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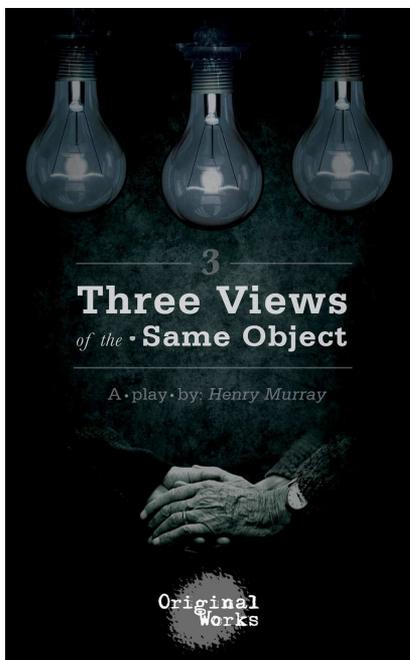
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Monkey Adored
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*Also Available By
Henry Murray*



THREE VIEWS OF THE SAME OBJECT

By Henry Murray

Synopsis: Jesse and Poppy have a suicide pact against the time that illness and infirmity make life impossible to continue unassisted. But what becomes of the pact if one falls ill and the other is still healthy? And how do you know when it's just before being too late? **THREE VIEWS OF THE SAME OBJECT** offers three different dramatic outcomes to the problems facing the elderly in America.

Cast Size: 2 Males, 2-4 Females

Monkey Adored

**A play by
Henry Murray**

**For
Lewin Wertheimer
And
Diane Williams**

All thoughts of a turtle are turtle.

Emerson

But whether the mind is enlightened or deluded, there is nothing beyond it, and it is essentially the same in all beings, human or nonhuman.

Kalu Rinpoche

Outside of a dog, a book is man's best friend. Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read.

Groucho Marx

Production History

MONKEY ADORED was given its world premiere by Rogue Machine Theatre in Los Angeles, California, opening October 8, 2011. It was directed and produced by John Perrin Flynn; The Assistant Director was Brenda Davidson; it was co-produced by Mathew Elkins and Edward Tournier; the technical director was David Mauer; the set design was by Stephanie Kerley Schwartz; the costume design was by Lauren Tyler; the lighting design was by Dan Weingarten; the sound design was by Joseph “Sloe” Slawinski; the puppeteers were David Combs and Linda Hoag, The production manager was Amanda Mauer and the stage manager was Ramon Valdez. The cast was as follows:

PENGUINITO: Ron Bottitta
BROWN SPOT: David Mauer/Justin Oakin
ELAINE OSTRICH: Jennifer Taub
SONNY BONOBO: Edward Tournier
MADELINE KAHN: Amanda Mauer
JAMES RAT: Patrick Flanagan

Acknowledgements

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Thanks to my insightful friends and advisors: Kim Terrell; Laurie Lathem; Jean Craig; Sherry Sonnett; Nora Dvosin; Jeffery Karoff; Linda Stonerock; Diane Williams; Luca Stewart; and my husband Lewin Wertheimer.

Thanks to the many and good people of Rogue Machine Theatre for delivering a dream production and especially John Perrin Flynn for his deep and enduring vision.

My eternal affection and gratitude to you all.

Characters:

<u>PENGUINITO:</u>	a busboy
<u>BROWN SPOT:</u>	a homedog
<u>ELAINE OSTRICH:</u>	a waitress
<u>SONNY BONOBO:</u>	a monkey
<u>MADELINE KAHN:</u>	a sexy pussycat
<u>JAMES RAT:</u>	a politically active rodent

Assorted shadow puppet passersby. Large puppets of humans: the Bomb Squad Investigator and the Lab Technician. Puppet of The Star-nosed Mole, Mr. Stubbs, the chimpanzee. Attachable puppet bodies for the actors playing Madeline Kahn and Penguinito.

In café scenes, as creatures approach and appear in silhouette on the window shade they should be represented as a cut out or cartoon caricature of the animal they represent. However, when actors are on stage, only a minimal nod to the animal represented should be made. Some light make-up, false ears, perhaps even a tail (or in James Rat's case, a stub), but the actors stand on two legs, sit in chairs and wear clothes. Exceptions are noted in the text.

Please see a further discussion of puppetry and special effects in PRODUCTION NOTES at the end of the play.

Monkey Adored

ACT 1

Scene 1

Breakfast time inside Le Café Café. Upstage is the large street-facing window of the café. The shade is drawn against the morning sun. The busboy, PENGUINITO is setting tables. (When PENGUINITO is not actively doing something, he stands to one side, reading a worn paperback on string theory, which he keeps in the pocket of his tux.) On the shade, we see the silhouette of a dog approach the door, then BROWN SPOT, a big, handsome, square-headed mutt, enters and sits at a table for two. He has a rubber ball that he tosses and catches from time to time.

PENGUINITO: Something to drink?

BROWN SPOT: I'd love some coffee, por favor.

PENGUINITO: Decaf or regular?

BROWN SPOT: How can I make a decision before I've had my coffee?

PENGUINITO: The illusion of free will is present in every moment.

BROWN SPOT: In that case, I'll have half-caf.

PENGUINITO: I am encrusted with the scales of living.

(PENGUINITO exits. BROWN SPOT'S cell phone rings and he quickly shuts it off, checks it and then texts. ELAINE OSTRICH brings coffee to BROWN'S table.

ELAINE wears exaggerated eye make-up and a plume in her hair. Even though it is morning, she has already been drinking.)

ELAINE OSTRICH: Hi, Hon. Sorry you had to wait. Aw, you don't even have a menu. Penguinito!

BROWN SPOT: No hurry. I'm meeting someone.

ELAINE OSTRICH: Lucky you. Anyone I know?

BROWN SPOT: Just my favorite of the great apes.

