

NOTES

In the tradition of the science fiction classic, *Planet of the Apes*, along with a nod to Jake Barton's poetry collection, *The Dog Pound*, playwrights Gregory T. Burns and Bryan Denbow take us to the future—where Earth is no longer run by humans. Instead, society is governed by Dogs and Cats, and humans have become more-or-less indentured pets. *The Human(e) Society* takes a poignant look at society as a whole, as we ponder the question: Hundreds of years from now, will societal problems be all that different from the problems we face today? This futuristic tragic-comedy should be performed by two males and may be entered in either Duo Interpretation or Duet Acting. A single male, however, may choose to perform this as a multiple character Dramatic Interpretation. There is a lot of sci-fi fodder found within these scenes; however, it is important to play the two main characters, Joe and Mohammad, realistically. As performers begin the arduous task of creating characters, stay true to the breed: Boxers—honest, dependable, likeable, and masculine. They have a sense of humor and use it frequently. Also, be mature, and don't try to over-emphasize the use of the "B" word, which, of course, may be cut or edited at the performer's discretion. Just remember that the word merely refers to a female dog, and, in the context of this play, is simply spoken as everyday language used during conversation between two male canines. There is a multiple character public service announcement within this play. The commercial should be played for its drama, not comedy. The goal should be to make the audience empathize with the plight of what will happen to those humans who are *not* adopted. This is a powerful play—enjoy!

Characters:

Joe, a canine Boxer

Mohammad, a canine Boxer

Voice-Over

Luke, a human

Martha, a human toddler

Dog 1, a dog who adopts a human

Edna, an elderly human

Scene One: Human Feeding Time

Joe: (*Feeding the humans in their cages*) Here you go. That's a good boy. Come on. Don't be afraid. It's okay. I know you're scared, but there's no need to be afraid of me. I won't bite. (*Calling humans to cages*) Ttt. Ttt. Ttt. (*Petting a human through a cage.*) Yes, that's a good human—a *very* good human. (*To another human*) Ttt. Ttt. Ttt. Hey, Guy, you are so excited today. Yes, you are! Yes, you are! Yes, you're a pretty human. Yes, you are! Such a pretty Guy! I brought you some food. Yes, I did. Yes, I did. Pretty Guy! Pretty boy!

Mohammad: Everything okay in there, Joe?

Joe: Yeah, I'm just finishing up feeding the lot for the night. Guy is so excited! I think I'm starting to get attached to this one. (*To Guy, the human*) Yes, I am. Yes, I am. (*To Mohammad*) It just irritates me. Why don't dogs get these humans fixed or neutered? They just breed and breed; and then they have to be euthanized, if they don't get adopted. It's not their fault. Homo sapiens just want to make us happy. They are so innocent, so trusting, and so cute.

Mohammad: That may be well and true, but some of those Homo sapiens are pretty finicky eaters. And a lot of those homos seem scared to death.

Joe: Of course, they're scared. I would be, too.

Mohammad: They just have to get use to horrible food! I wish we could give them something better. More vegetables and stuff, things they crave.

Joe: Well, they better get used to it. Human shelters don't receive the state funding like they used to. The food is horrible, but at least they get a meal. It has to be better than scavenging on the streets.

Mohammad: That's for sure. The economy's a mess. I'm telling ya. Ever since they cut everyone's wages by 14%, Lola's been after me to get a second job. With her hoity-toity French family always finding ways to point out how *their breed* is better than mine, the bitch is always wanting me to go out and buy the best of everything, ya know? She's a wonderful, loving bitch, don't get me wrong, but she is a little spoiled sometimes.

Joe: Well, that's what you get for marrying a Poodle.

Mohammad: I love her, Joe. I really do, but she's just so spoiled, you know? I mean, it's not enough to have a matching set of dog bowls when her family comes over—*nooooo*. Now we have to use the best bowls all the time, not just for special occasions. And the way she runs up our credit cards is almost unnatural. I'm telling ya, Joe. It's a homo eat homo world out there, my friend; a homo eat homo world. (*To Guy, the human*) You wouldn't do that! Would

ya, boy? No, you wouldn't. No, you wouldn't. You're a good human, yes you are! Such a good homo, yes you are! (*To Joe*) I tell ya. If I didn't already have two humans back at the house, I'd take some of these guys home.

Joe: Yeah, but what would Lola say?

Mohammad: Are you kiddin' me? She'd bark her head off all night long. Lola refuses to have any more humans. She says they're too much trouble; plus, there's the expense of feeding them. It really makes me sad, but the bitch is right.

Scene Two: Politics

Joe: (*Reading the paper*) Hey, Mo, did you hear about that controversial politician upstate running for the senate?

Mohammad: No. What about it?

Joe: (*Long pause*) It's not even a tom-cat. It's a feline queen! A female cat! Need I say more? Times are changing.

Mohammad: Well, felines—they've got a right to run for office, if they want to; after all, like you said—times are changing, whether we agree with feline rights or not. Ever since cats got the right to vote, things in this country have started to change. I mean, I'm not saying anything racist about cats, but it's just getting different out there, that's all. And now that the Supreme Court made it legal for dogs and cats to get married, well—all bets are off! What next? *Humans* and dogs can get married? Ya know, when you get right down to it, you just have to question a cat's agenda. I mean, they are a different species. Literally, they are a different *species*. We're canines, and they're felines.

Joe: (*Trying to find the quote from the newspaper*) It says here in the paper, listen to this, "I, unlike my canine opponent, have run a clean campaign—"

Mohammad: (*Quickly interjecting*) Well, cats *are* known for being clean. But all that licking themselves is a little much. They do it non-stop. I mean, I don't care what they do in the privacy of their own homes, but do they have to flaunt it? It's just gross. It's really gross. Sick, actually.

Joe: Ha! That's funny—politically incorrect, but funny. (*Continuing to read from the newspaper*) She, the cat queen, goes on to say, "—And I promise to fight for the issues that are important to all felines." Of course, there is no mention about what she can do for canines. Whaddaya think of that, huh?