

**CASA BOW-WOW**

by

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## CASA BOW-WOW

### Characters

COUNTESS ILSA INGRID AV HUSET AV SVENSK PANNKAKA SMINK, female, a 2-year-old Swedish Vallhund.

RICK, male, a three-year-old Labrador Retriever, her former lover.

LOUIS, male, a three-year-old Portuguese Water Dog, his friend.

LASZLO, male, 30s-50s, Ilsa's master.

MARIE, female, 20s-30s, assistant to Mr. Laszlo.

DOORMAN, male, 30s-60s.

MAN WITH THE NET, male, 30s-60s.

### Time

During the war.

### Setting

A hotel entrance and wooded grounds nearby.

**CASA BOW-WOW**

*Lights up on a hotel entrance at night. A hedge and some bushes to the side remain in darkness. A DOORMAN uses a telephone near the entrance.*

DOORMAN

Hello. Bring up Mr. Laszlo's car, please. Thank you.

*DOORMAN hangs up and moves to open the hotel door. LASZLO emerges with ILSA on a leash, with MARIE following. ILSA prances, eager to be free of confinement.*

LASZLO

*(To DOORMAN, indicating ILSA.)*

Paulo, would you take her where she can do her business?

DOORMAN

Certainly Mr. Laszlo, anything you say.

*(To ILSA.)*

Come on, girl, let's make wee-wee.

*DOORMAN takes ILSA's leash from LASZLO and escorts her to the bushes. MARIE takes some papers out of a briefcase.*

MARIE

I hope you don't mind, Mr. Laszlo, I filled in the name on the entry form. To make it official.

LASZLO

You think of everything, don't you?

MARIE

*(Grandly.)*

Only the best for the Countess Ilsa Ingrid av Huset av Svensk Pannkaka Smink.

*MARIE hands the papers to LASZLO and exits. LASZLO examines the form as lights go down on the hotel entrance and up on the bushes, where DOORMAN waits on the end of ILSA's leash, smoking a cigarette. ILSA perks up.*

ILSA

My name! I heard my master say my name. I wonder what it could mean.

*RICK sticks his head out of the bushes. ILSA notices him, but DOORMAN does not.*

ILSA (CONT'D)

Did you hear it, Richard? My name. But why my name?

RICK

Because you're getting in that car.

*RICK comes out of the bushes, followed by LOUIS, who wanders around, sniffing haphazardly. DOORMAN remains oblivious.*

ILSA

*(Confused.)*

I don't understand. What about you?

RICK

I'm staying here with Louis 'til the car gets safely away.

ILSA

*(Rick's intention suddenly dawns on Ilsa.)*

No, Richard, no. What has happened to you? Last night we arfed--

RICK

--Last night we arfed a great many things. You arfed that you wanted me to do the thinking for both of us. Well, I've done that and it all leads to one conclusion: You're getting in that car with Mr. Laszlo where you belong.

ILSA

*(Protesting.)*

But Richard, no, I, I--

RICK

--You got to listen to me, Ilsa. Do you have any idea what you'd be looking at if you stayed here? Nine chances out of ten we'd both wind up in the Casa Bow-Wow animal pound. Isn't that true, Louis?

LOUIS

*(Pausing in mid-sniff.)*

I'm afraid the Man with the Net would insist, Countess.

ILSA

You're arfing this only to make me go.

RICK

I'm arfing it because it's true. Inside of us we both know you belong with Mr. Laszlo. You're his trophy bitch, the one thing that keeps him going. Besides, you're a champion--you deserve the recognition. If that car leaves and you're not with him, you'll regret it.

ILSA

No. I would not regret remaining with you, here in Casa Bow-Wow.

RICK

Maybe not today, or the next day, but soon, and for the next several years of your life.

ILSA

But what about us? What about our history?

RICK

It's peerless--we'll always have that. We forgot it once, until you came here to Casa Bow-Wow. But we remembered it last night.

ILSA

I arfed that I would never leave you.

RICK

And you never will. But where I'm going you can't follow. What I'm going to eat you can't stomach. Ilsa, I'm not noble like you, but it doesn't take much to see that the problems of two canines don't amount to a hill of refried beans in the dumpster behind Taco Bell. Someday you'll understand that. Now, now...

*ILSA sniffs tearfully. RICK puts his paw to her chin and raises her face to meet his own.*

RICK (CONT'D)

Here's nipping at you, kid.

*They nibble each other's necks. DOORMAN feels the tugging on the leash and notices what's going on with alarm. He kicks at RICK to drive him away.*

DOORMAN

Gwan! Get outta here, ya mutt!

*Lights up on the hotel entrance, as DOORMAN pulls ILSA back to where MARIE has joined LASZLO. RICK and LOUIS watch from the safety of the bushes. LASZLO shakes the entry form.*

LASZLO

Everything looks in order.

MARIE

All except one thing. There's something you should know before you leave.

LASZLO

*(Sensing what is coming)*

Marie, I don't ask you to explain anything.