ELAINE OSTRICH: Sonny Bonobo? Haven't seen him in a coon's age.

BROWN SPOT: He's been in the lab. Just got out a couple of days ago.

ELAINE OSTRICH: Hey, you two have been prancing 'round the Maypole for a long time now. When you gonna to get it together?

BROWN SPOT: That is the topic of this morning's breakfast. Heh, heh. I'm trying to work up the courage to ask him to move in with me.

ELAINE OSTRICH: Just go for it. You'd be the best thing that ever happened to him. Not that I'd expect him to mend his wayward ways. Get you something while you wait?

BROWN SPOT: Cream for my coffee?

ELAINE OSTRICH: Sorry. I'm half asleep this morning. That damn rooster never crowed. But don't let me bore

you with my troubles. Penguinito! Dos menus and give Bossie a squeeze, por favor!

(ELAINE exits.)

(The form of a Bonobo Ape passes on the window shade and SONNY BONOBO enters dressed like an organ grinder's monkey.)

SONNY BONOBO: Brown Spot!

BROWN SPOT: Hey, you look great! *(SONNY and BROWN SPOT tussle.)* How's your head?

SONNY BONOBO: *(He lifts his cap and shows a large shaved spot with a bandage.)* Healing.

BROWN SPOT: The hair will grow back.

SONNY BONOBO: And please don't offer embarrassing words of affection.

(PENGUINITO enters with cream and two menus.)

PENGUINITO: You like something to drink?

SONNY BONOBO: Coffee, as fast as you can. Nice tux.

PENGUINITO: I spent all my life learning to be me.

(He exits. SONNY eyes him.)

SONNY BONOBO: Cool.

BROWN SPOT: Freedom feels pretty nice, huh? And statistically, you won't have to go back.

SONNY BONOBO: Statistically, I'd rather be dead.
Vivisectionists, the lot of them.

BROWN SPOT: Humans are not so bad. Hey, there's
something I want to...

SONNY BONOBO: If people descended from apes, that
was a hell of a drop.

BROWN SPOT: Right. Listen, you must need a little time
to get on your...

SONNY BONOBO: They've been at the top of the food
chain too long. They forget that once you die the bot-
tom of the food chain gets it's revenge. (*singing*) The
ants go marching two by two...

BROWN SPOT: But look at all the good things humans
do...

SONNY BONOBO: Humans have never gotten over the
fact that chimpanzees were first in space.

BROWN SPOT: But who built the rocket?

SONNY BONOBO: Who injected themselves with extract
of monkey testicle to increase their virility?

BROWN SPOT: Humans did that?

SONNY BONOBO: The Fifties were a strange time.

BROWN SPOT: Look. I don't want to get into an argu-
ment...

(*PENGUINITO delivers SONNY'S coffee.*)

PENGUINITO: A pleasant hour may be spent in sapient dialectic.

(PENGUINITO exits. The shadow of a cat passes on the window shade.)

BROWN SPOT: What I want to say is, I fixed up my place and if you...

(MADELINE KAHN enters.)

MADELINE KAHN: Sonny! Sonny Bonobo!

SONNY BONOBO: Madeline Kahn!

MADELINE KAHN: Hey, you wascal, I thought I'd find you here.

(SONNY jumps up and gives her a kiss and grabs a chair.)

SONNY BONOBO: What's up puss? Hey, this is my dog, Brown Spot.

MADELINE KAHN: Do you have a hairy chest?

BROWN SPOT: I do.

MADELINE KAHN: Oooo... Mind if I join you?

BROWN SPOT: Ah...

SONNY BONOBO: Brown Spot here refuses to acknowledge simian superiority.

BROWN SPOT: Monkeys are imitators. They see, they do. I'm sorry Sonny, but it's your nature.

MADELINE KAHN: Are you just going to sit there and take that?

SONNY BONOBO: Well, I'm certainly not going to stand for it.

BROWN SPOT: And cats have never gotten over the fact that the Egyptians once worshiped them as divine.

MADELINE KAHN: Was that a catty remark?

BROWN SPOT: Nothing personal, Madeline Kahn, but where would... you... be...

(BROWN SPOT freezes in suspended animation. The Café window becomes twinkling stars and swirling galaxies. A cut out of a dog swims through the Universe. PENGUINITO is coming to take MADELINE'S order. He stops and watches and is the only one who sees the universe through the window. MADELINE waves her hand in front of BROWN'S face.)

SONNY BONOBO: He has these little fits sometimes.

MADELINE KAHN: He just stops?

SONNY BONOBO: He's discontinuous. It's a kind of epilepsy.

(The dog cutout lands and the café window returns to normal. BROWN's hand trembles against the tabletop for a moment, then he continues.)

BROWN SPOT: ...where... would... you be without canned tuna?

MADELINE KAHN: Honey, are you okay?

BROWN SPOT: I'm fine.

MADELINE KAHN: And that is the lie each one of us tells on a daily basis.

(PENGUINITO approaches the table.)

PENGUINITO: You want coffee?

MADELINE KAHN: Por favor.

PENGUINITO: The universe looks at itself through our eyes. *(He exits.)*

SONNY BONOBO: But don't you think cats are stronger than the rest of us in some ways?

BROWN SPOT: I'd have to say that cats are more flexible and therefore more enduring.

(ELAINE enters with her pad.)

MADELINE KAHN: Fewines have never been in power. We don't have the wole models or the support system.

ELAINE OSTRICH: Okay kids, enough fun, let's order.

SONNY BONOBO: How about a nice chicken breast?

ELAINE OSTRICH: Just what's on the menu.

SONNY BONOBO: You playing hard to get?

ELAINE OSTRICH: Nope.

SONNY BONOBO: You wanna play “get it hard”?

ELAINE OSTRICH: And, nope.

SONNY BONOBO: Why not?

ELAINE OSTRICH: I remember how disappointed I was the last time.

