Fur Heaven’s Sake

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Characters:

Doctor Schnibbles (male) – Hoity-toity, married to female Dr. Schnibbles (and science)

Doctor Schnibbles (female) – Hoity-toity, married to male Dr. Schnibbles (and science)

Lady Margerie von Schnibbles (dog) – Very excitable, as you would expect a satirical dog to be

Sir Rufus von Schnibbles (cat) – Cold, aloof, as you would expect a satirical cat to be

Devon – Doctors Schnibbles’ publicity manager, very political in his social interactions

Clark Olsen – a reporter who is very enthusiastic, but also very political

Reporters (2) – other reporters ask questions throughout the press conference scene

Synopsis:

Doctor and Doctor Schnibbles have just made a huge discovery in the field of astrophysics. On the morning of their press conference, another discovery is made in the Schnibbles household. Having switched bodies with their owners, the Schnibbles’ dog and cat must take their places in the press conference.

Setting:

Fur Heaven’s Sake takes place in modern day. There are two locations: the Schnibbles household, and the press conference.
Scene 1: (Sir Rufus von Schnibbles is center stage, grooming himself. Lady Margerie von Schnibbles runs in, very excited.)

Margerie: The humans are home! The humans are home!!!

Rufus (not amused in the slightest): (heavy sigh) Margerie, why are you always so excited about the humans being home?

Margerie: The humans are the greatest thing in the whole wide world!!!

Rufus: The humans come home every day. It’s never different. It’s never new. There’s nothing exciting about it. Besides. If they were the greatest things in the world, they wouldn’t have given us such ridiculous names.

Margerie: (stops dead) I love my name.

Rufus: …seriously?

Margerie: And you should love your name too! It’s so…regal!

Rufus: There is nothing good about my name.

Margerie: Sir Rufus von Schnibbles. You will never find anyone who has a better name than you!

Rufus (patronizingly): But what about your name? Lady Margerie von Schnibbles, why, that almost makes me jealous!

Margerie (giddily): Heh heh, it is a pretty great name…

(Enter Doctor and Doctor Schnibbles, Margerie goes bananas again)

Margerie: Doctor Schnibbles! Doctor Schnibbles! I missed you so much! You’re my favorite people ever! I thought you were never going to come back! I love you so much! How was your day? Mine was boring! But now it’s great!

Male Doctor Schnibbles: Yes, hello, my dear Lady Margerie von Schnibbles, we’re home. I trust you kept the house safe? (incredibly condescending chuckle)

Female Doctor Schnibbles: Oh, there’s my Sir Rufus von Schnibbles! (reaches toward Rufus, Rufus pulls away slightly, they both freeze)

(Beat)

Rufus: Alright, you may greet me. (F. Doctor Schnibbles pets Rufus’ head for a second, Rufus enjoying himself, then suddenly: ) You’re done. (walks away, continues grooming himself)
F Dr. S.: (going over to M. Dr. Schnibbles and Margerie) and Lady Margerie, how are we today? You seem excited! Someone must have told you about our big discovery!

Margerie (overcome by excitement): Discovery?? What discovery did you make?! Was it cool?? I bet it was cool! What’s your discovery?? Woof!

M Dr. S.: I’m glad you asked, Lady Margerie. Your mother and I discovered a whole new planet! And I bet you’ll never guess where.

Margerie (spinning around): A whole planet?? That’s so cool!! Woof!! In another galaxy? In another solar system? In another universe?? Woof!!

F Dr. S.: That’s right! It was right here in orbit between Earth and Mars this whole time!

(Margerie’s excitement immediately stops, as she gets a look of astonishment and suspiciousness, Rufus looks at the humans slowly, as though he were saying “how could you be so stupid, I thought you were Doctors” with his face)

F Dr. S.: Margerie, what’s the matter? She’s completely stopped wagging her tail. Can’t she tell how exciting this is?

M Dr. S.: Well, she is just a dog after all.

(Margerie looks over at Rufus like “are they serious?”)

F Dr. S.: I suppose. Ah well, it’s time we ought to go to bed! Big day tomorrow.

M Dr. S.: Yes, it will be! We’d better be well-rested for our big press conference about the new planet.

(Exeunt Doctors Schnibbles)

Margerie: (going over toward Rufus) …are they serious? How is there an entire planet so close to Earth that no one has ever seen before?

Rufus: (sigh) I don’t know…humans always impress me with their lack of wit. Ah well, we can’t all have my dizzying intellect.

Margerie: (oozing with sarcasm) Yes…too bad we haven’t all come to believe that the red dot is the root of all evil and must be stopped…

Rufus: You know how I feel about that red dot! I’m telling you…one of these days…

Margerie: Alright, alright, you have your fantasies (Rufus is steaming). In the meantime, I’m going to bed. I’ve got a long day of waiting for the humans to come home ahead of me.

