

TWO MONKEYS AND A PEPSI CAN

Gareth Amphlett, Paradise Valley Community College

Third Place, One-Act Play

CHARACTERS: Monkey 1, person dressed in white pants and plain white t-shirt.
DOES NOT LOOK LIKE A MONKEY.

Monkey 2, person dressed in black pants and plain black t-shirt.
DOES NOT LOOK LIKE A MONKEY.

Note: Whenever characters speak in 'ooh-ooh-ah's' or wha-ah-ah's' or 'oh-oh-oh's' they sound like monkeys.

SETTING: The time is now, the early twenty-first century. There is no true place, and the curtain rises on just an open stage with a four-legged stool with a shiny, unopened Pepsi can on it placed Down Center. A broad spotlight comes up on the chair and will be held throughout.

(MONKEY 1 is heard from Off Left making various monkey sounds; clearly but not outrageously nor loudly. He enters the spotlight, walking like a monkey. His arms swing, he is bent over, low to the ground, etc. This will be maintained throughout the play.)

MONKEY 1: Ooh-ooh-Wha-ah-ah. *(He looks up, down, and around. Finally his gaze catches the Pepsi can, and he stares at it curiously for a while. He slowly, cautiously approaches the chair)*

Ooh-ooh-wha-ah? Wha-ah-ah? *(He reaches the chair and slowly lifts head above the rim of the chair, getting his eyes over. He stays for a little while, then brings his head all the way up and stares purposefully at the can. Next line spoken to the can)*

Ooh-ooh-ah? Ah?! Wha-ah-ah? *(He slowly, cautiously reaches forward and finally touches the Pepsi can and flinches back. He recovers it-and touches again, no flinching. He slowly grasps and picks up and brings to himself. He taps on it.) Whaa-aah-aahh!!*

(He bangs the can on his head and falls backward in pain while dropping the can. Shrieks next line.) AHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!

(Sits up rubbing head then notices Pepsi can beside him. He very carefully picks it up. He sniffs it. He taps it with his ear next to it. He then just stares at it curiously while speaking.)

Wha-ah-ah-ah-at. Wha-ah-ah-ah-at. *(Voice begins to sound human)*
Wha-ah-ah-at. *(Completely human starting next line)* What is this?
What is this thing? This weird object? It is...cold. It is...shiny. What does it say? *(Peers closer.)* Pep-s ye. Pep-s ye? *(Suddenly it comes to him.)* PEP-SI!!! PEPSI!!! It's true!! It exists!! The others weren't lying.

This-is-a-Pep-si-can!!! O' Glory, O' happy day!! Everything's going to be different from now on! Finally, life is truly mine at last!! This light- (Refers somehow to the spotlight) this giant beam has guided me here. And I have received my free gift. Something so simple yet so beautifully intricate. I'm saved! I'm saved! Grace, mercy, new life! The hour I first believed!

(Rolls around joyfully on the floor with the can as MONKEY 2, making various monkey sounds, enters spotlight from Off Right. He is looking around like Monkey 1 did at beginning until he sees MONKEY 1 and can.)

MONKEY 2: Oooh-oooh-wha-ah-ah-oh-oh-oh ?

MONKEY 1: *(Stop what he's doing and looks at MONKEY 2)* What did you say?

MONKEY 2: What's going on?

MONKEY 1: *(Laughs silly and rolls around again)* I'm HAPPY!! Happy, happy, happy...*(Fades off laughter)*

MONKEY 2: Really? I wish I was as happy as you... *(MONKEY 1 too engrossed to catch comment)* Nice weather we're having- oooh-oooh-ah- don't you think?

MONKEY 1: *(Looks up.)* Huh? Oh yes, yes it is... Happy, happy, happy, happy...

MONKEY 2: *(Still making small talk)* It's kind of weird that a stool is right here in the middle of nowhere, don't you think?

MONKEY 1: *(Noticeably less excited due to comment; stops rolling around; begins to act nervous)* Um...why, yes...yes it is.

MONKEY 2: Probably just got here by accident.

MONKEY 1: By accident? No, no, no...someone had to have placed that chair there...

MONKEY 2: Nah. It could have just as easily been an accident.

MONKEY 1: But it has legs, and it's carved, and it doesn't make any sense that it's just here...

MONKEY 2: Oh, sure it does. I mean there could've been some wood lying around... there could have been termites or something...