BROWN SPOT: Ouch!

MADLINE KAHN: Bulls-eye!

ELAINE OSTRICH: So, Sonny, what would you say to a nice... big... I’m talking BIG... stack of... Banana pancakes!

(SONNY screeches and makes excited noises.)

ELAINE OSTRICH: I thought so.

MADLINE KAHN: Just coffee for me.

ELAINE OSTRICH: The anorexia special. Well, what’s one life more or less to you?

BROWN SPOT: What are your specials?

ELAINE OSTRICH: Grilled breast of sourdough or tofu surprise, with or without pesto.

BROWN SPOT: Tofu with pesto. And a side of kibble.

ELAINE OSTRICH: Ha! Got’cha covered. *(She starts to exit.)*

SONNY BONOBO: Let me ask you something, Elaine.
Why did the chicken cross the road?

ELAINE OSTRICH: You looking for a piece of my action?

SONNY BONOBO: I'm just saying, assuming that the chicken actually did cross the road, and we have no proof, there's no photo of the chicken crossing the road, I mean, what was her motivation? Was she bored?

ELAINE OSTRICH: Not to throw sand in your lubricant but I'm an ostrich.

SONNY BONOBO: Maybe it was more of an irrational impulse. Something about the road itself, something inherent in "the other side"...

ELAINE OSTRICH: Listen, short and stinky, let me ask you something ...

SONNY BONOBO: Did she look both ways for cars?

ELAINE OSTRICH: ...given an army of monkeys and an infinite number of typewriters, how long would it take you to extract your head from your butt?

(As she exits, SONNY calls out:)

SONNY BONOBO: Yeah? Which came first, fried chicken or the omelet?

BROWN SPOT: I think you got on her good side.

SONNY BONOBO: She's always in a foul mood.

(The shadow of a rat appears on the window. It has large sunglasses, a blind person's cane and a tin cup for begging. It chooses a spot to beg in front of the window.)

MADLINE KAHN: So, Bwown. In my opinion, this mating in twos has been hampering the cause of evowution since Noah's Awk. Egg-wayers should have the wight to choose the finest penis-beawer available.

SONNY BONOBO: That's an overtly ovulatory point of view.

BROWN SPOT: Penis bear?

SONNY BONOBO: Penis-bear-er. As opposed to egg-layer.

BROWN SPOT: Got it.

(PENGUINITO places Madeline's coffee on the table.)

PENGUINITO: I eat my childhood for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

(He returns to his station.)

BROWN SPOT: So, why shouldn't a penis-bearer also want to fertilize the choicest egg?

MADLINE KAHN: That would wequire discernment. Wouldn't it?

SONNY BONOBO: She has a point. You can't think and have a hard-on at the same time.

BROWN SPOT: You can't.

SONNY BONOBO: Sniff my butt.

BROWN SPOT: And what happens if you fall in love?

(SONNY BONOBO and MADELINE KAHN burst into peals of laughter.)

MADELINE KAHN: I'm sowwy, Bwown Spot. But can you tell me the difference between wuv and wust?

SONNY BONOBO: I can. Love is lust with a hidden agenda.

(More giggles from SONNY & MADELINE.)

BROWN SPOT: Then how do you choose who gets to fertilize your eggs, Madeline?

MADELINE KAHN: For all we know, the decision is contwolled at the wevel of cwomosomes.

BROWN SPOT: Our genes?

MADELINE KAHN: What gets passed on? Genetic code, ultimatewy.

BROWN SPOT: But what about the fun of getting to know someone? What about actually liking someone?

SONNY BONOBO: Point for Brown Spot. He's being double-teamed... but! He has Love on his side.

BROWN SPOT: Madeline, do you really believe that what we call "falling in love" is just our genetics exercising control?

MADELINE KAHN: Doesn't the verb "falwing" impwy a woss of contwol? In fact, isn't our vewy being the we-sult of all our yesterdays pwus what our pawents did to us?

SONNY BONOBO: Point for Madeline Kahn. She has actually managed to call Free Will into question.

MADELINE KAHN: And before our pawents were our gwandpawents. And so on back through history. All the way back to The Big Orgasm.

BROWN SPOT: Don't you mean the Big Bang?

MADELINE KAHN: That phwase may weassure your mascuwinity but you can't have a bang in a vacuum. Cweation is a mother's job.

BROWN SPOT: You're saying the fate of the universe was decided at the moment of its creation?

SONNY BONOBO: You're saying women have orgasms?

MADELINE KAHN: Destiny unfolds cause by cause.

BROWN SPOT: The Big Orgasm. So God is a woman?

(The rat exits his place at the window.)

MADELINE KAHN: Whoops, I'm going to be wate for wehearsal!

(MADELINE begins to exit rapidly.)

SONNY BONOBO: Madeline! I'll pick you up after your show tonight. We'll do something fun.

MADELINE KAHN: You betcha'. Kisses.

(MADELINE exits on the run. The shadow of a cat on the window shade.)

SONNY BONOBO: Beneath that glamorous facade there beats a truly glamorous heart.

(ELAINE OSTRICH appears, plates in hand.)

ELAINE OSTRICH: Okay, banana pancakes for the one with the funny ears. Syrup. And tofu for you-fu. Anything else I can get'cha?

BROWN SPOT: Salsa?

ELAINE OSTRICH: *(Exiting)* Penguinito! Salsa de las Muertas para el bow wow, por favor.

SONNY BONOBO: *(Chewing.)* So if I understand her correctly, when I feel like I want to get in Madeline Kahn's panties it's my chromosomes talking?

BROWN SPOT: Exactly. Now you don't have to beat yourself up for all your sleazy impulses.

SONNY BONOBO: No, I have you to do that for me.

(PENGUINITO enters with salsa & coffee. But before he can get to the table, there is an EXPLOSION off stage. The rat runs past the window, followed by various running animals. SONNY, BROWN and PENGUINITO all stop and stare at the window. BROWN SPOT gives a startled bark.)