(Scene)
Scene 2: (Lady Margerie von Schnibbles is center stage, curled up in a ball, asleep. She is no longer a dog, she is now a human. Sir Rufus von Schnibbles enters, looking at his hands, feet, clothes, etc., in utter disgust of what terrible curse has befallen him.)

Rufus (frantically whispering): Margerie. Maaargeriiieee. Margerie!

(Margerie shoots up, startled)

Margerie: Ah! Wha—Who are you??? What are you doing in my house! I must protect my house! The humans must be safe!

Rufus: Shhh! Shhhhhhh! It’s me, dimwit!

Margerie: …Rufus?

Rufus: Yes!

Margerie: (smelling him) You don’t smell like Ru—where is my nose?!?!

Rufus: Shhhhhhhhhhh! It’s there! It’s…just…human…

Margerie: (looking incredibly skeptical) What do you mean it’s human?

Rufus: I don’t know what happened, but all I do know is that when I went into the humans’ room this morning to check on the reflective portal to another dimension where my arch nemesis lives, instead of him, it was another human! I tried to scratch him, but then I saw my hand! And it was a hand! I’m beginning to think that instead of a portal to another dimension, it may just show me my reflection, but I’m still working on that theory. In any case, I was freaked out!

Margerie: So what did you do?

Rufus: What could I do? I curled my back up, hissed, and ran out before anyone could see me.

Margerie: Makes sense.

Rufus: …you seem remarkably unfazed by this…event.

Margerie: Well, it helped seeing you first. And frankly, I smell waaaaaay better as a human.

Rufus: Fair. Wait. The humans!

Margerie (overcome with excitement): Yes! We’ll finally be able to talk to them!!

Rufus: No, that’s not what I mean! What happened to them! If we turned into humans, what did they turn into??

Margerie: Huh…I didn’t even think of that…
(A woman’s scream can be heard in the background, followed by a bark)

M. Dr. S. (also off-stage): Upon my word! (hissing)

Rufus and Margerie: (remarkably calm, in such a way like ‘yeah, this might as well happen’) She’s a dog. He’s a cat.

F. Dr. S. (still off-stage): We simply cannot go to the press conference like this!

M. Dr. S. (still off-stage): We’ll just have to miss it and (coughs up a fur ball) reschedule…

Margerie: Did you hear that?? They’re going to miss the conference! After all the hard work they’ve done! We can’t let that happen!

Rufus: Can’t we?

Margerie (shocked): Of course not! Don’t you care about them at all??

Rufus: I care about them plenty. But what do we know about their new planet?

Margerie: Umm…umm…well…it’s probably big! And…and… it’s between Earth and Mars! And…well…uhh…they discovered it!

Rufus (sarcastically): Wow. I was wrong. We might as well be experts.

Margerie: Ohhhhhh! Why won’t you just come with me?

Rufus: It’s much comfier here. (sits down, gets comfortable)

Margerie: Well, ya know, with them being a cat and a dog and all, no one’s going to be able to get you your precious warm milk! (Rufus looks slightly disturbed by this revelation) And if you’re going to get up for warm milk, you might as well get up and go to the press conference.

Rufus: (pause, while considering what Margerie has said) Now, don’t get me wrong, I see a great flaw in that logic. But I have to admit, I do have respect for the way you just used my own laziness against me…alright, your argument compels me. What the hell. Let’s go.

Margerie (in utter excitement): Oh boy oh boy oh boy! Go for a ride in the car! I love riding in the car!!

(Scene)

Scene 3: (Rufus and Margerie arrive at the press conference. They are greeted by their publicity manager, Devon.)

Devon: You’re late! You were supposed to be here a half an hour ago! What happened?
(Margerie and Rufus look at each other, Margerie opens her mouth to respond)

Devon: Never mind. You’re here now. Come. Come!

(Rufus stands there for a moment, defiant, Margerie excitedly begins to hurry after Devon. After realizing how each other are acting, they compose themselves and follow Devon.)

(Before they reach their seats, they are greeted by Clark Olsen.)

Clark: Hello, Doctors Schnibbles! So pleased to meet you! Clark Olsen! (offers his hand)

(Margerie and Rufus look at each other, confused)

Devon (aside, to Margerie and Rufus): Shake his hand!

(Rufus looks disgusted and turns away from Clark)

Devon: Shake it!

(Margerie, suddenly very excited, begins to wag her butt and pant, sits down, and holds out her hand like a paw. Clark looks a little confused, but takes her hand and shakes it. Margerie stands up, looking very proud of herself. Devon looks confused and concerned, but he shakes it off)

Devon: Alright, well, let’s take our seats now. (they sit at the conference table. To the reporters:) We will take questions now.

