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Social Darwinism

by Angela Gant

A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION



**SAMUEL
FRENCH**

FOUNDED 1830

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SOCIAL DARWINISM opened at Texas Tech University's Lab Theatre in Lubbock, Texas on October 3, 2005. It was directed by Jeffrey Wells, assisted by Sarah S. Shaver, with scenic design by Alicia Warren, lighting by Richard Hamilton, sound by Jacob Davis, costumes by Jennifer Lara, and fight choreography by Kelly Parker. The stage manager was Carol Krueger. The cast was as follows:

ALPHA MALE Steve Wood
ALPHA FEMALEMorgan Mercer
SUBORDINATE MALE. Adam Zarowski
SUBORDINATE FEMALE. Amanda Barnes
ADOLESCENT MALE Brice Russell
ADOLESCENT FEMALE Mary Anne Murray
OUTSIDE MALEE. Talmadge Hill
OUTSIDE FEMALE Kristin Abaquin
FIELD SCIENTIST Kevin Ten Eyck
JANE Annie Bradley

CHARACTERS

ALPHA MALE (JASON) – The strongest and oldest male; he rules by fear, money, or stature. He often cheats on his wife with the **OUTSIDE FEMALE**.

ALPHA FEMALE (ELIZABETH) – The oldest and strongest female.

SECOND BANANA (CHARLIE) – The homosexual step-brother of the **ALPHA MALE** who is always striving to move up.

SUBORDINATE FEMALE (KATE) – The most headstrong and outspoken of the women.

ADOLESCENT MALE (ISAAC) – An awkward teenager who has few social skills; he is often spurned by **ALPHA MALE**.

ADOLESCENT FEMALE (JESSIE) – A cheerleader-type of adolescent; she is not very bright, but she is her father's favorite.

OUTSIDE MALE (AUSTIN) – The sometime-lover of **SECOND BANANA**. He is an ethnicity other than Caucasian.

OUTSIDE FEMALE (MARY) – The other woman. She is an ethnicity other than Caucasian.

FIELD SCIENTIST – A male scientist studying different classes of primates. A cross between Jane Goodall and Mutual of Omaha.

JANE – Female assistant to the **FIELD SCIENTIST** who does the Field Scientist's grunt work and the tagging of the animals. She interacts with the subjects throughout the play, and is always on stage.

SETTING

The set can be sparse or elaborate, but it needs to have minimal elements of the jungle, and lower, middle, and upper classes, which can be added and/or removed.

COSTUMES

The characters can start out nude, clad in underwear, or tight clothing as chimpanzees. As the characters move from rednecks, to the 1950's, and to the upper class they should add a layer of clothing until they revert to their chimpanzee form and revert to their chimp costumes.

TIME

Present.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

The **FIELD SCIENTIST's** and **JANE's** costumes evolve along with the other characters, and are always dressed appropriately for the class changes found within the play.

JANE "tags" some of the characters throughout the play by shooting them with a dart gun and placing an obnoxious tag over their ear that can be worn throughout the rest of the play.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to Gregg Henry, Norman Bert, Gary Garrison, Jeffrey Wells, Adam Zarowski, Eric Ruben, Connie Whitt-Lambert, Bill Untiedt, Amy Marsh, Grant Brenner, The Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, Texas Tech University Department of Theatre and Dance, Samuel French, and my beautiful, intellectual, talented wife and muse that I am too lucky for words to have, Jamie Hogue.

Additionally, I want to thank NYC's very own ADA Alex Spiro, Katie Doran (Advisor to the DA for LGBT issues), and Detective John Hoffman for giving me the spirit and power to make it through the judicial process, and see my assailant brought to justice. The play had already been written and produced, but may have never made it to publication. Thanks everyone!

*To anyone who has ever gotten a beat down for looking like a woman,
being a woman, looking like a queer, being a queer, not being manly enough,
being too manly, or having the audacity to be any race other than Caucasian,
here's the last laugh!*

ACT I

*(As the scene opens, all characters are in their underwear, including the **FIELD SCIENTIST**, who is in his underwear and sporting a safari hat. **ALPHA MALE** and **OUTSIDE MALE** are absent. **SECOND BANANA** and **ADOLESCENT MALE** are sparring in a jocular fashion. They are posturing and aware some of the females are watching. **ALPHA FEMALE** is grooming **ADOLESCENT FEMALE** by picking lice off her back and sticking them in her mouth. **OUTSIDE FEMALE** is trying to entice **SUBORDINATE FEMALE** into eating termites with her off a stick. Though the **SUBORDINATE FEMALE** is unsure of the **OUTSIDE FEMALE**, she is very fond of termites. The **FIELD SCIENTIST** is standing off to one side, speaking in a deep soothing voice.)*

FIELD SCIENTIST. As you can see, the chimpanzees are very much like their homo sapien cousins. Sharing ninety-seven percent of our genetic makeup, they are the animals most closely related to us. Over here, one can observe two of the subordinate males defining their status in this culture.