SONNY BONOBO: What was that?

BROWN SPOT: The Liberation Front. They're getting more active.

(Sirens are going off. The sound of a helicopter.)

PENGUINITO: You like more café?

(He pours coffee. BROWN puts salsa on his tofu.)

BROWN SPOT: Thank you.

PENGUINITO: Only the hermaphrodite is whole.

(PENGUINITO returns to his station. BROWN's cell phone gets text, which he glances at and quickly puts away. SONNY's curiosity is aroused.)

BROWN SPOT: So... where have you been staying?

SONNY BONOBO: Gecko's.

BROWN SPOT: Is it nice?

SONNY BONOBO: It gets good sun. He's very accommodating. Bordering on passive.

BROWN SPOT: Is this a romance?

SONNY BONOBO: I don't know. He's a really nice shade of green.

BROWN SPOT: You don't waste any time.

SONNY BONOBO: Are those tears in your eyes?

BROWN SPOT: This salsa would blister asphalt.

(ELAINE enters.)

ELAINE OSTRICH: Here's the check boys... but take your time.

BROWN SPOT: My treat, Sonny. Welcome home.

ELAINE OSTRICH: I'll be right back with your change.
(Scratching BROWN's chin.) What a wonderful face, it has loyalty written all over it. Hey Sonny, why don't you move in with Brown Spot?

BROWN SPOT: Gasp.

ELAINE OSTRICH: I hear he fixed up his place real nice.
(exiting) Not that you deserve it.

(They sit there for a moment, a big awkward grin on BROWN's face.)

BROWN SPOT: Just say no. And I can move on with my life.

SONNY BONOBO: You're my best friend.

BROWN SPOT: I'm man's best friend. It's a thankless job.

(There are sirens in the distance. The large shadow of a human appears against the window shade. It tries to peer into the café. SONNY, terrified, leaps into BROWN SPOT's lap.)

SONNY BONOBO: They're coming for me!

BROWN SPOT: It's okay. It's probably looking for whoever set off that bomb.

SONNY BONOBO: Make it go away!

(BROWN SPOT gives a friendly bark. The shadow passes from the window.)

BROWN SPOT: I won't let them take you.

SONNY BONOBO: My hero. *(Wiggling a bit.)* This is kind of cozy.

BROWN SPOT: I'll protect you.

SONNY BONOBO: Nice words, but... do you have a hard-on?

BROWN SPOT: No.

SONNY BONOBO: You do.

BROWN SPOT: I don't.

SONNY BONOBO: I can feel it.

BROWN SPOT: Alright, I do.

SONNY BONOBO: I like it. *(He bounces up and down.)*
Boing, boing, boing... *(He launches himself.)* Apes in Space! *(He is in orbit.)*

BROWN SPOT: I'm so ashamed.

SONNY BONOBO: I take it as a compliment.

BROWN SPOT: You could have bounced a few more times.

(ELAINE enters with the change.)

ELAINE OSTRICH: Here you go, Brown Spot.

BROWN SPOT: Hey Elaine, how you doing after that surgery?

ELAINE OSTRICH: (*Grabbing her left breast and giving it a shake.*) Looks real, don't it. I'm a little weak in the wing 'cause they went up here to get a lymph node but I'll be fine. Worst was the chemo. Funny thing is, I'm the first in my family. My mother was a tough old bird. She never had a wrinkle on her face until the day she died. I guess that's what comes from sleeping with your head in the sand. Ha!

BROWN SPOT: Well, hang in there.

ELAINE OSTRICH: Will do. You two have a good day. I'm watching you, Sonny.

SONNY BONOBO: How long have you been in love with me?

BROWN SPOT: I didn't say I was in love with you.

SONNY BONOBO: But you are.

BROWN SPOT: No, I, you know... I mean what is love, except that you kinda remind me of my dad?

SONNY BONOBO: Brown. Sometimes I feel like I could grow to love you.

BROWN SPOT: That's a rotten thing to say. I was perfectly clear two seconds ago.

SONNY BONOBO: And if I move in? No rules about who I have sex with?

BROWN SPOT: I don't want to put a leash on you. All we ever have is the present moment in which to love each other.

SONNY BONOBO: You really mean that?

BROWN SPOT: Yes.

SONNY BONOBO: Let's get my things. And hey, what about Friday night?

BROWN SPOT: What about it?

SONNY BONOBO: A real date, just the two of us.

BROWN SPOT: Awww, I don't know. I'd like to keep things tentative in case something better comes up for me.

SONNY BONOBO: Not much chance of that.

BROWN SPOT: Really? Why is that?

(SONNY grabs BROWN SPOT's ball. There is a brief game of keep-away and SONNY throws it off stage. BROWN SPOT is galvanized.)

BROWN SPOT: Oh, not nice. You think I can't resist that. You think instinct, which is possibly another way of saying "genetic code", is stronger than reason.

SONNY BONOBO: You're sweating.

BROWN SPOT: I'm going to stand here until you tell me why nothing better will come up for me. *(He gets a startled look.)* No! Don't touch that! That's my ball!

(Brown goes running off after the ball.)

SONNY BONOBO: 'Cause after me, it's all downhill.

ACT 1

Scene 2

A small, rusted, busted-up convertible car. SONNY BONOBO and MADELINE KAHN are snuggling in a space hardly big enough to hold them. There are an ever-increasing number of arms and legs in the love tussle.

MADELINE KAHN: Nice caw, Sonny.

SONNY BONOBO: At least it runs.

MADELINE KAHN: Well, I'm happy you're fwee again.
It must have been howwible.

SONNY BONOBO: Life in a cage...

MADELINE KAHN: And what they did to you!

SONNY BONOBO: Physical pain stops when it's over.
It's the psychological damage...

