Visiting Katt and Fredda

a play

by

Ingeborg von Zadow

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Characters

Katt

Fredda

Miranda

Visiting Katt and Fredda is a play for three actresses.

English translation by the author, 1998
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A room. Two couches, two chairs, a table, a door. Katt and Fredda.

KATT Do you know how long we've been here, Fredda.

FREDDA How long, Katt.

KATT Quite a while.

FREDDA That long already.

KATT Do you remember our trip.

FREDDA Of course.

KATT All that stress.

FREDDA All those hours and days.

KATT Full of longing and fear and all the other hurdles.

FREDDA But then.

KATT Then we're finally standing in front of the door.

FREDDA In front of the door.

KATT And then.

FREDDA Then it was easy.

KATT Easy to open.

FREDDA To open and walk in.

KATT No more wandering from place to place.

FREDDA Finally sheltered.

A pause.

FREDDA It's nice here.

KATT Yes.

FREDDA Peaceful.

KATT Yes.

FREDDA Quiet.

KATT Yes.

FREDDA Undisturbed.

KATT Yes.

FREDDA Just the two of us.

A pause.

KATT Do you think it will stay this way.

FREDDA Yes.

KATT Just the two of us.

FREDDA Yes.

KATT Always just the two of us.

FREDDA Yes.

KATT Always just the two of us?

FREDDA Why not.

A pause.

KATT Somebody could visit.

FREDDA Oh no, better not.

KATT Why. Don't you like guests.

FREDDA Things would get confused.

KATT Why would things get confused.

FREDDA Where would the guest stay. There is room for two, not for three. One couch for me, one couch for you.

KATT There is room for three. We'd have to move closer together.

FREDDA Believe me, Katt, it's good the way it is.

KATT You're just afraid that your beloved order will be messed up.

FREDDA My beloved order.

KATT Your beloved order.

FREDDA It's good if your things are in order. It's good when you know what you have and where it is.

A pause.

KATT Don't you think a guest could be interesting. It would be something new. It would be exciting.

FREDDA I'm not exciting.

KATT Yes, you are.

FREDDA I'm not attractive.

KATT Yes, you are.

FREDDA I'm not new.

KATT No.

A pause.

FREDDA Why don't you go.

KATT Go?

FREDDA Go away.

KATT Go away?

FREDDA You could have done that a long time ago. There is the door.

KATT No, Fredda.

FREDDA We're happy, we have it nice, we're together.

KATT Yes.

FREDDA Our room.

KATT Yes yes.

FREDDA One couch for me, one couch for you. Perfectly arranged.

KATT Don't yell at me.

FREDDA Don't hurt me

KATT I'm not hurting you.

FREDDA You're hurting me.

KATT But I'm not doing anything.

A pause.

FREDDA You're thinking, you're dreaming.

KATT Is that forbidden.

FREDDA It's too loud. Sometimes it's just too loud.

KATT Don't listen to it.

FREDDA How can I do that if you're in the same room.

KATT Cover your ear.

FREDDA And the other one.

KATT That one too.

FREDDA But then I won't hear what's going on.

KATT That's why you're doing it.

FREDDA I have to know what's going on. I have to know everything. Every thought, every dream.

KATT Even if it hurts?

A pause.

I can´t help it if I have thoughts. I can´t help it if I have dreams. They're not my fault. They come when they want to. They don't knock, they're just there.

FREDDA Of course, Katt.

KATT I can´t help it if they hurt you.

FREDDA No, Katt.

A pause.

FREDDA You're staying.
KATT Of course, Fredda.
FREDDA You're not going away.
KATT No.
FREDDA We can continue to play.
KATT Let's play.
FREDDA Our room. No guest.

A knock.

KATT A GUEST.

The door opens. Miranda walks in. A pause.

FREDDA You invited her.
KATT No.
FREDDA Without asking me.
KATT No.
FREDDA Just invited her.
KATT NO.
FREDDA Where does she come from then.
KATT I don't know.
FREDDA Who is she anyway.
KATT I don't know.
MIRANDA Miranda.
FREDDA So it's Miranda.
KATT What a fascinating name.

