

WHO 'S A GOOD BOY?
by
Anthony Wood

Copyright 2015

OPEN: Lights up as noir-ish music plays. There are two chairs on stage

REX stands center stage.

REX

It was a day like any other. The sun rises, the birds sing, you pee on a tree, roll in some feted manure and get on with your routine. Dig up a bone, chase a car, bury a bone, take a nap. That's what I thought I was in for that fateful morning. But it's a dog eat dog world out there. The trick is figuring out that age old question; which dog are you?

Rex lifts his leg as if to mark the area.

REX (CONT'D)

My name's Rex, I'm a Golden Retriever.

Music swells.

REX (CONT'D)

On the morning of July 17th my master took me to the New Highland Kennel Club Dog Show. Now don't get me wrong. I'm not one of those high falutin', bath a week, silky breeder babies who chase after blue ribbons like they're prime New York Strip Steak. I don't play that game. I guess the old master just wanted me to see how the other half scratched. I had just finished licking my scrotum when she walked into my kennel and into my life.

Enter SASHA. She seems flustered and upset.

SASHA

Are you Rex?

REX

Maybe I am.

SASHA

You find lost things?

REX

Maybe I do.

SASHA

Can you help me?

REX

Maybe I can.

SASHA

You're full of a lot of "maybe's."

REX

I'm full of a lot of things, baby.
Nothing a good worming wouldn't
clear up.

He approaches her. They circle one another sniffing each other's butt.

REX (CONT'D)

After sniffing her butt I told her
to "sit."

(He commands. She sits.)

She seemed okay. A little high
strung, but hey, what Poodle isn't.
Her name was Sasha, although
officially it was "Heavenly Sasha
of the Milky Way." Show dogs...go
figure.

SASHA

I need you to help me find
something. It's valuable...very
valuable.

REX

And what is this "valuable thing?"

SASHA

It's a ball.

Rex sits upright, alert. His head darts around.

REX

Ball? Where? Where's the ball?
Where's the ball? Where?

SASHA

It's not here. I told you it's
missing.

Rex sits back, a bit embarrassed.

REX
Right...sorry.

SASHA
That's okay...I do it, too.

REX
Can you describe this ball?

SASHA
Well, it was a yellow-green color.
It was soft on the outside and kind
of fuzzy.

REX
Uh-huh.

SASHA
It bounced pretty high. It was
soaked with slobber and old rain
water.

REX
Uh-huh.

SASHA
The fuzzy cover was torn back. I
bit into it as best I could.
(Getting agitated.)
I had a feeling something is inside
of that damn thing, something
important. I just needed more time
to get at it.

REX
When was the last time you saw the
ball?

SASHA
Yesterday. I was playing our
favorite game with my master.
He throws the ball, I go get it. He
throws it again, I go get it. He
throws it, I go
get it. He throws it, I go get it.
He throws it, I get it.

REX
Uh-huh. And if he threw it again?

SASHA
(Shrugging.)
I guess I'd probably go get it. But
then this last time he threw it,
(MORE)

SASHA (CONT'D)

I chased all over the yard, but I couldn't find it, couldn't even smell it.

(Thoughtful pause.)

At least I think he threw it.

REX

I'm sure he did. They always throw it.

SASHA

Can you help me?

REX

No problem, Sweetheart. I'll have your fuzzy ball back before you can rollover.

SASHA

(Standing.)

I knew you could help me, Rex. They said you were the best.

REX

That's why I get the all-meat biscuits, baby.

Light change. Sasha exits.

REX (CONT'D)

Aiee-Chihuahua... "A yellow-green fuzzy ball that bounces." Doesn't sound too common. Should be easy to sniff out. I went to my first and best resource, a cock-eyed little mongrel named Nipper. When he wasn't digging holes or humping the nearest shin, Nipper was in on all that was of interest to the K-9 crowd. If Nipper didn't know it, it wasn't worth knowing.