MARIE

I'm going to anyway, because it may make a difference to you later on. You said you knew about Ilsa. About that bitch, her mother.

LASZLO

Yes.

MARIE

But you didn't know who her sire was. Because the stud's semen was stolen, she had no official pedigree.

*(To ILSA, in "babytalk.")*

Isn't that true, girlie? You're a countess, yes you are. We just can't let anyone know who your real daddy was, Ilsa-wilsa. No, we can't, baby girl.

*ILSA wiggles with excitement at the attention.*

LASZLO

Yes. I...I suspected as much.

MARIE

I tried everything to get bogus papers, and nothing worked. Until I bribed someone at the American Kennel Club to alter the registry. We had to convince everyone that she was for real. For your sake, she pretended she was pedigreed, and I let her pretend.

LASZLO

I understand. I know what I paid for.

MARIE

Here it is. Her forged AKC registration.

*MARIE hands the papers to LASZLO.*

LASZLO

Thanks. I appreciate it.

*LASZLO extends his hand to MARIE, who grasps it firmly.*

MARIE

Good luck at Westminster. This time I know your dog will win.

*An SUV pulls up in the driveway and waits, its engine running. MARIE exits.*

LASZLO

Are you ready, Ilsa? You ready, girl?

ILSA

*(Breathlessly.)*

For a ride? Yes, yes, oh, yes!

*(To RICK.)*

Goodbye, Rick. Dog bless you.

RICK

You better hurry, or you'll miss that ride.

*RICK watches as LASZLO leads ILSA very deliberately towards the car. DOORMAN helps load her into the carrier in the back. LOUIS nudges RICK with his head.*

LOUIS

Well I was right. You are hopelessly sentimental.

RICK

I don't know what you're yapping about.

*RICK puts a tennis ball in his mouth and chews it thoughtfully.*

LOUIS

What you just did, that fairy tale you invented to send Ilsa away. I know a little about bitches, my friend. She went, but she knew you were lying.

RICK

*(Removing the ball.)*

Anyway, thanks for helping me out.

LOUIS

I suppose you know this isn't going to be pleasant for either of us, but especially for you. It's going to arrest the grieving process.

RICK

Then I'll start work on that as soon as she's gone, Louis.

*DOORMAN closes the SUV's hatch, and LASZLO drives away just as MAN WITH THE NET enters.*

*MAN WITH THE NET*

What's the meaning of this?

DOORMAN

Victor Laszlo's in that car. Along with the Countess Ilsa Ingrid Something-Something.

*DOORMAN nods toward the departing car. MAN WITH THE NET pulls on DOORMAN's sleeve.*

MAN WITH THE NET

I was referring to that pack of wild dogs that's been feeding on the hotel garbage. Why do you allow it? Why don't you stop them?

DOORMAN

Don't ask me. Ain't my problem.

*DOORMAN exits inside the hotel. MAN WITH THE NET looks briefly at DOORMAN, then makes a step towards RICK and LOUIS.*

MAN WITH THE NET

Here, boy...

RICK

Hey, back off.

*MAN WITH THE NET doesn't stop because, hey, RICK's a dog, and what he says just sounds like barking to him.*

RICK (CONT'D)

*(Steely.)*

I would advise you not to come any closer.

*MAN WITH THE NET prepares to spring at RICK, who begins to circle defensively.*

RICK (CONT'D)

I was willing to bite Mr. Laszlo, and I'm willing to bite you.

MAN WITH THE NET

*(Insincerely placating.)*

Come here, little buddy. I'm not going to hurt you...

RICK

Put that net down.

MAN WITH THE NET

Nothing to worry about. I'll take you for a nice ride. Then you can have a nice, long sleep.

RICK

Put it down!

*MAN WITH THE NET pulls out a pistol with his other hand and shoots quickly at RICK. The bullet misses its mark. RICK attacks MAN WITH THE NET, snapping at him fiercely and grabbing his pants leg in his powerful jaws. After a brief but vicious struggle, RICK chases MAN WITH THE NET off stage. RICK barks a few times, then turns back to LOUIS, who dances around him, wagging his tail like mad.*

LOUIS

*(Laughing.)*

You showed him, Rick. You really showed that Man with the Net. My hero!

RICK

You could've helped. Why didn't you help?

LOUIS

And deprive you of the chance to bite the choicest parts?

RICK

Just tastes like chicken.

LOUIS

Well, Rick, you're not only a sentimentalist, but you've become a role model.

RICK

Maybe. It seemed like a good time to start.

LOUIS

I think perhaps you're right.

*RICK and LOUIS lift their legs to the bushes together in comradeship.*

LOUIS (CONT'D)

The Man with the Net will be back, you know. With reinforcements. It might be a good idea for you to disappear from Casa Bow-Wow for a while.

RICK

I could use a road trip. Can you lend me provisions?

LOUIS

I got ten bones should cover us for a few days.

RICK

Us?

LOUIS

Uh huh.

RICK

Louis, I think this is the beginning of a beautiful friendship. Come on. Let's go sniff some ass.

*The two walk off together into the night. Fade to black.*

THE END