MADELINE KAHN: Poor baby.

SONNY BONOBO: If only I could bury my face in some
kitty's titties. It's been so long...

MADELINE KAHN: Oh Sonny, here. *(She exposes her cleavage.)* Could you move your...

SONNY BONOBO: Here, let me...

MADELINE KAHN: That's better.

SONNY BONOBO: Ahhhhh...

MADELINE KAHN: Poor thing.

(She tries to pet him.)

SONNY BONOBO: Not the head!

MADELINE KAHN: Oh spit! Sonny, I'm so sorry about that night.

SONNY BONOBO: It wasn't your fault.

MADELINE KAHN: But if I hadn't picked a fight with you wouldn't have gone wunning out in the wain and you might not have been captured.

SONNY BONOBO: Yes, that part was your fault.

MADELINE KAHN: Well, it's not wike I didn't have pwovocation. You cheated on me with a Shetwand Pony.

SONNY BONOBO: My first true blond.

MADELINE KAHN: And the beaw?

SONNY BONOBO: Rough sex.

MADELINE KAHN: But the Platypus? I mean she defined ugwy!

SONNY BONOBO: What can I say, she had her own trampoline!

MADELINE KAHN: You hurt my feewings.

SONNY BONOBO: Madeline, it's not as if you were the soul of discretion. The wolverine?

MADELINE KAHN: Well, I ask you, when the fuww moon wises, who can wesist a wolverine?

SONNY BONOBO: And the porcupine? Talk about un-safe sex.

MADELINE KAHN: You knew about the porcupine?

SONNY BONOBO: What about that donkey?

MADELINE KAHN: That DONG-KEY! What was I thinking? At weast I didn't wub your nose in it.

SONNY BONOBO: At least I was honest.

MADELINE KAHN: I forgive you, Sonny.

(JAMES RAT appears in a raincoat and army boots. He has on dark glasses and perhaps carries a blind person's stick. He peeks over the tops of his glasses.)

SONNY BONOBO: Thanks. Um, could you move your...

MADELINE KAHN: Oopsie doodle...

SONNY BONOBO: This is in the way...

(SONNY produces MADEILINE's panties and tosses them out of the car where they land at JAMES' feet.)

MADELINE KAHN: Oh! Sonny, you wascal.

SONNY BONOBO: Can you lift this leg any higher?

MADELINE KAHN: Oh!

SONNY BONOBO: That's what I call a perfect fit.

MADELINE KAHN: Sonny, I want to tell you thwee things.

SONNY BONOBO: Tell me.

MADELINE KAHN: One: Bananas Foster.

(SONNY quivers all over and whimpers.)

MADELINE KAHN: Oh Sonny, yes. *(They pause looking at each other, panting.)* Two: Banana Cweme Pie!

(SONNY makes excited monkey noises and MADELINE moans with pleasure. They recover their focus.)

MADELINE KAHN: Three: Chocowate Covered Fwozen Banana Pops!

(SONNY squeals in delight bouncing up and down. MADELINE yowls like a cat in heat... then she sees JAMES.)

MADELINE KAHN: A wat! A wat! A wat!

(JAMES exits quickly.)

SONNY BONOBO: You go girl!

(MADELINE bursts into tears.)

MADELINE KAHN: Oh Sonny, that was incwedible.

SONNY BONOBO: Damn Madeline! Rocket to the moon!

(MADELINE bursts into laughter.)

MADELINE KAHN: Now I feel like smoking some catnip.

SONNY BONOBO: I'll drive you home.

(They exit.)

ACT 1

Scene 3

MADELINE KAHN's place. A bed with an end table with a photo of Sonny.

MADELINE KAHN: C'mon in, Sonny. I'll get the stash.

SONNY BONOBO: I'm not really into the Nip.

MADELINE KAHN: You want something to dwink? Maybe a nice hot shower?

SONNY BONOBO: I can't. I'm going over Gecko's for a bit.

MADELINE KAHN: Oh! How about we go out on Fwi-day?

SONNY BONOBO: Love to. But. Date with Brown Spot.

MADELINE KAHN: O-Kaaay.

SONNY BONOBO: I'll call you tomorrow.

(He exits.)

MADELINE KAHN: I'll hold my breath. *(She turns SONNY's photo face down.)* Maybe I should become a wesbian.

(We hear a "boing...boing...boing". MADELINE pounces, holds something tiny up to the light.)

MADELINE KAHN: Helwo there, wittle fwea. Just when I think I've hit wock bottom, you guys always show up. Thank you for weminding me that things can always get worse and...welcome to your next wife!

(MADELINE pinches off the flea's head and tosses the body into the air making the sound of something tiny falling and hitting the floor with a tiny crash. She reclines on the bed.)

(Suddenly there is a crash and JAMES RAT (puppet) falls through the skylight and lands with a thud behind the bed. Or perhaps he has been hiding under the bad. JAMES (the actor) stands wearing a lengthy segment of his own severed tail around his neck.)

MADELINE KAHN: Mercy!

JAMES RAT: Um. I know this is sudden, and probably unexpected... on your part.

MADELINE KAHN: You fwightened me, you idiot!

JAMES RAT: My name is James R-R-Rat. P-p-pardon my indiscretion, but I have a p-p-peculiar obsession.

MADELINE KAHN: You wook famiwiar...

JAMES RAT: Rather than die in obscurity, I breeched your security. (*Tiny mouse voice.*) Forgive me.

MADELINE KAHN: What kind of obsession?

JAMES RAT: Call it a fatal attraction, I have a yen for an action, a conditioned reaction that needs satisfaction.

MADELINE KAHN: Speww it out fow me James.

JAMES RAT: I... love... PU-PU-PUSSS-EEHHH cats.

MADELINE KAHN: Finawwy! I mean, I'm sorry, I'm a wesbian.

JAMES RAT: I've seen evidence to the con-con-contrary.

