

PAWS AND CLAWS

Melody (a cat) sits on a wall (anywhere elevated!). Jack (a dog) enters and calls out to her, unaware of where she is.

Jack Melody? Melody? Are you there? I've brought you a sugar mouse.

Melody Oh, how sweet! Come on up.

Jack Up there? That high up?

Melody You're not scared, are you?

Jack Of course not.

Melody Jump up then, there's plenty of room.

Jack tries to jump up a few times, but each time fails rather miserably and ends up looking a bit silly.

Melody Hey, did you hear about the dog who couldn't jump a wall?

Jack No.

Melody He never got over it.

Jack Ha ha. Maybe if I took a run up.

He retreats, then begins to run towards the wall.

Melody No, wait, you'll hurt yourself. I'll come down.

Melody climbs down from the wall as gracefully as possible. She approaches Jack a little cautiously. Jack hands her the sugar mouse.

Jack Here you go.

Melody Thank you. It's very thoughtful of you.

Jack I thought you might be hungry. Sorry it's not a real one, they're really hard to catch.

Melody Did you try? Just for me?

Jack Yes.

Melody Wow, you really aren't like other dogs I've met.

Jack Have you met many?

Melody No, not really. Not properly. We're meant to hate you, you see. Fury tells everyone to hate dogs, so everyone hates dogs. All dogs.

Jack But that's so stupid. Dogs aren't all alike. There are Dachshunds and Spaniels and Greyhounds and Chihuahuas. Hundreds of types. And even then each dog is different.

Melody It's the same with cats. Persian, Manx, Siamese, Cornish Rex. Most of us are nothing like each other.

Jack But you do like sitting in the sun, all cats like that.

Melody Of course. We're solar powered you see.

Jack And you all like walking along fences.

Melody I wouldn't say I particularly like that, but I can do it if I need to, yes. What about dogs, though, why do you all like sniffing each other's bottoms? That seems really odd to me.

Jack I guess it's our way of talking to each other.

Melody Oh. *(pause)* Aren't you talking to the wrong end?

Jack Um ...

Melody And you all chase after sticks. Isn't that an extraordinary waste of energy?

Jack Oh yes, definitely. But it keeps the humans happy. We like to humour them.

(Voice Offstage) Fetch!

Jack turns instinctively to chase after the stick, then stops himself and turns back around.

Jack Sorry, force of habit. Yes, we love humouring the humans.

Melody Us too. It's our favourite pastime.

Jack Let's face it, dogs and cats are practically the same compared to people.

Melody That's just what I was thinking. We've all got tails, haven't we? We've all got four legs.

Jack It's only our name which is different; what's in a name?

Melody Milk by any other name would taste as sweet.

Jack A bone would feel as hard.

Melody Precisely.

Jack Exactly.