

Captain Codfish

Audition Piece

(Out at sea, the Captain has a betting game with Idle Jack/Lazy Susan.)

Jack/Susan I'm alright 'cos I've got a short attention span, but don't you get bored on these long sea journeys?

Captain Oh I don't mind, I've got my pet dog for company.

Jack/Susan A dog? I never knew you had a dog!

Captain Aye, the ship's mascot, Salty. I've had him since he was a puppy, I ship-trained him and everything.

Jack/Susan Aw I love dogs, can I see him?

Captain Oh no. He's dead vicious with strangers. And seeing as I trained him, he only obeys orders from me.

Jack/Susan Oh go on, I'm sure he'll like me – and I'm really good with dogs. I bet I'll have him eating out of my hand.

Captain Eating your hand, more like. But if you do fancy a bet and you reckon you're so good with dogs, I'll bet you five pounds you can't get him to do anything for you.

Jack/Susan Alright then, you're on...

Captain *(Fetching the dog,)* Ok but I'm telling you, he only obeys my commands.

Jack/Susan Great! I've got a way with dogs, they love me. This'll be the easiest fiver I've ever earned.

(Captain returns with a stuffed toy dog.)

Captain There you are...

Jack/Susan What's that?

Captain That's Salty, my pet dog.

Jack/Susan But... but that's not a dog, it's a toy!

Captain Shh! Don't let him hear you say that! The last person who said that to him, he chewed their leg clean off! How d'ya think Peg Leg Pete got his name?

Jack/Susan Yeah but, you can't expect me to teach a cuddly toy to do tricks can you?

Captain Oh well if you can't do it, you can just hand over the five pounds you owe me...

Jack/Susan What? Well, if I've lost anyway, I might as well have a go. Put him down then. *(Captain does. Jack/Susan frantically tries unsuccessfully to attract the dog's attention. Ad lib.)* Oh this is ridiculous; I give up.

Captain Very well, five pounds please...

Jack/Susan Oh alright. *(Just about to pay.)* Just a minute though, you reckon you've trained him to obey your commands, right?

Captain Right.

Jack/Susan Prove it. Prove that Salty does everything you say and I'll give you the five pounds.

Captain Alright then. *(Captain picks up dog, crosses stage and puts him down, backs away and crouches.)* Salty... Salty... stay! *(Pause. Turns to Jack/Susan and opens hand.)*

Jack/Susan Fair enough. *(Gives him money.)*