(Reporters chatter as they all seek to be called on. Margerie and Rufus look a bit overwhelmed at the sudden change in volume)

Devon: Umm, yes, you. In the orange sweater.

Reporter 1: Thank you. Doctor Schnibbles, Doctor Schnibbles, how will this new planet affect the Earth’s tidal patterns? Is it something for beachgoers to be concerned about?

Rufus (aside to Margerie): They know the planet has been there this whole time, right? It’s not like it’s a new planet that is suddenly going to make all these changes.

Margerie: I had not considered that.

Rufus: (rolls his eyes, turns back to the audience) Meow meow meow—(covers mouth with hand, looks frantically at Margerie)

Margerie: (nervously laughs, turns to the audience as though to explain what Rufus meant) Woof woof woof woof woof—(slaps hand over mouth, looks frantically at Rufus)

Rufus (aside to Margerie): Why can’t we speak human??
Margerie *(aside to Rufus)*: I don’t know! We’re humans, we should be able to, right?

Rufus: Well, yeah! I assumed so!

Margerie: Well, what do humans say?

Rufus: Uhh…uhh…

Margerie *(turns back to the crowd, as though to say something profound)*: Good girl. Who’s a good girl? You are.

Rufus *(painfully hopelessly and hopefully)*: Want some warm milk?

*(The reporters are silent, Devon is looking at Margerie and Rufus as though they each have three heads)*

Reporter 1: Umm…thanks? I’m all set…but about the gravity…?

Margerie *(aside to Rufus)*: It didn’t work!

Rufus: I know it didn’t work! What else do humans say?

Margerie: You said the gravity won’t be affected, right?

Rufus: Of course not, that would mean—

Margerie: I’ve got it. I’ve heard this one a lot. *(back to the reporters, very firmly)* No! No no no no no! No!

*(Reporters look a bit confused, look at Devon, who also looks confused and concerned, shrug it off and begin scribbling in their notepads)*

Margerie *(to Rufus)*: Heh. It worked. *(Rufus facepalms)*

Devon: …next question? Please?

*(Reporters chatter again, Devon and Margerie look at each other, Margerie nods to affirm that Devon doesn’t need to continue selecting reporters)*

Margerie: Umm…you. Who smells like bananas and peanut butter. *(reporters look confused)* Um…I mean…with the yellow shirt…

Reporter 2: Doctor Schnibbles,—

Margerie and Rufus: Yes?

Reporter 2: Uhh…well…you’re both Doctor…could we have your first names, so that we could distinguish which of you is which?
Rufus: Of course. My name is…(pause, turns frantically to Margerie, who turns back to him, confused)

Margerie (to rufus): What’s the matter?

Rufus: What are their names??

Margerie: Oh my gosh…I have no idea! They never say each other’s names when they’re around us!

Rufus: I don’t think I’ve ever heard their names in my entire life!

Margerie: What do we do??

Rufus: I don’t know…make up a name!

Margerie: Make one up?

Rufus: Yeah! A human name! What are some human names?

Reporter 2: Umm…excuse me? Doctors?

Margerie: (looking frantically back and forth between Rufus and the reporter, suddenly she puts an air of calm and confidence, definitely being very smooth in the process) My name…is Lady Margerie von Schnibbles.

Rufus: (sighing so hard he almost hurts himself. The attention shifts to him, and he reluctantly offers:) Uhh…Sir Rufus von Schnibbles…

(Reporters erupt into chatter, begging to be called on)

Rufus (still disappointed in Margerie and himself): Yes, Clark.

Clark: Umm…Sir Rufus… (Throughout this line, Rufus gets bored listening to Clark, notices Devon’s water bottle on the table, and simply has to knock it off. He has to reach over Margerie to do so, and as he does, Margerie notices what is going on and tries to stop him. She fails in stopping him, and he finally knocks it off the table, feeling immense satisfaction in himself. About the time he sits back down, Clark has finished his question.) We at the Weekly Moon were wondering if there’s any possibility of this new planet disrupting any of the astrological or geological trends we’ve been seeing in the past. Is there any chance Earth’s orbit will change at all, or perhaps mountains will be pulled upwards under the gravity of the new planet, growing at a faster rate? Is it possible that the new planet will pull on the floors of the ocean, causing the ocean floor to become level with continental ground, causing the seas to overflow? (Devon is completely shocked and appalled at Rufus’ behavior)

Rufus (now realizing that Clark had been speaking): Uhh…could you repeat the question?
Clark (looking exasperated): Umm…well, we were wondering if the gravity of the new planet—

Rufus: Oh, right, that. I remember why I stopped listening. That’s ridiculous. The planet isn’t new, we just haven’t seen it before. We have always been feeling the effects of its gravity, we just never factored it into the tidal patterns, etc., that we see every day.