*(**SECOND BANANA** cuffs **ADOLESCENT MALE** in a particularly hard-fought round.)*

The adolescent male shows great courage in attacking a more worthy opponent. The subordinate male is second only to the alpha male in strength and agility, and the adolescent male is no match.

*(**ADOLESCENT MALE** scampers to **ALPHA FEMALE** for protection. The **SECOND BANANA** circles the stage area screaming in victory.)*

FIELD SCIENTIST (*cont.*). Chimpanzee dominance is defined by their actions; the victor takes a lap around the encampment area, while the weaker of the two returns to his mother for sympathy. It is often difficult for the lowest ranking male to move up in any environment, and this one is certainly no different.

(**ALPHA FEMALE** *pushes the ADOLESCENT MALE away. He moves away to sulk in a corner by himself.*)

The alpha female realizes that, at a certain age, it is unwise for her only male child to be seen running to his mother for support. He must learn to face life and challenges on his own.

(**ADOLESCENT MALE** *simpers.*)

In short, he must learn to take it like a man.

(**SECOND BANANA** *stands and pounds his chest victoriously over his weaker opponent.*)

SECOND BANANA. Hell, yeah!

FIELD SCIENTIST. Even in the animal kingdom, showboating can become excessive.

SECOND BANANA. Who's the man?

FIELD SCIENTIST. At times, much to the chagrin of the others.

SECOND BANANA. Who's the man?

(**ALPHA FEMALE** *comes up behind the SECOND BANANA and bops him on the head. The SECOND BANANA turns to retaliate, but the ALPHA FEMALE strikes a motherly pose and begins to tap her foot at him. SECOND BANANA* *thinks better of his attack and slowly moves away from the ALPHA FEMALE, glancing sullenly back at her. SECOND BANANA* *then screeches at her and moves quickly to another area of the stage.*)

FIELD SCIENTIST. In a small percentage of chimpanzee cultures, the groups are run by both an alpha male and an alpha female. Unlike their more aggressive counterparts who are ruled primarily by alpha males, these groups tend to be more accepting of outsiders and less cannibalistic than their male-dominant cousins.

(**ADOLESCENT MALE** *approaches the ADOLESCENT FEMALE and begins to show an animal interest in her.*)

FIELD SCIENTIST. As in most societies, the males are more interested in mating than the females.

(**ADOLESCENT FEMALE** *attempts to shrug off the advances of the ADOLESCENT MALE.*)

In mating rituals, females only wish to mate with the highest-ranking males, and those males like to mate with as many females as they can. As in many societies, this ensures that the strongest genetic seeds are planted, so their dominant traits will continue to thrive.

(**ADOLESCENT MALE** *attempts to hump the ADOLESCENT FEMALE and is immediately attacked by the SECOND BANANA. After successfully chasing away the ADOLESCENT MALE, the SECOND BANANA begins to show an animal interest in the ADOLESCENT FEMALE.*)

The females, by instinct, shy away from lesser males, hoping for the best. They try to avoid contact with all others beneath their social class, much like many women in society today. This trend is seen by the time females reach adolescence and begin to take on certain roles within their class system.

ADOLESCENT FEMALE. (*cheerleader-like*) Yea, Team!

FIELD SCIENTIST. The males' libidos are in turn more concerned about mating than dating. Being from a highly evolved species, the athletes have a number of tactics to get the adolescent females to consent to their mating rituals.

SECOND BANANA. But if you love me, you need to show me you love me.

FIELD SCIENTIST. A great number of tactics.

SECOND BANANA. My mom is dying of cancer right now. I just need to feel safe. You want me to feel safe don't you?

FIELD SCIENTIST. But sometimes, not always the brightest tactics.

SECOND BANANA. (*indicating*) But if I don't use it, it will fall off.

(**ADOLESCENT FEMALE** *attempts to scurry away, but SECOND BANANA gives chase.*)

FIELD SCIENTIST. Some tactics, however, always work.

(**SECOND BANANA** *grabs her and begins to hump her. ADOLESCENT FEMALE tries to get away. SECOND BANANA traps her and begins to alternately fondle himself and grab at her.*)

FIELD SCIENTIST. It is possible that, in the attempt to deny the lesser male's advances, the adolescent female's rejection will only lead to a forceful reminder of a female's place in society.

(**JANE** *takes aim with her dart gun, and the FIELD SCIENTIST grabs the nose of the weapon and points it in the air.*)

Of course, we know there is no rape in the animal kingdom.

(**ADOLESCENT FEMALE** *screams.*)

And these creatures don't have feelings the way you or I do.