A pause.

FREDDA She ought to leave.
KATT To leave.
FREDDA To go away again.
KATT You can't just send her away again. She just got here.
FREDDA She'll mess everything up.

KATT I don't think so.

FREDDA Just the two of us, Katt.

KATT One two three.

FREDDA You want her to stay.

KATT You can't just send her away again.

A pause.

KATT Katt. Why don't you sit down.

MIRANDA Thank you.

KATT This is Fredda.

MIRANDA Hello Fredda.

KATT Where do you come from.

MIRANDA I was passing by and then I suddenly wanted to come in.

KATT Just like that.

FREDDA Just like that.

MIRANDA Like that.

KATT I like that.

A pause.

MIRANDA What a pretty nose you have.

FREDDA Me.

MIRANDA I've never seen a nose as pretty as that.

FREDDA She thinks my nose is pretty.

KATT It is pretty.

FREDDA She said that she thinks my nose is pretty.

KATT That´s nice of her.

FREDDA I think that's great. I have a great nose.

KATT She said a pretty one. Not a great one, a pretty one.

A pause.

KATT Do you like my couch.

MIRANDA Yes.

KATT It's my own.

MIRANDA It's very nice.

KATT You're welcome to stay seated, Miranda. After all, I'm sitting next to Fredda. Fredda's couch is pretty nice, too.

MIRANDA It's nice with a lot of people. Really nice, I think. I always feel good with a lot of people around. One two three. I like having a lot of people around. Life is more fun that way. What a pretty nose you have.

FREDDA Thank you.

KATT Doesn't she.

A pause.

MIRANDA You two look nice together.

KATT Thank you.

MIRANDA Do you do everything together.

FREDDA Most things. Perfectly arranged.

MIRANDA That's great. I think that's great. I always like doing everything together, too.

A pause.

MIRANDA What a pretty nose you have.

FREDDA Thank you.

KATT You already said that.

MIRANDA What.

KATT That Fredda has a pretty nose.

MIRANDA Don't you think Fredda has a pretty nose.

KATT Of course.

MIRANDA I think she has a very very pretty nose.

FREDDA Thank you.

KATT But I don't keep saying it over and over.

MIRANDA Why not.

KATT Should I keep saying that Fredda has a very very pretty nose.

FREDDA Why not.

MIRANDA You have a very pretty nose, you have a very very pretty nose, you have a very very very pretty nose... *Continues in variations during Katt and Fredda's following dialogue.*

KATT Do you like this now.

FREDDA Well.

KATT Don't you think it's disturbing.

FREDDA Well.

KATT I think it's disturbing.

FREDDA Don't listen.

KATT How can I do that if she's in the same room.

FREDDA Cover your ear.

KATT And the other one.

FREDDA That one too.

KATT Then I won't hear what's going on.

FREDDA But you already know what she is saying. She thinks I have a pretty nose.

MIRANDA I think you have a pretty nose.

FREDDA Thank you.

A pause.

FREDDA Do you like it here.

MIRANDA Oh yes.

FREDDA Make yourself comfortable.

MIRANDA Oh yes.

FREDDA Make yourself at home.

MIRANDA Oh yes.

FREDDA It's nice that you're here.

KATT I thought you don´t like guests.

FREDDA Why.

KATT Your beloved order.

FREDDA My beloved order.

MIRANDA Your beloved order?

FREDDA Miranda is nice.

KATT Of course.

FREDDA She is very very nice.

MIRANDA No one has ever said that to me.

FREDDA So we´ll have to move closer together.

MIRANDA Oh yes, move closer together.

KATT Move closer together.

FREDDA Then there is room for three. One two three.

MIRANDA One two three.

KATT There is room for a guest. Like I said. One two three. There is room for a guest.

