAT: I told you it's dangerous.

DOG goes to box and sniffs around it

DOG: Smells Ok to me.

Dog starts to open the lid

CAT: Don't touch that!

DOG: What are you afraid of?

CAT: I told you, you wouldn't understand.

DOG: I'm curious now. I bet there's food in there.

Cat gets an idea – maybe it can use the Dog to find out more

CAT: I suppose it wouldn't do any harm just to have a look.

DOG: Do you think?

CAT: Yeah, why not.

DOG: Alright.

Dog opens the lid ever so slightly and looks in

CAT: Well?

DOG: Can't see much but it looks empty.

CAT: Empty?

DOG: I'll have to open it up fully.

Dog opens the lid fully. Cat prepares for the worst

DOG: Yes empty. Come and have a look.

CAT: No, I'm fine over here.

DOG: It looks a lot bigger on the inside.

CAT: *(Casually)* Try getting into it.

DOG: But you said it was dangerous.

CAT: Maybe I'm wrong about it.

DOG: You get into it then.

CAT: *(Panic)* No! *(settles down, making light)* I mean, I've lost interest now. There might be food.

DOG: But, it's empty.

CAT: But maybe when you go in, you'll be given food.

DOG: How?

CAT: Like in your room. It might be a reward.

DOG: I am hungry.

CAT: You've got nothing to lose.

DOG: Maybe I will *(he thinks)* right, let's do this.

Dog steps into the box and crouchs down

DOG: Nothing.

CAT: You might need to close the lid.

DOG: OK

Dog closes lid. Cat waits

CAT: Well?

No reply. Cat cautiously approaches box

CAT: Hello?

Cat tentatively knocks on box and retreats

CAT: You OK?

DOG: Just trying to get comfortable.

Pause

DOG: Oh wow!

CAT: What is it?

DOG: Oh my God! This is so ... I didn't expect this.

CAT: What is it?

DOG: This is amazing!

CAT: Tell me.

Dog pushes the lid open and steps out. Dog is more upright and confident than before

CAT: Well?

DOG: I know who you are. I know everything.

CAT: What?

DOG: You are Schrodinger's cat and you're afraid to go into the box because you don't know whether you'll be alive or dead when the box is opened.

CAT: How do you know that?

DOG: In the darkness of the box, it was like as if my head opened and all this vast knowledge poured in.

CAT: I don't get it.

DOG: The square of the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides - Pythagorous! Am I right?

CAT: How should I know?

DOG: That box has magical properties. I've acquired so much knowledge in such a short time. Wow! Listen, you don't have to worry, the whole Schrodinger's cat experiment isn't real. It's just a thought experiment to explain some complex concept in quantum

physics.

CAT: You learned all that in there?

DOG: It's amazing and you've been here for ... how long ... and scared of it all that time. You'll have to try it out.

CAT: Try it out?

DOG: Yes. You cats are renowned for your curiosity. I'm sure you want to.

CAT: You want me to get in there?

DOG: You're a clever cat. How much more clever would you be with all this extra knowledge. Go on, try it.

Cat gets suspicious

CAT: Why are you so keen to get me in there?

DOG: I just thought you might like to.

CAT: I get it. Nice try.

DOG: What?

CAT: This was all part of the plan was it?

DOG: Plan?

CAT: Fool me into getting into the box. *(talking up as if to a viewing balcony)* You nearly had me but I'm not going to fall for that one.

DOG: You're just being paranoid now.

CAT: Oooh! Look at you with all your fancy words.

DOG: It's just a box. Get in or don't get in. I don't care. I'm not hanging around here anyway. I'm getting out of here.

CAT: Sure.

DOG: As soon as that buzzer goes off, I'm gone. I've figured out a way to escape. I was going to bring you along but ...

CAT: Escape from the room?

DOG: From the whole place. I'm talking freedom.

CAT: That's impossible.

DOG: I know things now. They manage to keep us here because we're dumb ... or at least they think we're dumb .. but now ...

CAT: What's the plan?

DOG: I can't go into detail. You can come if you want.

CAT: I'm not sure I trust you.

DOG: Your choice. I thought you wanted to get out but maybe you really like it here.

There is a buzzing sound from the next room. Dog looks off

DOG: There it is. The door will be opening shortly. Are you in?

CAT: I don't know.

Dog sees that the door is open offstage

DOG: It's open. I'm going. Follow me if you want but don't wait too long and try to keep up.

Dog exits. Cat looks off thinking, unsure of what to do. Then suddenly decides to go

CAT: Wait for me.

Cat exits. Next set of Cat's dialogue is off stage but would be effective with an echo effect or even pre-recorded

CAT: Where are you? ... It's dark in here ... I can hardly see where I'm going. Wait up, will you ... I thought this was just a doorway into your room ... Come on. Make some noise so I can follow you ... It's getting narrower ... Ow! I've banged my head ... This feels like a dead end ... Wait. There's something here.

The lid on the box opens and Cat appears. Takes a while to register the exact location

CAT: Aarrgh!

*Cat jumps out, leaps around rubbing itself down as if
contaminated ending downstage centre*

CAT: (*Pointing to unseen viewing gallery*) Bastards!

*There is a long loud maniacal laugh over the intercom.
Blackout*

END OF PLAY