(**ADOLESCENT FEMALE** *cries out. JANE stalks off to her clipboard where she furiously begins to write notes.*)

Though it may be painful to watch, I assure you, these are merely animals, and in no way are they in any danger.

(**JANE** *snorts her disapproval.*)

FIELD SCIENTIST. These are the rules of their society. The subordinate male is attempting to ensure that his genetic offspring will continue on. This is important to him, since he thinks so highly of his genetic material.

(**OUTSIDE MALE** *enters and distracts the group. All characters stop what they are doing and begin to form a perimeter around the OUTSIDE MALE, moving in closer at times to get a better look or to show their dominance. ALPHA MALE begins to rise.*)

FIELD SCIENTIST. Now this is a fascinating turn of events. We don't often get to see this. When an outside male comes in contact with a pre-existing chimpanzee group, any number of things can happen. Let's watch closely as the events unfold.

*(The **ALPHA MALE**, now clear-headed, moves in and immediately takes charge. He is wearing a necklace that befits his position as alpha male. The **FIELD SCIENTIST** indicates the situation to **JANE**, who moves in as well, careful to avoid the other characters.)*

As we can see, the alpha male has just returned to find the newcomer in his presence. Indeed, if this were completely an alpha male-driven society, no doubt the outside male chimpanzee would be killed outright and eaten for his succulent meat. Look at the alpha male immediately take charge of the situation. This is one of the attributes that separate the alpha male from the lesser males.

*(The **ALPHA MALE** attacks the **OUTSIDE MALE**, toying with him. The **OUTSIDE MALE** covers.)*

In chimpanzee societies, which are controlled by both alpha males and alpha females, the group has a tendency to be more tolerant of outsiders. Unfortunately for the outside male, that does not necessarily ensure his survival at this critical juncture. These animals are still very wary of those trying to encroach on their pack.

*(The other characters move off from their tight perimeter, except for the **ALPHA FEMALE**, to give the **ALPHA MALE** room to investigate. The **SECOND BANANA** is the last to leave, giving the **OUTSIDE MALE** a parting shot as he crosses the stage.)*

Actually, an interesting note on this particular group is that they have already accepted an outside female. If you look past the others, she is the one always more separate from the group. Still, it is not the same as taking in a male outsider.

*(The **OUTSIDE MALE** cowers.)*

The outside male must be very desperate and hungry to attempt to enter this pack. No doubt, there is some reason why he was forced out or lost from his previous pack. The alpha male has a lot to consider here. He must consider not only the well being of his pack, but also consider whether or not he wants to be responsible for another adult male individual.

*(The **ALPHA MALE** circles the **OUTSIDE MALE**, who has taken a submissive posture.)*

It's very important at this juncture for the outside male to show his submissiveness to the alpha male here. He's certainly not small for a chimpanzee, and he's trying to make himself appear even smaller and less of a threat to increase his chance for survival and his admission into the new group.

*(The **SECOND BANANA** moves in too close to the perimeter laid out by the **ALPHA MALE**.)*

Oop. The subordinate male is encroaching a little too much on the alpha male's investigative territory.

*(The **ALPHA MALE** responds in a dominant manner, but the **SECOND BANANA** is slow to retreat.)*

The subordinate male gets the warning from the alpha male to move off, and he does, but he's responding really slowly here. It's not a good tactic for the subordinate male. The alpha male isn't going to appreciate that.

*(The **ALPHA MALE** cuffs him and sends him rolling.)*

The subordinate male is going to try to cry foul here, and you can tell he wants to come up swinging.

*(The **SECOND BANANA** pulls out a penalty flag and throws it to the ground. He jumps up and down, pointing to the flag.)*

The penalty flag really not going to do him any good here. It's considered fair play in the society where he is always relegated to second banana. Remember, the

alpha male is an alpha male for a reason. This could be a really dumb play here on the part of the subordinate male.

*(The **SECOND BANANA** stands upright in a threatening manner. The **ALPHA MALE** stands to his full height. **SECOND BANANA** thinks better of it and crosses away. The **ADOLESCENT MALE** points and laughs.)*

Probably wise for him to back off at this moment. Not a good time to challenge the alpha male with an outsider present.

*(The **SECOND BANANA** cuffs the **ADOLESCENT MALE** as he passes by him. The **ADOLESCENT MALE** crosses to the penalty flag and picks it up, shaking it in the **SECOND BANANA**'s face.)*

You'd think the adolescent male would have learned from his experience, but he's really not that bright.

*(**SECOND BANANA** takes the flag from the **ADOLESCENT MALE** and shoves it in the **ADOLESCENT MALE**'s screaming mouth.)*

The subordinate male isn't going to let him get away with much right now; he's got to save face from the ego bruising he just received from the alpha male.

*(The **ALPHA MALE** moves over to the **SECOND BANANA** and the **ADOLESCENT MALE** to quiet them down, and the two of them scamper in opposite directions. The **ALPHA MALE** follows the **ADOLESCENT MALE** and pulls the flag out of his mouth.)*

ALPHA MALE. Boy, what's wrong with you?