House of Great Surprise

CHARACTERS

MR. GOLDYPURSE
MR. PEPPERCORN
MUFFIN-TO-GO (A SQUIRREL, PUPPET)

TWO FURNITURE MOVERS

English translation by the author. Original title: HAUS BLAUES WUNDER

HOUSE OF GREAT SURPRISE was nominated for the German Children´s Theater Prize in 2016.

SCENE 1

Inside a little house. A room. A front door and a window. Behind it a barren countryside. The stage is empty.
Mr. Goldypurse enters from the side loaded down with things and unlocks the front door. He comes in, puts his things down and looks around. Inspects the room. Seems pleased and takes a look out of the window.

MR. GOLDYPURSE Where is the ocean?

He can't find it. He starts making himself feel at home.

Mr. Peppercorn enters from the other side with a suitcase, and takes a look at the little house from outside. Maybe singing to himself. Mr. Goldypurse becomes aware of him. Mr. Peppercorn puts a key into the lock. Mr. Goldypurse is alarmed. Mr. Peppercorn opens the door and just barely misses the frying pan that threatens to come down on top of him. Mr. Peppercorn quickly shuts the door again and cautiously takes a look in through the window. He decides to try once more. He alters his tactics. Mr. Peppercorn knocks on the door.

MR. GOLDYPURSE *opens the door* How can I help you?

MR. PEPPERCORN Well – let me in.

MR. GOLDYPURSE That´s not possible.

MR. PEPPERCORN Why not?

MR. GOLDYPURSE This is my house.

MR. PEPPERCORN Oh no.

MR. GOLDYPURSE Oh yes. You're a neighbour?

MR. PEPPERCORN No no.

MR. GOLDYPURSE Then please hand over that key now. It won´t be necessary to water any plants at my place.

MR. PEPPERCORN But I don't want to - And I'm not a – That´s not the point.

MR. GOLDYPURSE So what´s the point then?

MR. PEPPERCORN This is my little house.

A pause.

MR. PEPPERCORN This is the House of Great Surprise?

MR. GOLDYPURSE The House of Great Surprise, of course.

MR. PEPPERCORN There you are – that´s mine.

MR. GOLDYPURSE Don´t you joke about property.

MR. PEPPERCORN This isn´t a joke. *A pause.* I may not look as if I was able to afford a little house, but I certainly saved a long time for it. *A pause.* Isn´t it beautiful?

MR. GOLDYPURSE Of course, this is a very beautiful little house. Otherwise I wouldn´t have bought it.

A pause.

MR. PEPPERCORN Why you?

MR. GOLDYPURSE One at the sea front was still missing in my collection.

MR. PEPPERCORN Exactly, at the sea front. That´s what the ad said. "For sale: A little house at the sea front".

MR. GOLDYPURSE You´ve obviously got the address wrong, Mr. -

MR. PEPPERCORN If you don´t mind – it´s Peppercorn.

MR. GOLDYPURSE Nice to meet you. Goldypurse. *A pause.* I would appreciate it, if you wouldn´t bother me any longer during my evening.

Mr. Goldypurse wants to close the door. Mr. Peppercorn puts his foot in the door.

MR. PEPPERCORN Just a moment.

MR. GOLDYPURSE Anything else?

MR. PEPPERCORN With all due respect, the person who is mistaken, is you.

MR. GOLDYPURSE Well, that´s enough now, Peppercorn.

MR. PEPPERCORN I agree, I absolutely agree. *A pause*. What are you doing in my little house anyway? How did you get in in the first place?

A pause.

MR. GOLDYPURSE I´ll show you my sale contract.

MR. PEPPERCORN All right. Then I´ll also show you my sale contract.

Mr. Peppercorn presents his sale contract. Mr. Goldypurse is still searching for his.

MR. PEPPERCORN Then we´ll see who´s right. *A pause.* Don´t you think?

MR. GOLDYPURSE Yes, we´ll soon see that.

A pause.

MR. PEPPERCORN Well, where´s your sale contract?

MR. GOLDYPURSE Just a moment.

Mr. Goldypurse searches for it. A pause.

MR. PEPPERCORN If you can´t find it, we could just keep to this one, Mr. Goldypurse.

