

DOGGIN' IT

by Ken Bradbury



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(Cast: 3f, 1m ... Mrs. Ticker and her dog Ralph; Mrs. Fleasley and her dog Chi Chi. If talking dogs are not available in your area, actors may be substituted as long as they seem doggish in their attitude.)

(Scene: The office of Dr. Stopwet's Obedience School for Dogs. Two chairs are in the waiting room.)

MRS. TICKER: *(entering with Ralph, a large dog of indeterminate breed, on a leash. Mrs. Ticker is a rough old gal, fresh from the hills.)* Come, boy. Dog-gone it, Ralph *(looks the place over)* You know, this is exactly why I brung you to a Dog Obedience School! You don't pay attention to a thing I say!

MRS. FLEASLEY: *(at first we hear an loud offstage yipping then Mrs. Fleasley's voice offstage. Mrs. Fleasley is a lady of culture and breeding.)* Oh, please, Chi Chi! Calm down, sweetheart! Listen to mommy, Chi Chi! *(she enters with Chi Chi, a small Pomeranian, on leash.) (as Chi Chi continues to yap)* Chi Chi, you won't get any treats if you don't quiet down and behave! *(sees Mrs. Ticker)* I'm sorry. Chi Chi has a very active personality.

MRS. TICKER: Seems a bit spastic to me.

MRS. FLEASLEY: Chi Chi is not spastic! How dare you say such a thing! She's excitable! All dogs of breeding are excitable.

MRS. TICKER: Ralph ain't. He's just ornery.

MRS. FLEASLEY: Is this the Doggie Obedience School?

MRS. TICKER: Better be. I hope I didn't drag this hound dog up three flights of steps for nothin'.

MRS. FLEASLEY: Hound dog? Oh, Chi Chi, don't look at him. He's a common hound dog!

MRS. TICKER: You got that right. What's the name of your rat?

MRS. FLEASLEY: Chi Chi is a full-blooded Pomeranian!

MRS. TICKER: I'll be switched. Think she'll ever grow?

MRS. FLEASLEY: She's full grown! Pomeranians are small, delicate dogs. (*Chi Chi goes into another fit of yipping*)

MRS. TICKER: Any chance you could shut her up? You're makin' Ralph nervous.

MRS. FLEASLEY: (*covering Chi Chi's ears*) Don't listen to her, Chi Chi! She's a crude, crude woman.

MRS. TICKER: Least I don't keep rats.

MRS. FLEASLEY: We'll just sit right here and pretend like we're all alone.

MRS. TICKER: Far as I'm concerned, you are.

MRS. FLEASLEY: I'm not speaking to you.

MRS. TICKER: What?

MRS. FLEASLEY: I'm not ... (*catches herself*) Stop that!

MRS. TICKER: Whatever you say ... or don't say. I'll just busy myself with pickin' a few fleas. (*and she begins picking at Ralph's fur*)

MRS. FLEASLEY: That is disgusting!

MRS. TICKER: Naw, it ain't bad today. Yesterday I was pickin' 'em out of the soup.

MRS. FLEASLEY: (*covering Chi Chi's ears*) Don't listen to her, Chi Chi! Oh, my poor, poor darling!

(*The ladies sit a moment. Mrs. Ticker picking fleas out of Ralph's hair and Mrs. Ticker gently stroking Chi Chi's head-head.*)

RALPH: (*after a pause ... to Chi Chi. The ladies cannot hear the dogs talking*) So ... this your first time here?

CHI CHI: Naw. She drags me here every week.

RALPH: I see.

CHI CHI: I get around. You?

RALPH: My first. What's an obedience school?

CHI CHI: A doggie shrink. They try to mess with your head.

MRS. FLEASLEY: Chi Chi! Don't get close to him!

MRS. TICKER: Hold still, Ralph. I think I finally got one.

CHI CHI: It's like a game. She brings me here; she pays her money; she feels better. It's therapy for the owner. Doesn't do a thing for the dog.

RALPH: Does it hurt?

CHI CHI: Yeh. Sometimes I start laughing and my collar gets tight.

RALPH: So ... you gonna be free later this evening?

CHI CHI: Whatta ya got in mind, Ralph?

RALPH: Oh, I don't know. Thought I'd chase a few cars, find a good puddle for a little nip, then howl when the moon comes out.

CHI CHI: Sounds like fun.

MRS. FLEASLEY: You're dog is looking at my Chi Chi!

MRS. TICKER: (*indicating the size of Mrs. Fleasey's hips*) If your Chi Chi wasn't so derved big

MRS. FLEASLEY: That's the name of my dog! (*nuzzling Chi Chi and rubbing her ears*) Is the big old ugly doggie bothering Chi Chi?

RALPH: She do that often?

CHI CHI: Yeh. And in public. It's really embarrassing.

MRS. TICKER: Go ahead and bite her if you want to, Ralph.

MRS. FLEASLEY: Oh!

RALPH: Why would I do that?

CHI CHI: They always talk that way. Humor her. I do. (*Ralph growls.*)

MRS. FLEASLEY: He's attacking! He's attacking!

CHI CHI: Nice work.

RALPH: I can growl real good. Always impresses people.

MRS. FLEASLEY: (*standing and looking off*) When is Dr. Stopwet going to call us?

RALPH: Nervous sort ain't she?

CHI CHI: I give her an excuse to live. Watch this. (*Chi Chi begins yelping*)

MRS. FLEASLEY: Oh, my poor baby! (*falls to her knees and hugs Chi Chi*)

CHI CHI: Is that too cute or what?

RALPH: Wonder if it'd work for me?

CHI CHI: Try it. (*Ralph howls.*)



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