*(The **ALPHA FEMALE** moves in and begins to sniff the **OUTSIDE MALE**.)*

FIELD SCIENTIST. It looks like the alpha female has begun to show an interest in the newcomer. This appears to soothe the sometimes-volatile alpha male.

*(The **ALPHA FEMALE** begins to poke at the **OUTSIDE MALE**.)*

She could be a real lifesaver here. With all the commotion, the alpha male is unlikely to accept the outside male unless the alpha female gives her approval.

(The ALPHA FEMALE begins to hump the OUTSIDE MALE.)

In the chimpanzee world, the alpha male and alpha female show their acceptance of an outsider by humping him. *(excited)* In human society, it's something one might find at a swinger's bar. These types of bars of course come in many varieties. My favorite is more of an upper class bump and grind.

(JANE clears her throat.)

But I digress...

ALPHA MALE. You like this one, Ma?

(ALPHA FEMALE is still humping the OUTSIDE MALE.)

ALPHA FEMALE. He smells real nice, Pa.

(They revert to their chimpanzee form and the ALPHA MALE moves in for a closer look at the OUTSIDE MALE, who remains perfectly docile. ALPHA MALE looks at ALPHA FEMALE, sighs, and quickly humps the OUTSIDE MALE and then moves off.)

FIELD SCIENTIST. Once the alpha male has accepted the outside male, he will now pretend not to notice him. The outside male has been established now as the lowest ranking adult male of the group. More than likely, the adolescent male will one day hold the pre-eminent position of becoming the alpha male of the group, since he is the first-born male offspring of the alpha male.

(ADOLESCENT MALE picks his butt and sniffs his finger.)

Well—maybe.

(ADOLESCENT MALE sticks his finger in his mouth. One by one, the individual chimpanzees approach the OUTSIDE MALE.)

All the chimpanzees move in for a closer look, barring the alpha male and alpha female, who have already granted their approval.

*(The females move in first. The **OUTSIDE FEMALE** moves away first. The **ALPHA MALE** shows an interest in her.)*

In the two years we've been studying this group the alpha male has always shown an affinity for the outside female over any other female of his group. Though none could deny him, he prefers a taste of foreign flesh. The alpha female, who is rightfully his mate, accepts his philandering, as it were. Of course, in this society there is no true monogamy, so henceforth, there is no cause for her to be jealous.

*(The **ADOLESCENT MALE**, now no longer the lowest ranking male, sticks his hands down his pants and flings feces on the **OUTSIDE MALE**. The **SUBORDINATE FEMALE**, irritated by the poo-flinging, hurls some back at him and scampers off.)*

The adolescent male, now excited to no longer be the lowest ranking male, flings his excrement in delight, though not everyone is as excited by it as he is.

*(The **ADOLESCENT MALE** takes a victory lap. **SECOND BANANA** moves up behind the **OUTSIDE MALE** and sucker punches him, then slowly moves off.)*

The attack by the subordinate male is merely to show his strength and authority.

*(**SUBORDINATE FEMALE** approaches **OUTSIDE MALE** who shies away.)*

You can see here that the subordinate female wants to help, but in a society relegated to nonverbal communication her intentions are unclear to the outside male.

*(**SUBORDINATE FEMALE** approaches again and the **OUTSIDE MALE** shies away.)*

Of course one can hardly blame him after his official welcoming.

(**SUBORDINATE FEMALE** approaches and the **OUTSIDE MALE** postures to attack.)

She's got to be careful here. Animals are most dangerous when they are wounded and confused. If only they had the ability to communicate verbally, her intentions would be made clear to him. Then perhaps these kinds of misunderstandings could be avoided.

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. I just want to help you. Won't you let me help you?

(**OUTSIDE MALE** sniffs her hand and moves closer. A clock begins to chime. **SECOND BANANA** approaches the **OUTSIDE MALE** again, this time giving him a wedgie. Everyone giggles, except for the **ALPHA FEMALE** and the **SUBORDINATE FEMALE**, who show signs of disapproval.)

Times do change, and people change with the times. At least that's what many would have us believe. But does time really affect the animal kingdom in a traditional way?

(The clock strikes two. **SUBORDINATE FEMALE** puts on skirt and approaches the **OUTSIDE MALE** pulling on a sweater. She picks up the penalty flag and begins to wipe off the feces.)

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. Who did this to you? Talk to me. You can tell me, you know. You'll be safe here.

(**ALPHA MALE** pulls on a wife beater and, one by one, the characters begin to put on a single layer of clothing and animate from their chimpanzee mode to their redneck society mode. The **FIELD SCIENTIST** adds on khakis and a shirt.)

