

THE HUMAN RACE

By Rod

This sketch attempts to look at the Creation v Evolution debate. It concentrates primarily on the question "What makes man so special?". The aim is not to belittle Darwin's theory but to question whether it goes far enough in explaining the true nature of man.

CAST

Sally Mum with small children

John Sally's husband

Sally and John are at the zoo with their children [although the children are not seen]. There is a bench. ENTER Sally and John.

JOHN Phew, I'm exhausted.

SALLY Yes, you don't look too good.

JOHN My back's killing me. Sally, do you mind if we sit down for a bit?

SALLY There's a bench over there. We can watch the children while they look at the sea lions. They'll be fine without us. *[They sit down]*

JOHN Ah, that's better.

SALLY I always like coming to the zoo.

JOHN Me too.

SALLY And the children love it.

JOHN Yes, they're having a great time.

SALLY They really enjoyed the chimps' tea party. You know, watching them eat, sometimes makes you think they are almost human.

JOHN Yes and that's true of the chimpanzees as well.

SALLY Very funny. But seriously, seeing the way those monkeys behave makes you think.

JOHN Does it? What about?

SALLY Evolution.

JOHN Well, I realise that the members of the Scottish and Welsh Parliaments have some strange ways, but likening them to monkeys does seem a bit hard.

SALLY Not devolution. Evolution.

JOHN I must have misheard you.

SALLY Yes, I noticed that you'd been going rather deaf. *[Pause. No reaction from John]* John.

JOHN Oh, sorry, did you say something?

SALLY Stop messing about.

JOHN What's this evolution then?

SALLY It's the theory put forward by that Beagle fellow.

JOHN Jeremy Beagle?

SALLY No, it was ... er.... Charles Darwin and he went on a voyage on the HMS Beagle – that was it. He visited the Galapagos Islands and wrote a book called 'The Origin Of Species'.

JOHN What's it about? Is it a thriller set on the high seas?

SALLY Well, not really, it's more of a scientific textbook.

JOHN *[Disappointed]* Oh.

SALLY In it he put forward the idea of Natural Selection.

JOHN What's that when it's at home?

SALLY Basically, it is that nature selects which species survive and which ones don't.

JOHN How does it decide?

SALLY Darwin argues that nature is controlled by random chance trying out all possibilities. But only the best one's make it. It's called the survival of the fittest.

JOHN I see. So by this process all the species in nature gradually get better and better.

SALLY That's right.

JOHN *[Standing up very stiffly and exaggerating various ailments]* So what you're saying is that nature started with a monkey or something like that and through thousands of years of survival of the fittest, with refinements, developments, improvements and all forms of natural selection, ended up with me!

SALLY Yes. *[Looking at John]* It's not much of a theory is it?

JOHN No.

SALLY Perhaps Darwin should have written a thriller after all. He could have called it 'Species'.

JOHN I think it's been done.

SALLY Has it?

JOHN Yes. Do you know, I think I prefer the Bible's explanation of the creation of man?

SALLY What's that? That Man was just a prototype before God got it completely right with woman.

JOHN No, the Bible says that mankind is special simply because God loves us. It's God's selection that makes us special, not some evolutionary natural selection.

SALLY *[Gets up]* I like that. It also explains why you're so special.

JOHN Does it?

SALLY Yes, you're special to me – not because you've got the physique and good looks of Tom Cruise ..

JOHN That's not in dispute.

SALLY ...nor because you have the razor sharp intellect of Jeremy Paxman ...

JOHN Thank goodness.

SALLY ...but because I love you.

JOHN Ah, thank you. *[They hold hands and look at each other]*

SALLY You'll always be special to me – however decrepit and deaf you may be – because I love you.

JOHN Oh, that's nice. I'll tell you what I'll do.

SALLY What?

JOHN I'll race you to that ice-cream van. Last one there has to supervise the children at teatime. *[He pushes Sally back on to the bench and sets off]*

SALLY Hey, you cheat.

JOHN Sorry, Sal, but it's survival of the fittest in this race you know. [*Exit both running*]