MR. GOLDYPURSE That would suit your needs, wouldn´t it, Peppercorn, to rob me of my property?

MR. PEPPERCORN *reads* „The House of Great Surprise was sold today to the honest Mr. Peppercorn for a good sum of money. Signed: Mr. Seller".

MR. GOLDYPURSE But that´s exactly what it says on mine, too!

MR. PEPPERCORN Well, then we know who this little house belongs to, don´t we?

MR. GOLDYPURSE *has found his sale contract* „The House of Great Surprise was sold today to the honest Mr. Goldypurse for twice as much money. Signed: Mr. Seller" *A pause.* What do you have to say now?

MR. PEPPERCORN Now I say – *A pause.* Why - you paid more.

MR. GOLDYPURSE Really?

MR. PEPPERCORN Twice as much as me. It says so here, in black and white.

MR. GOLDYPURSE Well, if that isn´t the biggest -

MR. PEPPERCORN There must be some mistake. The same little house, sold to two people. *A pause.* Who does something like that?

A pause.

MR. GOLDYPURSE WHAT A BASTARD! WAIT TILL I CATCH HIM!

MR. PEPPERCORN WE´LL GIVE HIM HELL!

MR. GOLDYPURSE WE´LL MAKE HIM PAY FOR THIS!

MR. PEPPERCORN THIS IS OUTRAGEOUS, OUTRAGEOUS!

A pause.

MR. GOLDYPURSE I´ll give him a call.

MR. PEPPERCORN Good idea.

MR. GOLDYPURSE This Mr. Seller.

MR. PEPPERCORN Quite right, quite right.

*Mr. Goldypurse is on the phone. Of course, no one answers the call. Then a recording: "*Hello, you have reached Mr. Seller´s answering machine. Win a dream holiday, capture a ship, buy a house at the sea front. Unfortunately there is nobody in. Please try your luck again later."

A pause. Nobody knows what to do.

MR. GOLDYPURSE *as nice as pie* Would you be so kind as to show me your sales contract one more time?

MR. PEPPERCORN Why of course, Mr. Goldypurse.

Mr. Goldypurse takes the sales contract from Mr. Peppercorn and shoves him and his suitcase out of the door.

MR. PEPPERCORN What are you doing? What´s going on?

MR. GOLDYPURSE The show´s over.

Mr. Goldypurse closes the door and barricades himself in.

MR. PEPPERCORN *from outside* I want my sales contract back! I want it back immediately!

MR. GOLDYPURSE *inside, crafty* What sales contract?

Mr. Peppercorn looks in through the window.

MR. PEPPERCORN That´s not fair! That´s robbery! You´ll pay for this! *A pause. Shakes the door.* I still have my key!

Mr. Goldypurse is about to tear up Mr. Peppercorns sales contract. Mr. Peppercorn appears in front of the window again. Alteration of tactics.

Poor me! Here I stand stupidly, outside of my own little house. With NOTHING on earth but my old, insignificant suitcase -

Noises from inside the suitcase. Mr. Peppercorn tries to cover them up. Inside the house Mr. Goldypurse tears up the sales contract and drops it into the wastebasket. Mr. Peppercorn watches. Evening approaches. A pause.

Whatever did I do to Mr. Goldypurse? Did I do something wrong? There you are, wanting to live out your dream just once: a little house at the sea front! And then look what happens!

A pause. Mr. Goldypurse doesn´t seem to take interest in Mr. Peppercorn.

I bet the weather will take a turn for the worst any minute now.

A wind picks up. The weather starts getting worse.

Where on earth can I go? How can I protect myself? I bet it´ll start raining any minute now too!

It starts to rain. Inside Mr. Goldypurse is getting ready for bed, still deliberately ignoring everything that is going on in front of the window.

Life is so unfair! No tree, no bush and also no house!

Sticking to the window. MR. GOLDYPURSE!

MR. GOLDYPURSE Quiet out there, please.

MR. PEPPERCORN Don´t you see what´s going on?