ALPHA MALE. Kate, will you leave the boy alone? He probably don't wanna talk about it, 'specially to a girl. Somebody shows up covered in shit, they generally don't wanna discuss it. Well, how'd you get covered in shit, there, boy? I guaran—fuckin'—tee you, nobody really wants to know the answer to that, 'ceptin' you.

FIELD SCIENTIST. The alpha male was considerate enough to let the outsider, at least temporarily, reside in his family unit. But much to his exasperation and chagrin, the outside male is pulling too much of his pack's focus.

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. You could at least try to be considerate of his feelings. He does have feelings, you know.

(The ALPHA MALE sighs and walks off.)

FIELD SCIENTIST. A smart leader knows when to allow a member of his pack a bit of latitude in dealing with unusual circumstances.

ALPHA MALE. *(to ADOLESCENT MALE)* Boy, go get me another beer.

(ADOLESCENT MALE stares at him and squeals in a chimpanzee fashion, bobbing up and down.)

Boy, I said go get me another beer.

(ALPHA MALE picks up ADOLESCENT MALE by his ear. ADOLESCENT MALE squeals in a chimp voice and tries to get away.)

Don't you back talk me, boy. If you don't quit that mamby-pambying around. I'll tan that hide of yours, so help me God.

(ADOLESCENT MALE scampers off in a chimpanzee fashion.)

It's all your doin'. It's all your damn motherin' him that's done it. How's he gonna grow up to take over this place when he ain't much better than a girl?

(ALPHA FEMALE screams and runs up to him on all fours. She pounds at his chest and returns to her original position.)

Goddammit, woman, I done told you not to do that again. You will respect me in this house.

(ALPHA FEMALE blows him a kiss.)

ALPHA MALE. (*cont.*) Don't be getting' all sweet on me neither. I know your feminine wiles and how they work. It was enough for us to get hitched and for you to get three kids out of the bargain, but that's where it ends. A man has needs. I got an itch, and sometimes I just gots to scratch it...

(**ALPHA MALE** *hugs* **OUTSIDE FEMALE.**)

Ain't that right, baby?

(**ALPHA FEMALE** *gives him a raspberry, does a backwards roll, and gives him the "fuck off" hand and fist motion.* **SECOND BANANA** *puts on a denim shirt, which he leaves open.*)

SECOND BANANA. I certainly wouldn't let no woman talk to me like that.

ALPHA MALE. Well little brother, I don't see you havin' no woman to complain about.

(**ALPHA MALE** *is still hugging* **OUTSIDE FEMALE.**)

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. Why is she here anyway? Everyone will be over in a few hours. You could be a little respectful, if not of Mama, at least of the rest of us.

SECOND BANANA. Don't bother me none.

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. That's because you have the moral standards of an animal.

SECOND BANANA. Lordy, one semester of junior college and don't you talk pretty?

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. You have no idea what I just said, do you?

(**OUTSIDE MALE** *laughs.*)

SECOND BANANA. What are you laughin' at, boy? You show up, covered in shit or somethin', and you think you're gonna laugh at me? Fuckin' retard, you probably can't even talk. Can you talk, 'tard? Or did they cut out your tongue? Maybe I'll cut it out for ya.

FIELD SCIENTIST. The subordinate male cannot let the challenge to his authority go by without confronting his giggling attacker. Males in this species are extremely afraid of losing face in front of their peers.

(SUBORDINATE FEMALE *wipes the dirty flag on the SECOND BANANA's face.*)

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. Here, you got something on your face. Let me clean it off for you...

SECOND BANANA. Bitch, I'll kill you! Don't touch me with that shit-covered rag!

ALPHA MALE. That's enough!

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. Guess he told you.

ALPHA MALE. (*to SUBORDINATE FEMALE*) I said that's enough.

FIELD SCIENTIST. In a complex social structure there are many rules. Though a father will protect his daughter, even an adopted one, he cannot stand by and allow a mere lowly ranked female to repeatedly attack a male.

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. But Dad...

ADOLESCENT FEMALE. You know Daddy's always right.

ALPHA MALE. That's my baby girl.

ADOLESCENT FEMALE. I love you, Daddy.

ALPHA MALE. (*coddling ADOLESCENT FEMALE*) That's why you're my little pumpkin head.

(*ADOLESCENT MALE enters with enough beer for all the males, excluding the OUTSIDE MALE. All other characters begin to dress and speak as rednecks.*)

ALPHA MALE. Personally, I think she's sweet on ya.

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. Dad.

ALPHA MALE. I'm just sayin', ya'll act just like your ma and me when we first got together.

ALPHA FEMALE. That was a long time ago.

ALPHA MALE. It took me a while to learn you right. (*flexing his muscle*) But you learned, didn't ya?

ALPHA FEMALE. If you want to call it learnin'.

ALPHA MALE. Weren't my fault you were a slow learner. Some lessons are worth repeating.