(*JAMES produces her panties. MADELINE snatches them, then notices the tail around his neck.*)

MADELINE KAHN: What is that?

JAMES RAT: A piece of tail?

MADELINE KAHN: Yours?

JAMES RAT: I was walking down an alley and... there it was...a big ripe p-p-piece of cheese connected to an oddly familiar steel spring. The smell of cheese was making my brain go all fuzzy... so I sat down. I pondered. Steel spring? Cheese? I've been around the

treadmill a t-t-time or two. I know that every choice I make writes a page in my biography and becomes a part of my total essential being, thereby influencing my next choice. That's the true TRAP OF EXISTENCE! Or T-O-E. Life's "toe" as I like to call it. (*He sniffs her toes.*) Wait! What did I say?

MADLINE KAHN: The twap of existence?

JAMES RAT: Trap? Of course it's a trap! But if when the Germans annexed the Alsace-Lorraine in 1871 and set in motion events that proceeded through Versailles and didn't end until the close of WWII, does that mean that I am doomed to bite the cheese and have my neck snapped in r-r-return? Although... one does hear tales of someone taking the cheese and not getting caught. Could I be the lucky one? What would Mickey do? Suddenly I hear footsteps behind me. I spin around and SNAP!

MADLINE KAHN: Oh, James, I'm sorry.

JAMES RAT: But now I confess because of this mess, my visit tonight to your hacienda, has a dual agenda.

MADLINE KAHN: What are you talking about?

JAMES RAT: There's a secret society that exists to r-r-resist. I've come to enlist your help.

MADLINE KAHN: The Wesistance Movement!

JAMES RAT: Shhhhhh!

MADLINE KAHN: The Wee... (*JAMES puts his finger to his lips.*) we, we, we. Well, I do have bwack boots and a beret. (*She says bur-way.*)

JAMES RAT: Understand me well, and this is crucial, and here I say something that rhymes with crucial... (*JAMES and MADELINE ponder.*) but we must not draw attention to the fact that you're hiding me.

MADELINE KAHN: Hiding you? Here?

JAMES RAT: They're out to k-k-kill me. May I stay?

MADELINE KAHN: I don't know. It's kind of small.

JAMES RAT: Oh, it gets bigger if you're nice to it.

MADELINE KAHN: Oh, James.

JAMES RAT: (*high voice*) I'm feeling kind'a t-t-timorous and l-l-lonely at the moment... (*low voice*) and here you are...home alone...by yourself...on a Saturday night...

MADELINE KAHN: Thanks fow dwopping in James, but you should go now. I'm beginning to wike you.

JAMES RAT: Kitty, kitty, kitty? (*JAMES makes sounds known to be attractive to cats.*)

MADELINE KAHN: Don't, James. Even one kiss causes a fwush of oxytocin... (*JAMES nibbles her ears.*) Stop that, James... followed by a fwood of dopamine... (*He is kissing her neck from behind.*) Don't touch me... topped off by a dewuge of seratonin... and there I am in wuv again. (*JAMES licks the inside of her elbow.*) I said, NO!

JAMES RAT: You're too smart for me. All that beauty and brains too. (*He starts to go.*)

MADELINE KAHN: James? (*He hesitates*) It's not that I don't feel some stwange instinctual attwaction, but I can't wight now. (*He starts to go.*) James? (*He hesitates*) It's not that you don't wook wike you have a pewfectwy vawid spewm count, I'm just not weady. (*He starts to go.*) James? (*He hesitates.*) You can stay for a week but no sex.

JAMES RAT: Then, can we talk about how you can help the cause?

MADELINE KAHN: Other than having a wat's nest in my domicile?

JAMES RAT: We got to find someone for a da-da-dangerous assignment.

MADELINE KAHN: Well, I'm willing to wear a twench coat but that's as far as I go.

JAMES RAT: Someone who's been in the brig and understands what goes on behind closed doors. Someone with a reason to get back at the humans...

MADELINE KAHN: I do know someone who's been just been weweased fwom the testing wab.

JAMES RAT: Someone cute?

MADELINE KAHN: Someone adorable. (*She dials her cell phone.*) Hewwo, Sonny? Sowwy to distuwv youw shenanigans, but something has come up.

JAMES RAT: Ask him to meet me tomorrow night.

MADELINE KAHN: There's someone who would like to meet you to talk about your wecent incawcewation. Yes, tomorrow night.

JAMES RAT: Tell him to come to your show.

MADELINE KAHN: He'ww meet you at my show, I go on about ten. His name is James Wat... Excewwent.

(She hangs up and JAMES takes her in his arms.)

MADELINE KAHN: Get off me, you ignowant wodent!
(He gives her a kiss. She's breathing hard.) What have you done? *(She pushes him down on the bed.)*

JAMES RAT: Sorry, Madeline, I'm just so happy.

(She stares at her hands as they sprout big claws. She turns to JAMES and takes a wrestler's stance.)

MADELINE KAHN: Okay, stuff! Wet's see what you're made of!

(She pounces.)

ACT 1

Scene 4

The Kit Kat Klub. MADELINE wears a glittering gown. PENGUINITO is the bouncer. BROWN SPOT and SONNY BONOBO are sitting at a table for two. The music starts. A spotlight hits MADELINE KAHN.

MADELINE KAHN: *(Sings.)*

Bwak cat at midnight, owange cat in the sun,
Gway cat in the fog, tiny feet on the wun.
Still you can find me, wook, I'm the one,
Holding the bag... full of wuv.

(JAMES RAT enters. He scans the room and sees SONNY and BROWN.)

Mouth full of feathers, bed full of fweas,
Worn out from always twying to pwease,
A bed that is empty, a spare set of keys
And me with a bag... full of wuv.

(JAMES crosses to SONNY and whispers in his ear.)