Enter NIPPER. He is a bit cock-eyed and dim. Rex approaches him. They touch noses. They put up their hands like they're going to shake, but it looks more like that "give me your paw" trick. Nipper then circles around Rex and starts humping him from behind.

REX (CONT'D)

Okay, Nipper, that's enough, huh?

Nipper stands off to the side, agitated.

NIPPER

Sorry, Rex.

REX

Your master's been keeping you away from the folded laundry, huh?

NIPPER

Hey, hey, hey, don't get down on my masters, okay? They're the best. They take good care of me. They feed me, they wash me, they had my balls cut off...you know. A guy could have it worse.

REX

Maybe. I need to know what you know about a lost little item.

NIPPER

What kind of item?

REX

A ball.

NIPPER

(Alert.)

Really? Where? Where is it? Where is it?

REX

Calm down. I told you it was lost. Now what can you tell me?

NIPPER

Hmm, let's see. Was it a fuzzy ball? Yellow-green with a torn cover?

REX

That's the one. Have you seen it?

NIPPER

Maybe...maybe not.

REX

All right, Nips. What's your angle?

NIPPER

Angle? What angle?

REX

You want me to grease your paw
before you cough up the info.
So...what do you want?

NIPPER

Okay, first I want some beef
snacks, real liver, not that all
cereal stuff. And chewy, too, yeah,
real chewy.

REX

You got it.

NIPPER

And I want some good wet dung to
roll in. Stinky. Not like that
dried out crap you got for me last
time. That stuff was a week old, it
was almost white. It was like
rollin' on hand grenades.

REX

I'll see what I can do.

Nipper looks around nervously.

NIPPER

Yeah, okay, I seen that ball. It
rolled by here yesterday. If I
wasn't chained to the wash line I
would'a grabbed it myself.

REX

So where is it now?

NIPPER

Last I seen, it went down the
sidewalk...by Mitzie's place.

Music. Nipper exits. MITZIE enters. She is worn out and
forlorn.

REX

Mitzie...there's a name I hadn't
heard in sixty-three dog years.
Mitzie was a racing Greyhound. When
I first met her she'd just retired.
Let me tell you, when they say
those Greyhounds move fast, they
ain't just throwin' you a bone. One
sniff of my anal sacks and she was
on me like stink on old panties.

(MORE)

REX (CONT'D)

If it wasn't for her bald-headed neighbor and his bucket of cold water, we'd still be hooked up right now.

Rex approaches Mitzie

REX (CONT'D)

Hello, Mitzie.

MITZIE

Well, well...Rex the Wonder Dog. I always knew someday you'd come trottin' back into my kennel.

REX

You look good.

MITZIE

I look tired...worn out...past my prime. I was the fastest thing on four paws at Dairyland, now look at me. I'm old...gray...hip displacia. One good wind comes up and I'm gonna be blown into the street and under a recycling truck.

(a pause.)

So...what do you want?

REX

You know what I want. I want the ball.

MITZIE

(Alert.)

Ball? There's a ball? What ball?

REX

The yellow-green, fuzzy, slobber-soaked ball that came rolling by here yesterday. And don't tell me you didn't see it.

MITZIE

So...you workin' for that dressed up bimbo Poodle, huh? You sad, pathetic little Schnauzer. And to think I wanted to have your puppies.

Rex steps up and slaps her on the nose with a rolled up newspaper. She whines.

REX

Look at you, all hopped up on Liv-A-Snaps and wet Alpo. You probably couldn't track a skunk in your own garage. So don't go callin' me pathetic, Lassie. You're so out of it I wouldn't bet on you if you were racing against road kill.

MITZIE

You always were a sweet talker. You seem to be going to an awful lot of trouble just to find a measly, yellow-green ball.

REX

You know where it is, or don't you?

MITZIE

I got a better idea, Sparky. Why don't you go ask Sir Ralph?

Music.

Exit Mitzie. Enter RALPH.