ADOLESCENT FEMALE. Why does everyone always have to fight?

SECOND BANANA. All right pretty lady, I'll make you a deal. You agree to go to the dance with me tomorrow night, and I'll be sweet as can be. I'll be on my best behavior for you... I might even take bath.

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. That's sick. He's our uncle.

SECOND BANANA. We ain't blood related, so what's it to you? Why don't you mind your own fuckin' business?

ALPHA FEMALE. I won't have you using that language in the house.

SECOND BANANA. We ain't in the house proper, now are we? (*noticing OUTSIDE MALE*) Why is that 'tard still here?

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. Because for some reason or another, no one will ask you to leave.

(**SECOND BANANA** *backhands her.*)

OUTSIDE FEMALE. Leave her be. You ain't nothin' but a bully.

ALPHA MALE. Everything's all right.

SECOND BANANA. Happy now?

(**OUTSIDE MALE** *stands up.*)

Whatever you're thinking about, 'tard, I'd sit my ass back down if I was you.

ADOLESCENT FEMALE. Look, I'll go to the dance with you just leave her alone.

ALPHA FEMALE. You don't have to if you don't want to.

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. (*under her breath*) Way to take one for the team.

ADOLESCENT MALE. (*aloud*) Way to take one for the team.

SECOND BANANA. You watch your mouth, boy. You know I can kick your ass. Is that what you want?

ALPHA MALE. Drink your beer and go cool off.

(**ADOLESCENT MALE** *takes a magnifying glass and begins trying to burn bugs while sitting open legged on the ground.*)

SECOND BANANA. That boy's mouth of his is going to get his ass in trouble.

(**FIELD SCIENTIST** indicates to "tag" **ADOLESCENT FEMALE**, which **JANE** does, though the other characters do not notice.)

ALPHA MALE. And I said, drink your beer and go cool off.

FIELD SCIENTIST. (*standing by felled **ADOLESCENT FEMALE** though **JANE** is doing all the work*) It's of the utmost importance to track these animals' movements to see how they progress through their lives. As soon as the quick acting tranquilizer wears off she will be as good as new.

(**FIELD SCIENTIST** slaps **ADOLESCENT FEMALE** as though she were a head of cattle.)

It can be quite dangerous out here in the wild. (*full of himself*) One must always be aware of ones surroundings and take every precaution; one never knows the danger that might befall one.

(***JANE** is openly staring at him. **FIELD SCIENTIST** sees her and turns around quickly.*)

Good job, Jane.

ALPHA FEMALE. (*to **SUBORDINATE FEMALE***) Are you all right? You want me to get you a cold washrag?

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. I'm fine.

ALPHA FEMALE. You know you can't go mouthin' off to the men-folk that way. I brung you up better than that.

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. It's just not right.

ALPHA FEMALE. It's the way things are. You can't just go changin' things to suit yourself. I don't want you to have to learn things the way I did. Here, we can go have a lie down for a minute. You'll feel better.

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. I said I was fine. (*pause*) I'm sorry, Mama. Really I'm fine.

SECOND BANANA. If you'd watch that mouth of yours, you might have a date for the spring dance too.

Maybe the 'tard will take you.

ALPHA FEMALE. (*to OUTSIDE MALE*) Tell you the truth, the spring dance is about the biggest thing around these parts.

(*ADOLESCENT FEMALE rouses herself. ADOLESCENT MALE continues burning bugs with a magnifying glass. ADOLESCENT FEMALE begins playing with cat's cradle.*)

FIELD SCIENTIST. The spring dance is the rite of youth, and often involves the rituals in finding a mate.

ALPHA FEMALE. That's how I ended up with that big lug there.

ALPHA MALE. Yeah, there's nothin' more romantic than tryin' to get it on while every mosquito in the county is trying to munch on your dick.

ALPHA FEMALE. What have I told you about that kind of talk?

ALPHA MALE. What? I can't say mosquitoes?

ALPHA FEMALE. Especially in front of company...

SECOND BANANA. Company, what company? Some mute retard? He's probably got some retard disease, gonna infect us all and make us dumb.

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. I think you caught it.

ADOLESCENT MALE. Maybe you done caught it.

SECOND BANANA. Dammit, boy.

ADOLESCENT FEMALE. You promised.

ALPHA MALE. Son, I just don't know what to do with you. Son, are you listenin'?

ADOLESCENT MALE. Dad, I gotta go to the bathroom.

ALPHA MALE. Boy, what's wrong with you? Just go! Hell, you got a dick and there's a tree.

ALPHA FEMALE. Jase, really, is that necessary?

ALPHA MALE. Well what the hell is wrong with that boy? Are you sure he's mine?

ALPHA FEMALE. Any more talk like that and it's going to be more than mosquitoes that go after that prick of yours.

