



GUARDIAN

By John Busser

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GUARDIAN
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Cast of Characters

MAN: Male, 30's-50's
WOMAN: Female, 20's-30's
ROXIE (A DOG): Female, any age

(NOTE FOR THE ACTOR: ROXIE, being a dog will exhibit dog-like behavior, but does not have to be on all fours. The actor may crouch if it feels natural to do so, but this is not necessary. Being on all fours would impede movement and may be avoided. Her vocalizations should suggest a dog's barking or whining, depending on the situation.)

Place

The woods

Time

Late Fall, early evening

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At lights up, MAN and ROXIE enter from Stage Left. He is dressed for cool fall temperatures in hunting clothes, boots, hat and gloves and carries a shotgun. ROXIE, his dog, is NOT on a leash. She walks by his side but is constantly sniffing. As they begin to cross the stage, ROXIE stops dead in her tracks. Her head goes up in an alerted state. She begins to sniff the air.

ROXIE

WAIT! WAIT! STOP!

The man stops. He looks around.

ROXIE

SMELL! WAIT! SMELL! PEOPLE! *(She sniffs more)*

MAN

(Quietly) What is it, girl?

ROXIE

PEOPLE! SMELL! BAD SMELL! *(She sniffs more)* ONE PEOPLE! ONE!

MAN

(Quietly) You smell something? A rabbit? You smell a rabbit, Rox?

ROXIE

ONE PEOPLE! BAD SMELL! PEOPLE! GO AWAY!

ROXIE begins to nervously circle about the MAN, sniffing.

MAN

What's the matter, girl? Something got you spooked?

ROXIE

GO AWAY! GO AWAY NOW! PEOPLE SMELL! BAD! BAD SMELL COME NOW!

The MAN holds up his shotgun and scans the area.

MAN

Who's there!

No answer.

MAN

I said, WHO'S THERE? Come out here, now!

ROXIE

BAD SMELL COME! PEOPLE COME, PAPA!

Entering slowly and tentatively from Stage Right is a person dressed in all-covering but ragged clothes. They look torn and dirty. An old parka with the hood up and a scarf covering the face obscure the wearer's identity.

MAN

Stop! Stay where you are!

ROXIE

(Acting anxious and pacing back and forth between the MAN and this new intruder) PAPA! GO AWAY! PEOPLE HERE! GO AWAY FROM PEOPLE!

MAN

What are you doing here?

ROXIE

GO AWAY! SICK! SICK! GO! GO NOW!

MAN

This is private property.

ROXIE

SICK! SICK! PAPA LEAVE HERE! BAD SMELL!

MAN

I asked you a question. *(He levels the shotgun at the intruder)* Who are you?

ROXIE

(Looks and pleads with the MAN) PLEASE PAPA! WE GO! WE GO NOW! SICK! SICK!

MAN

Quiet girl! Roxie, stay. *(ROXIE stops pleading, looks at the MAN intently)* Sit!

ROXIE sits on the ground looking at the intruder, ready to spring up.

MAN

Last chance. You're trespassing. *(He brings up the gun as if to aim)*

WOMAN

WAIT! Please! I'm lost!

MAN

I'll tell you where you are. You're on my land! Now go!

WOMAN

Wait! Go where? I've got nowhere to go.

MAN

Not my problem. You can't stay here.

ROXIE

(Quietly pleading) WE GO PAPA. WE GO NOW. SICK. STAY AWAY PEOPLE. SICK. SICK.

MAN

Roxie, quiet. (*ROXIE stops whining*) Good girl. (*To the intruder*) Let me see your face.

WOMAN

I'm not sick. I swear. (*She takes off her hood.*) I've just been wandering.

MAN

(*He lowers the gun slightly*) The scarf too.

WOMAN

I am, hold on. (*She unwraps her scarf*) See? I'm okay. No sores. No marks. (*She takes off her gloves*) Nothing on my face or hands! I'm not infected! (*She walks toward him. ROXIE gets up alert but stays where she is*)

MAN

(*He holds up the gun again*) Not everyone gets the marks. You could still be a carrier.

ROXIE

I WILL BITE! SHOULD I BITE PAPA?

WOMAN

I'm not a carrier and I've stayed away from everyone.

MAN

That don't matter. Infection could still be with you.

WOMAN

I'm not infected.

ROXIE

SHOULD I BITE?

WOMAN

Look, even if I was infected, it would have to be gone by now.

MAN

Why's that?

ROXIE

STAY AWAY! I WILL BITE! SICK! SICK!

MAN

Roxie! Quiet! Look, miss, I'm sorry.

WOMAN

I've got nowhere to go. I'm filthy but I'm not infected!

MAN

You can't stay here.

WOMAN