MONKEY 1: But someone would have to carve that wood into the chair. Termites don't have the intelligence to do that...

MONKEY 2: Oh sure, don't be daft. The wood could've just been lying around and the termites were looking for something to chew and you put the two together and you get yourself a chair, my friend.

MONKEY 1: But why didn't they eat all the wood then?

MONKEY 2: Well...

MONKEY 1: And you still didn't explain how wood was just lying around here...

MONKEY 2: Well...

MONKEY 1: Nor for that matter where the termites came from...

MONKEY 2: *(Suddenly angry)* BE QUIET!!! DON'T BE SUCH A MORON!!! THE CHAIR GOT THERE BY ACCIDENT!!!! DID YOU EVEN GO TO PUBLIC SCHOOL ???! *(Dead, long silence)* Anyway...it doesn't seem like you and I have gotten off to a very good start. For that I am sorry.

MONKEY 1: *(Sincerely and lightly)* That's okay... I don't think anybody could ruin my day.

MONKEY 2: *(Sincerely, not meanly)* Oh yeah, you're really happy, aren't you?

MONKEY 1: *(Continues rolling around on floor)* Yup!

MONKEY 2: *(Innocently)* Why?

MONKEY 1: *(Stops dead in his tracks and becomes very defensive)* No reason.

MONKEY 2: *(Confused by reaction but still exploring)* What's that you're holding?

MONKEY 1: *(Caught red-handed; hides the Pepsi can behind his back)* Nothing.

MONKEY 2: But I saw it.

MONKEY 1: *(Aggressively)* Saw what?

MONKEY 2: I don't know what it was but-

MONKEY 1: *(Interrupting)* So you didn't really see anything-g-oooh-oooh-ah- did you?

MONKEY 2 : YES I DID!

MONKEY 1: NO YOU DIDN'T! *(Accidentally drops the Pepsi can due to his passionate reproof)*

MONKEY 2: Ah-Ha! Let me see it!

MONKEY 1: No! *(Leaps down for the Pepsi can while MONKEY 2 runs at him and tackles him from the side. They are now wrestling)*

MONKEY 2: I just want to see it!

MONKEY 1: I don't want you to! I don't want to show it to you! *(They break apart MONKEY 1 still holding the Pepsi can)*

MONKEY 2: What are you so afraid of?

MONKEY 1: *(Clearly not truthful)* Afraid?! I'm not...afraid.

MONKEY 2: Then let me laugh like you laugh. Roll like you roll.

MONKEY 1: NO! *(Breaks down into tears)* I **CAN'T**.

MONKEY 2: *(Walks up to MONKEY 1 to comfort him)* It's okay. .. *(Places his hand on MONKEY 1's shoulder)*

MONKEY 1: *(Violently slaps his arm away)* Don't-oooh-oooh-tou-uh-uh-uch me! GET AWAY FROM ME AND WHAT I HAVE! AND WHAT YOU CAN'T HAVE! YOU CAN'T HAVE IT!!

MONKEY 2: *(Suddenly angry and violent)* You're afraid! I can see it in your eyes! I can hear it break through as your voice quakes and trembles! I know what it is. I saw it! It's a Pepsi can, isn't it? *(Monkey 1 looks up guiltily)* I knew it. I should've known. All of the monkeys that have that thing seem to love it so much. Seem to be so happy.

MONKEY 1: *(Stops crying and is now anxious)* And you want a Pepsi can too, don't you? You want to be happy, too.

MONKEY 2: I am happy.

MONKEY 1: You are lying to yourself. You want a Pepsi can whether you admit it or not. You want a Pepsi can whether you know it or not. You inside still wants it. It's like a giant, gaping hole, isn't it? A giant hole that can only be filled by Pepsi. You want it too. You need it too.

MONKEY 2: So what if I do? And if I do so badly, then why won't you let me see it?! Why won't you give it to me?!

MONKEY 1: This one's my Pepsi can...

MONKEY 2: Then point me to another one! I can feel your fear!

MONKEY 1: I fear nothing.

MONKEY 2: *(Laughs cruelly)* Liar.

MONKEY 1: Get your own Pepsi can. This one's mine. *(Truthfully and thoughtfully)* Everyone needs their own personal experience with Pepsi.

MONKEY 2: I won't go searching until you let me examine it. I won't go unless I know your personal experience is based on solid fact.