FIELD SCIENTIST. Though these antics may seem dangerous, this is a very old game the alpha female and alpha male are playing.

ALPHA MALE. And she wonders why I have to find relief somewhere else...

SECOND BANANA. (*to ADOLESCENT FEMALE*) So, we're going to the dance together, huh? I expect you to look real pretty for me. You got a new dress, right? I'd like to see you in something new, something skimpy.

(**SECOND BANANA** *sniffs* **ADOLESCENT FEMALE.**)

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. And you wonder why your last girlfriend didn't stick around. (*to OUTSIDE MALE*) She was weird anyway. She would only eat food out of this suitcase. If you gave her food, she's put it in the suitcase. If you ask me, she was about half retarded herself.

SECOND BANANA. She didn't mean nothin' to me anyway.

ADOLESCENT FEMALE. (*to SECOND BANANA*) You seemed sweet on her at the time.

ADOLESCENT MALE. You liked the suitcase girl.

SECOND BANANA. (*to ALPHA MALE*) You've got the mouthiest group of women over here I've ever seen.

(**SECOND BANANA** *spits near/at* **JANE.**)

Why don't you do something about your mouthy women folk?

(**JANE** *starts to react and the FIELD SCIENTIST, oblivious, pulls her to him.*)

FIELD SCIENTIST. Let's watch closely as the subordinate male tries to subtly undermine the authority of the alpha male. The alpha male must protect his flock of women that the subordinate male would seek to covet. Let's watch and see how the situation unfolds.

ALPHA MALE. Why, they don't give me no trouble. If they respect ya, they don't cause you no real trouble. If you catch my meaning.

SECOND BANANA. You trying to say something?

FIELD SCIENTIST. This could be construed as a direct challenge to the alpha male. Let's see if he perceives it that way...

ALPHA MALE. Boy, you're getting' a little close to my space here. I'd ratchet down if I's you.

FIELD SCIENTIST. I think we have a definite affirmative to that challenge.

(JANE shushes the FIELD SCIENTIST while the ALPHA MALE and SECOND BANANA begin to circle each other. Clock ticking begins in the background.)

SECOND BANANA. I don't know who you think died and left you in charge, but I can do 'bout anything you can do.

ALPHA MALE. That right?

SECOND BANANA. You're startin' to get a little older now. Not quite as fast, maybe not quite as strong.

ALPHA MALE. Think so?

SECOND BANANA. Me, I'm in my prime.

ALPHA MALE. You think you can take me, huh?

SECOND BANANA. Maybe.

ALPHA MALE. Just like that?

SECOND BANANA. Just like that.

FIELD SCIENTIST. This particular alpha male usually waits for the aggressor to attack, giving him every opportunity to avoid the confrontation.

(SECOND BANANA swings his beer bottle at the head of the ALPHA MALE, almost hitting JANE. The ALPHA MALE deftly avoids it and they begin to spar.)

ALPHA MALE. C'mon boy. Let's see what you've got.

(SECOND BANANA scores a few punches and a few bites. The ALPHA MALE bides his time, letting the SECOND BANANA move in closer.)

FIELD SCIENTIST. The alpha male is going to attempt to draw him in closer. He's definitely drawing him in. The only question is whether the alpha male will go for the serious injury on the subordinate male or...

(**ALPHA MALE** dodges a swing and takes the **SECOND BANANA** by the ear.)

No, he's going for the humiliation factor here. You've really got to watch your ears; this alpha male is quite a character.

ALPHA MALE. I've had just about enough of you for one evening, boy.

SECOND BANANA. Fuck you.

ALPHA MALE. (*wrenching him harder*) Maybe I didn't hear you correctly. Or maybe you didn't hear me correctly. I said, I've had about enough of you for one evening.

SECOND BANANA. And I said, fuck you.

(**SECOND BANANA** throws *penalty flag*. **ADOLESCENT MALE** picks it up, giggling, and ties it on as a headband and runs around.)

ALPHA MALE. (*wrenching him harder still*) Say that one more time. I'm waiting.

SECOND BANANA. Sorry.

ALPHA MALE. What's that?

SECOND BANANA. I said I was sorry.

ALPHA MALE. Louder.

SECOND BANANA. Sorry.

(**ALPHA MALE** releases **SECOND BANANA** who appears to consider a second attack on the **ALPHA MALE** and then reconsiders it. **ADOLESCENT MALE** grabs four beers and passes them out to the males.)

ALPHA MALE. That a boy. I might learn you yet.

SECOND BANANA. (*indicating to **OUTSIDE MALE**, who is getting a beer*) Why the hell does he get a beer? What the hell has he done? Just some no-name retard that wanders in off the street, and we're gonna give him a beer?

ADOLESCENT MALE. We've got enough for everybody.

SECOND BANANA. They teach you that in school?