A door, a wall, a window, a chair,
Weal things that were always there.
The door, the taxi, the terminal, the pwane,
I sit in the chair wooking out at the wain.

(JAMES exits.)

(spoken) The one I wanted to want to be the one was not the one who wanted to be the one. The one I didn't want to want to be the one wanted to be the one. No one won. Too bad. But tell me. How is the wuv to end wuv any diffewent fwom the waw (*war*) to end waw?

(SONNY stands and gestures to BROWN SPOT to stay. He exits. The music swells. Madeline sings again. BROWN SPOT rests his head on the table but before the song ends, he rush off after SONNY.)

Sky full of bombs, a wat in a hole,
Bewieving excuses has taken its toll,
Me with a heart wike anthracite coal,
An empty bag... full of wuv...

An empty bag... full of wuv.

Meow.

ACT 1

Scene 5

The room at the docks. A single bare table. The lighthouse flashes a slow rhythm on the window. The sound of an occasional foghorn. JAMES enters, followed by SONNY.

SONNY BONOBO: What do you mean targeted?

JAMES RAT: You are a victim of species profiling.

SONNY BONOBO: I am?

JAMES RAT: Because you are genetically similar to human beings.

SONNY BONOBO: But you're not. They experiment on rats.

JAMES RAT: And dogs. And cats. Which of us is safe? You overstand?

SONNY BONOBO: Wow, I don't think I could find my way back here.

JAMES RAT: Let me ask you something, Sonny, and I don't mean to be funny, why do you feel obligated to carry money?

SONNY BONOBO: Having money is not an obligation. It's...

JAMES RAT: And your clothes? What kind of respect would you get if you didn't wear those?

SONNY BONOBO: I don't understand.

JAMES RAT: Who's in control? That's all I'm saying.
Who made the rules and what game are they playing?
Did you volunteer to go to the 8th Street Facility?

SONNY BONOBO: No, I did not.

JAMES RAT: What did they do to you?

SONNY BONOBO: They performed all kinds of tests on
me.

JAMES RAT: Are you better for it?

SONNY BONOBO: What are you getting at?

JAMES RAT: Someone always wins. Is it ever you?
They take what's good for themselves and leave us the
g-g-garbage.

SONNY BONOBO: But you're a rat.

JAMES RAT: Excuse me?

SONNY BONOBO: You like garbage.

JAMES RAT: I am not hearing this.

SONNY BONOBO: Aren't the differences between spe-
cies real?

JAMES RAT: And within a species we're all the same?

SONNY BONOBO: Well, I...

JAMES RAT: You'll pardon my expression, the histor-ee
of oppression marches on in procession.

SONNY BONOBO: You have a point.

JAMES RAT: We need you Sonny.

SONNY BONOBO: Me?

JAMES RAT: You telling me you don't you want to fight back?

SONNY BONOBO: I'm more of a lover, actually.

JAMES RAT: Jump to center with me on this. Your heart, Sonny. Look inside. Is there something that resembles pain?

SONNY BONOBO: Well, I...

JAMES RAT: I understand pain. I'm the last of my litter. They're trying to exterminate my kind.

SONNY BONOBO: Just because you are who you are?

JAMES RAT: But you they want alive. And you'll never be safe because it's in your genes.

SONNY BONOBO: I can't stop being me.

JAMES RAT: It's r-r-rare someone rises above all that comprises him and achieves authentic action. Are you receiving the message I'm sending?

SONNY BONOBO: What can I do?

JAMES RAT: Let me spell it out for you. I'm talking action. Something that will forever change the nature of the game.

SONNY BONOBO: But I'm just one little...

(JAMES suddenly becomes hyper alert.)

JAMES RAT: Shhhh... *(He begins to glide rapidly around the room, stopping and listening in various locations.)* Their predation is my frustration, and resignation brings germination with incubation 'til realization brings aspiration for information and maturation is transformation, with cooperation for formation of organization that sparks a detonation, a conflagration, an elevation to liberation, and that's cause for celebration...

(JAMES has worked his way to the door. He opens it suddenly and BROWN SPOT falls into the room.)

SONNY BONOBO: Brown? What are you doing here?

BROWN SPOT: Don't listen to him Sonny.

JAMES RAT: Who is this?

SONNY BONOBO: He's my friend, Brown Spot.

JAMES RAT: Well, Mr. Doggy Dog, what are you going to do? Lick the hand of the oppressor?

BROWN SPOT: No. But I don't want to bite it either.

JAMES RAT: I am a Rodent-American. I deserve freedom, justice and equality, and if I don't get it, why the fuck should anybody else have it?

BROWN SPOT: You don't gain rights by taking away someone else's.

JAMES RAT: I'm not the oppressor.

BROWN SPOT: The victim becomes the oppressor. And that's not progress.

JAMES RAT: I should turn the other cheek? That's progress?

BROWN SPOT: Retribution is a simple transaction, even a fool understands hate.

JAMES RAT: Who you calling fool, fool? What have you got at home? A refrigerator with a few beers? A table where you and your friends play poker on a Friday night? You have accepted the unacceptable and been happy about it!

BROWN SPOT: I still want the best for everyone.

JAMES RAT: Desire without action, listen up Bro, gets you nothing but the status quo. The so-called "status quo", which is an ever-widening gap.

BROWN SPOT: You can choose to forgive.

JAMES RAT: You burnin' my ass, dog! I'm not going to fight with you. You don't even know which side you're on.

BROWN SPOT: Sonny, come home with me.

JAMES RAT: Sonny Bonobo, I have not yet convinced you. Meet me in two hours time and I will show you something that will change your life forever.

BROWN SPOT: Let's go, Sonny.

JAMES RAT: One a.m. Rabbit Road in front of the Skunkworks. Don't bring the dog.

SONNY BONOBO: Alright. Yes, I'll be there.

(JAMES raises his fist in what looks like a socialist salute but ends in a knocking motion, sign language for "yes".)