Margerie (to Rufus): Ooooooooh! You even sound like you know what you’re talking about!

Rufus: You’re right! This is going better than I thought!

Margerie: I think we can do this!

Rufus: Yeah!

Margerie: Yes, you, in the dark skirt.

(Scene)

Scene 4: (Back at home, Rufus and Margerie arrive back from the press conference, exhausted)

Margerie: Oof, what a day! (plops down)

Rufus: Seriously, who knew being a human was so hard. I figured they just disappeared for most of the day until they came home. For all I knew, they simply ceased to exist.

Margerie (very serious and sad): That’s my greatest fear…

Rufus: Uhh…hey…do you, uhh…do you want a treat?

Margerie (her eyes light up with tired appreciation): A treat sounds wonderful. While we’re at it, want some warm milk?

Rufus: I’d like that.

(They get each other their respective delicacies, and they begin enjoying them)

Rufus and Margerie: (as this line goes on, they both begin to realize the other is saying the same thing and both escalate in excitement) Wow. This is so much easier with thumbs! (amused by each other)

(They continue to smile, and continue to enjoy their treats. After a beat, both of their faces drop, as they come to the same realization)

Rufus and Margerie: The humans.

(They both spring up to head toward the Doctors’ bedroom, and they are met at the door by the Doctors, who are a cat and a dog)
F. Dr. S.: Where have you been all day? You had us worried sick!

M. Dr. S.: Car gone, no note! You could have died! You could have been seen!

(Rufus and Margerie look at each other)

Rufus: Well, we went to your press conference and stood in for you.

Margerie: It went really well!

Rufus: Yeah, it did!

M. Dr. S. (in utter shock and disbelief): You two can talk?

(Margerie and Rufus are taken aback by this statement, beat)

Margerie: Really?

Rufus: The problem you have with this situation is that the two beings who are currently humans can talk?

F. Dr. S.: I will not have any excuses, young man!

Rufus: Excuses, wha—

Margerie: Scratch behind her ear.

Rufus: What?

Margerie: Scratch behind her ear. Dogs love that. You can completely derail a dog’s entire train of thought by scratching behind their ear.

Rufus: Uhh…(begins scratching behind F. Dr. S.’s ear, F Dr. S. immediately melts, ultimately curling up on the floor)

M. Dr. S.: Excuse me, I am very patiently awaiting an explanation.

Margerie: Uhh…

Rufus: (picks up a piece of paper) Here. Put this on his head.

Margerie: Why?

Rufus: Just do it. He’ll totally short-circuit.

(Margerie places the piece of paper on M. Dr. S.’s head, M. Dr. S. does that cat thing where it freezes and stares intently at what it has on its head, completely immobilized)
Rufus: Wow. As much as I know I hate it when it happens to me, it really is remarkably entertaining.

(Margerie and Rufus watch for a bit)

Rufus: I wonder if we’ll ever switch back. Or if we do, I wonder how long it will be.

Margerie: Probably until the next shooting star we see.

Rufus: …what?

Margerie: Then we can wish that we were all back to normal!

Rufus: …………what?

Margerie: Silly cat, how do you think we got this way?

Rufus: ……………what??

Margerie: Last night, I saw a shooting star, and I wished I could help the humans have an awesome day today in any way possible.

Rufus: And the star decided that meant we should take their places??

Margerie: I may have said “I wish we could switch bodies with the humans.” I’ve always wanted to try the whole walking around on two legs thing. Oh, and thumbs! (looks intently at thumbs, wiggling them around, looks back up at Rufus)

Rufus: Great! What are we supposed to do now? We’re stuck like this until we see another shooting star??

Margerie: Hmm…I hadn’t thought of that…

(Rufus, steaming, can only utter syllables of frustration)

Margerie (slightly concerned and confused): You look upset.

Rufus: Do I??

Margerie: Yup.

Rufus: (takes a breath, calms himself) Well why don’t you take your dog and go play?

Margerie: Sure! (turns to F. Dr. S.) Wanna go play?? Wanna go downstairs and play?? (F. Dr. S. gets up excitedly, runs toward the stairs) Good girl! Let’s go—what on earth is your name??

(F. Dr. S. and Margerie Exeunt)
(Rufus goes over to M. Dr. S, sits down on the floor next to him, takes the piece of paper off his head, and begins stroking his head)

Rufus: See, this is why we don’t ever let the dogs make the decisions.

Fin