ALPHA MALE. Let him be. That was real considerate of you, son. Kinda dumb, but real nice.

(*The ADOLESCENT MALE beams in pride.*)

ADOLESCENT MALE. I'm considerate.

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. Why do you care about him so much? He's not hurtin' anything. Hell, he's not doing anything but sitting there bleeding.

SECOND BANANA. Bleedin'? He's probably one of those AIDS faggots; I say we get rid of his ass right now. He's probably infecting all of us as we speak.

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. That's just stupid. He's not hurtin' you.

SECOND BANANA. He is if he gets me sick. What if he gets us all sick? You can't just bring home every mangy dog you find.

ADOLESCENT MALE. He's not a dog, though. He's a man.

SECOND BANANA. Anybody that looks like that has got to be part animal.

ADOLESCENT FEMALE. You promised, you remember, you said...

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. Why don't you go get drunk and pass out somewhere else?

SECOND BANANA. You're some kinda faggot lover, ain't ya? That it? Faggot lover.

FIELD SCIENTIST. Not feeling particularly physically inspired at the moment, the subordinate male is reduced to name-calling.

SECOND BANANA. Faggot lover.

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. I'd say it takes one to know one.

ALPHA FEMALE. Why don't we all go inside for a little while? I think the heat's starting to get to everyone.

SECOND BANANA. What are you trying to say?

ADOLESCENT MALE. (*trying to be helpful*) She said, it takes one to know one.

ALPHA MALE. Son.

SECOND BANANA. I've had just about enough of your mouth.

ALPHA FEMALE. Kate, we've talked about this before.

OUTSIDE FEMALE. Just ignore him. You know how he gets. He's just trying to get all the attention.

ADOLESCENT FEMALE. Why does everyone have to fight all the time? You promised you wouldn't do this.

SECOND BANANA. I'm not doing anything. I'm just having a little conversation here is all.

ADOLESCENT FEMALE. I hate this.

ALPHA MALE. If you get scared just come over here by me, little pumpkin head.

(ALPHA FEMALE starts to swoon and catches herself.)

ALPHA MALE. Dammit Ma, what's wrong with you?

ADOLESCENT FEMALE. Mama, are you okay?

OUTSIDE FEMALE. *(to ADOLESCENT FEMALE)* You win if you walk away, you know. You'll be the bigger person for it. Just let it go.

ALPHA MALE. Just trying to get attention, aren't you Ma?

ALPHA FEMALE. Don't you worry your pretty little head about it, dear. Just one of my spells.

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. I can protect myself just fine.

ALPHA MALE. Spells my ass. I'm getting sick of your spells woman.

OUTSIDE FEMALE. He could really hurt you.

ALPHA FEMALE. It's nothing. Won't happen again.

ALPHA MALE. Better not.

OUTSIDE FEMALE. I just don't want to see you hurt. Let me help you.

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. I don't need your type of help. The only person around here you can help is Dad. Why don't you just keep in mind what you are around here.

ADOLESCENT MALE. Don't get hurt, Kate. I don't want you to get hurt. Dad?

ALPHA MALE. Your sister's gotta learn, boy.

SECOND BANANA. Well, well, well. Seems like everyone's scared for ya. Are you smart enough to be scared with all your college smarts? Are you gonna try to protect that faggot retard of yours?

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. You're nothing but a homophobic bully.

SECOND BANANA. Yeah well... what'd you call me?

ALPHA MALE. Learned that in college, did ya? 'Bout them homosexuals. I've heard some of the learnin' that goes on in college, 'specially 'tween the women-folk. Maybe I shoulda gone to college myself.

ALPHA FEMALE. I think you've learned enough on your own. I've seen those magazines of yours.

ALPHA MALE. They're pretty good, ain't they? Why can't ya'll do stuff like that?

SECOND BANANA. You think I'm some kinda... funny bunny?

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. I like rump ranger. Even butt pirate's got a nice ring to it.

(OUTSIDE MALE stands.)

SECOND BANANA. What'd you say, bitch?

SUBORDINATE FEMALE. Faggot.

SECOND BANANA. Bitch, it's time somebody in this family taught you some manners.

(SECOND BANANA pulls back to hit SUBORDINATE FEMALE, but OUTSIDE MALE grabs his wrist.)

OUTSIDE MALE. Once is enough.

SECOND BANANA. So you can talk, retard.

(SECOND BANANA and OUTSIDE MALE begin to sniff and circle each other.)

FIELD SCIENTIST. Having his use of power curtailed by the lowest ranking male is not acceptable. The outside male may have just overstepped his bounds by interfering. Let us observe the confrontation as it unfolds...

(FIELD SCIENTIST goes to JANE and whispers in her ear.)

OUTSIDE MALE. Yeah, I can still talk. Are you scared?

SECOND BANANA. What, of some little bitch dog like you? I'm looking forward to this.

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