MONKEY 1: I can't show you mine.

MONKEY 2: *(angry)* Why? What are you afraid of?

MONKEY 1: I'm not-oooh-oooh-ah- afraid of anything.

MONKEY 2: WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

MONKEY 1: I'm not afraid of-

MONKEY 2: *(Quickly and forcefully probing)* What are you afraid of?

MONKEY 1: I'm not-

MONKEY 2: *(With the greatest passion either of them has demonstrated so far.)*
WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?!!

MONKEY 1: *(Finally it spills out)* I'm afraid I might spill it!

(There is a victorious silence for MONKEY 2)

MONKEY 2: *(Coming forcefully toward him)* Give me the Pepsi can.

MONKEY 1: *(Backing away scared)* No.

MONKEY 2: Give it to me!!! LET ME SEE YOUR PEPSI CAN NOW!!!

(MONKEY 2 attacks Monkey 1 and they wrestle violently. Finally, they are both holding onto the Pepsi can and tugging on it. MONKEY 1 inches hands up on can and finally rips it from MONKEY 2 but accidentally pops the tab during it causing Pepsi to spill everywhere while he loses control and drops the can)

MONKEY 1: **NOOOOOOOOOO! !!!** *(He falls to his knees and buries his head in his hands as he cries horribly.)*

MONKEY 2: *(Sincerely)* It's okay...there is no Pepsi can, is there? *(MONKEY 1 doesn't respond.)* It's over. You'll be fine. This is our evolution. Look, we're already beginning to speak English. You see, I was right. The stool was made by accident. Just like we were. We are nothing but accidents. The Universe, in its infinite complexity, is as blind as an intelligent Creator. As purposeless as a scientist. There is nothing. Nothing at all. There's no hope. And there's no right and wrong. Just popular opinion. Can't you see how wrong you were? I was right and you were wrong. Simple as that. Termites, my dear. There are real termites and they are *everywhere*. Termites dressed in church clothing. Just as stupid as those termites that made the chair. You will know them by their dogmatic, propagandist teaching. There is nothing. Nothing at all. Ooh- ooh- ooh- ah- ahhh. Belief makes truth. Man makes god. Everything's going to be better from now on, my friend. No Pepsi can, can stand.

MONKEY 1: *(Through the tears)* No...there are Pepsi cans that can stand. I didn't let mine. It has to go through the test. I didn't let mine go through the test. ...the stool had four legs specifically designed to hold up a perfectly circular piece of wood...accident...

MONKEY 2: Stop being so melodramatic. You'll be fine. You're going to change for the better. Do you hear me, idiot? You're going to change for the better, my friend.

MONKEY 1: You wanted what I had! Don't you remember? **YOU WANTED WHAT I HAD!!** What I... had. Had...ooh-ooh-ooh-ah-ah-ah-what happened to it? I had it...I had a....what?-ooh-ooh-ah-ah-ah-what was it again? It was a....*(Very lost)* a... ooh-ooh-ooh-wha-ah-ah-oh-oh- oh..., PEPSI CAN!!! I had a Pepsi can once. Why did I lose it? It was an objective reality...why didn't I let it show...I would still have it then...because others would've seen it and **IT WOULD HAVE STOOD**. Yes... that's it...a Pep-si can...Pep-si...Pep-s ye...ooh-ooh-ooh-ahh-ahh- oh-oh-oh-oh...Termites. You speak of termites. And you are right. There *are* termites everywhere. Termites dressed in the shroud of open-mindedness. Termites who claim they want harmony and claim they want acceptance but who hate Pepsi. How can you do that? How can you be so closed-minded in your open-mindedness?

MONKEY 2: *(Off-handishly. He hasn't even been paying attention)* Nonsense! It's our evolution, remember? It's just our evolution... *(There is an uncomfortable pause as Monkey 1 begins to lightly weep)* It's just our evolution, baby... Just our evolution...

(He exits Off Right. Monkey 1 cries horribly and picks up the Pepsi can slowly. It is now empty .He crushes it slowly while weeping more tears at the same time)

MONKEY 1: *(Drops the Pepsi can and is now like a lost child.)* Ooh- ooh- ah- ah ah? Wha- ah- ah? Ooh- ooh- ooh... ooh-ooh- ooh.

(He starts to exit Off Left, then exit the way MONKEY 2 did. Fade out.)