JAMES RAT: Look Forward and Remember! *(He points at BROWN SPOT.)* And you. Go on back to that ignorant rock you crawled out from under.

ACT 1

Scene 6

A small spare attic apartment belonging to BROWN SPOT, now shared by SONNY BONOBO. A wooden table and a rickety chair. An oval dog bed big enough for two on the floor. A collection of chewed Frisbees on the wall and an unframed, scruffy print of "Dogs Playing Poker". Dim light angles through a small window. SONNY lies sprawled on his back asleep, snoring lightly. BROWN SPOT stands in a bathrobe holding a washcloth, looking at him.

BROWN SPOT: Six feet. *(He moves closer.)* Three feet. *(Closer still but he does not touch Sonny.)* Even when we touch there's still too much distance between us. And we wrestle with an emptiness that can never be filled. But out of that trying, we generate something that is so startled at it's own birth that it flies into the air and is gone. Agenda is gone. For less than a minute maybe, but gone. And then we tell each other how good it was, as if words were capable of naming what just happened.

(BROWN SPOT kneels on the bed and begins gently washing SONNY, who wakes up.)

SONNY BONOBO: Hi.

BROWN SPOT: You dozed off.

SONNY BONOBO: I was dreaming.

BROWN SPOT: Was I in it?

SONNY BONOBO: It was about you... and five hundred others.

BROWN SPOT: I see.

SONNY BONOBO: They were soldiers from around the world.

BROWN SPOT: Men in uniform.

SONNY BONOBO: And women.

BROWN SPOT: I like it.

SONNY BONOBO: You kissed me. And they all put down their weapons.

BROWN SPOT: Did they take off their clothes and have an orgy?

SONNY BONOBO: I don't know. I woke up.

BROWN SPOT: You smell like sex.

(There is an explosion in the middle distance, brief glow of orange in the window.)

SONNY BONOBO: What time is it?

BROWN SPOT: It's almost one.

SONNY BONOBO: Already?

BROWN SPOT: Don't go.

SONNY BONOBO: I told James I would meet him.

BROWN SPOT: Then you must.

(SONNY hurriedly puts on his clothes.)

SONNY BONOBO: You don't know what it was like in there.

BROWN SPOT: No. But I'm willing to listen.

SONNY BONOBO: It's hard to talk about.

BROWN SPOT: Maybe when you get back. My experience of humans is very different.

SONNY BONOBO: And what they did to me is okay with you?

BROWN SPOT: Of course it isn't. They're not perfect.

SONNY BONOBO: And you forgive them.

BROWN SPOT: I don't know. Maybe.

SONNY BONOBO: I have to go. *(SONNY goes to him and wraps his arms around him.)* I'm sorry.

BROWN SPOT: I can do this. Go on.

(BROWN SPOT's phone rings. He looks at the message.)

SONNY BONOBO: What do they want?

BROWN SPOT: They want to stop the bomber.

SONNY BONOBO: But you don't know who it is.

BROWN SPOT: Not yet.

(SONNY watches BROWN text and send.)

SONNY BONOBO: I know you would never hurt me.

BROWN SPOT: What do you mean?

SONNY BONOBO: No phone calls while I'm gone.

BROWN SPOT: No, I...

SONNY BONOBO: Stay. Good boy.

(He exits quickly.)

BROWN SPOT: Twenty feet. Forty feet. I feel you move through the city. Betraying you would be like betraying my own body. Because what is love if not the shared memory of a few precious moments of naked bliss? But we clothe ourselves with a smile, a shy caress. And slowly, a single word at a time, we begin to negotiate again.

ACT 1

Scene 7

The dark round opening of a culvert. The sound of water dripping. The smell of rot. JAMES and SONNY approach.

JAMES RAT: You cannot tell anyone about this. Not until the proper time.

(JAMES takes something metal from his pocket and clangs a pattern on the metal culvert. They wait. An ancient whispery voice answers.)

MR. STUBBS: Who raps?

JAMES RAT: He who was born a rat, raps. And a friend.

MR. STUBBS: Forgive my slowness.

JAMES RAT: Take your time.

(MR. STUBBS appears in the shadows, barely visible, perhaps just the iridescent reflections of his eyes at first.)

MR. STUBBS: No one followed?

JAMES RAT: I'm sure of that. I brought you a banana.

MR. STUBBS: Thank you.

SONNY BONOBO: It looks nice and ripe.

MR. STUBBS: Would you like it? Please. I have no appetite.

SONNY BONOBO: Well, I wouldn't want it to go to waste.

MR. STUBBS: What is your name?

SONNY BONOBO: Sonny Bonobo.

MR. STUBBS: Bonobo... You were in the lab?

SONNY BONOBO: Yes.

MR. STUBBS: But they let you go?

SONNY BONOBO: Yes.

MR. STUBBS: I was not so lucky.

JAMES RAT: Tell him about the experiments.

MR. STUBBS: They've been testing. Using a radioactive isotope.

JAMES RAT: They're targeting the apes.

MR. STUBBS: They've been experimenting to find a cure for radiation sickness.

JAMES RAT: Which is not as cool as it sounds.

SONNY BONOBO: Why?

JAMES RAT: Tell him why they're experimenting.

MR. STUBBS: Word is, the humans are planning a nuclear war.

SONNY BONOBO: Why would they do that?

MR. STUBBS: Humans... *(He comes forward into the light and leans against the curving wall of the culvert. His eyes are blood red, his hair is falling out in huge patches, and his skin is blotchy with scabs. SONNY nearly retches his banana.)* ...never has a species shown more promise. They just have a small problem finding their goodness.

(SONNY screeches in pain. SONNY looks closely at MR. STUBBS. He backs up and screeches again.)

(SONNY rises to his full height. He bellows and screams and beats his chest. Is he answered by a chorus of apes from the trees?)