MR. GOLDYPURSE I don´t see anything.

MR. PEPPERCORN You wouldn´t send a dog out into this weather -

MR. GOLDYPURSE I would send a dog out into any weather.

MR. PEPPERCORN I bet it´ll start hailing any minute!

Of course, it begins to hail.

Ouch! Help! SOS!

MR. GOLDYPURSE My gosh, this Peppercorn is really making a mountain out of a molehill!

MR. PEPPERCORN MR. GOLDYPURSE! Please open the door! Do you want me to die in agony out here? In front of this beautiful little house? Then it´ll be your fault!

MR. GOLDYPURSE Nonsense.

MR. PEPPERCORN I bet we´ll have thunder and lightning any minute now!

Thunder and lightning.

Help!

MR. GOLDYPURSE Thunder and lightning! What kind of a neighbourhood is this anyway? *Opens the door.* Come in! Hop on into the parlour!

A pause. Mr. Peppercorn, soaking wet, saves himself and brings his suitcase into the house. Mr. Goldypurse quickly shuts the door.

MR. PEPPERCORN That was close, that was damn close, that was so damn close.

MR. GOLDYPURSE Thunder and lightning is no joking matter. It always shakes one so violently.

MR. PEPPERCORN It does, doesn´t it?

MR. GOLDYPURSE And so suddenly! Out of the blue!

MR. PEPPERCORN Completely out of the blue!

Mr. Goldypurse tries to wipe up around Mr. Peppercorn. The weather starts to calm down.

MR. PEPPERCORN Thank you for letting me in. Thank you. Thank you very much.

MR. GOLDYPURSE Of course, don´t mention it. Those were unusual circumstances, weren´t they? But only until tomorrow morning.

MR. PEPPERCORN Only until tomorrow morning -

MR. GOLDYPURSE Then you´ll disappear again.

MR. PEPPERCORN Outside the house? Of course. I don´t have a sales contract anymore anyway?

MR. GOLDYPURSE Exactly.

A pause. No one knows how to continue. Mr. Goldypurse closes the curtains.

MR. GOLDYPURSE I´m going to bed.

MR. PEPPERCORN Yes.

MR. GOLDYPURSE You´re going to lie down, too?

MR. PEPPERCORN Yes yes.

A pause. Mr. Peppercorn stands around.

MR. GOLDYPURSE What are you waiting for?

MR. PEPPERCORN I´m afraid that unfortunately I may not have any dry clothes left anymore.

MR. GOLDYPURSE There must be something in your suitcase.

MR. PEPPERCORN Sold everything. For the House of Great Surprise.

MR. GOLDYPURSE *A pause.* I understand.

Mr. Goldypurse fishes around in his things and throws a set of dry clothes to Mr. Peppercorn.

MR. PEPPERCORN Thank you. That´s very kind. Very kind of you.

MR. GOLDYPURSE But just until tomorrow morning.

Mr. Peppercorn gets changed and then lies down on top of his suitcase.

MR. GOLDYPURSE There you are.

MR. PEPPERCORN It´ll work, it´ll work.

MR. GOLDYPURSE Good night, Peppercorn.

MR. PEPPERCORN Good night. Sleep well, Mr. Goldypurse. And thank you again.

Mr. Goldypurse starts snoring contentedly. Mr. Peppercorn waits for this, then gets up again and opens his suitcase.

MR. PEPPERCORN Muffin-To-Go?

No response.

Muffin-To-Go?

No response.

Come on. We´ve arrived. Get out of there.

A pause. Nothing. He gets the squirrel out of the suitcase.

Take a look at our little house. Isn´t it beautiful?

A pause.

That guy over there, that´s Mr. Goldypurse. He´s also here somehow, but right now he´s sleeping.

Muffin-To-Go starts hesitantly looking around the house. In the meantime, Mr. Peppercorn goes to the waste basket, picks up the pieces of his sales contract and glues them together again. He puts the papers in his suitcase.

Now no one can say any longer that we don´t belong here, right, Muffin-To-Go? In our little house at the sea front.