REX

Sir Ralph...Or, "Sir Ralph Waldo Emmer-Happy, Hero of Green Gable Farms" as the jet setting show people called him. A top champion Bulldog five years running. This bag of hair had enough winning ribbons to re-paper the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. He's been washed, fluffed, blow-dried and combed at every major kennel club show in the country. And this drooler's got an ego as big as the all outdoors. He waddles around on his well manicured, Kentucky bluegrass lawn like his shit doesn't stink. Well let me tell you, I've been all up and down his sidewalk...it does.

RALPH

Oh goodness me, look what the cat dragged in.

REX

Spare me the witticisms, wrinkles. Where is it?

RALPH
Whatever do you mean?

REX
I want the ball.

RALPH
(Alert.)
Ball? I don't see a ball. Who said anything about a ball?

REX
It's the missing, yellow-green fuzzy ball, and I want it. Now you hand it over, Percy, before I turn you into a throw rug!

RALPH
(Laughing.)
You poor, misguided cur. Look around you. I live in the great, wide lap of Doggy Heaven. I am a champion. I have a fenced in yard, heated kennel and every chew toy imaginable. I have rubber balls, plastic balls, wooden balls, chew-safe frisbees, latex bones, rawhide bones, pig ears, squeaky toys and a Mister Buddy-Bear. What would I want with some torn, worn out old piece of rubber fuzz? You're beginning to bore me Rex. Ta-ta, and don't squirt the hydrant on your way out.

Rex grabs Ralph menacingly.

REX
Now you listen to me and listen good, Mr. Slobbers. If I don't see you come up with a yellow-green, bouncy, half-torn ball in five seconds, I'm gonna-

Sasha enters.

SASHA
--going to do what, Rex?

Rex and Ralph step back, stunned.

REX
Sasha...

She pulls out the tennis ball from behind her back.

SASHA
Is this what you're looking for?

REX
Holy moly, the ball! You had it
the whole time. I was lookin' all
over high heaven for it.

SASHA
(She laughs.)
I know.

REX
But why, baby? Why make me run
around town, chasin' my tail if I
didn't have to?

Sasha laughs again and walks downstage center, facing the audience.

SASHA
Because I can.

REX
I don't get it.

SASHA
I've spent the last three years
chasing this ball...or a ball just
like it. Up and down the yard, mile
after mile after mile. Day after
endless day.
Then, one morning, after the ninety-
third throw, I suddenly realized
something...

She holds the ball up over her head. Ralph and Rex stare at it, transfixed.

SASHA (CONT'D)
(continued.)
...the ball is power.

As she continues to speak towards the audience she moves the ball around in the air. Of course, Rex and Ralph, standing behind her, follow its' every move with their eyes.

SASHA (CONT'D)
(continued.)
It might go one way...It might go
another...It could go up...
or down.

(MORE)

SASHA (CONT'D)

Round and round she goes...Over and under and all around. Whoever holds the ball, holds the ultimate power. It's a power you can keep and guard and own for all eternity...Or, you could just throw it away.

On the word "throw" she mock throws the ball towards the audience and turns quickly away. Rex and Ralph run downstage looking for the ball. They scan the area, making sure they didn't miss it.

Sasha starts to exit upstage. She holds out the ball and chuckles.

SASHA (CONT'D)

(continued.)

Bye-bye, fellas. See you at the park.

She exits, laughing. Ralph and Rex look at one another. Ralph hangs his head and exits.

REX

So that was it. I was double-crossed. Bamboozled by a dame who had puffy, sculptural orbs shaved into her tail. Now she holds all the cards. She could throw it, and I might chase it...who knows? Sometimes I think I don't have a choice in the matter. Pretty depressing to think my whole life can be controlled by some stupid little yellow-green ball rolling through the grass. It may not be a happy ending but, hey, it's a dog's life.

Rex starts to exit, then turns back to the audience.

REX (CONT'D)

(continued.)

Oh and, by the way...
(He points to his crotch.)
We do it 'cause we can.

He sits and starts licking his crotch.

Music up.

Lights out.

THE END