

TOUCH MY MONKEY
by Fred Coppersmith

The room is empty except for a table on top of which sits a newspaper and telephone and behind which sits a chair. Enter MAN #1, carrying a small, nondescript cardboard box and a small hand-painted sign, both of which he places on the table. He sits and turns the sign so that one side faces the audience/camera. It reads simply, "Touch My Monkey: \$1." MAN #1 sits back and reads the newspaper. After a short while, MAN #2 enters. He approaches the table, clearly upset and distracted, as if he has just lost something of great value.

MAN #2

Excuse me. I seem to have misplaced my
keys, and I was wondering if maybe -

There is a pause. MAN #2 has just seen the sign. He is surprised.

MAN #2

Oh. I'm sorry. I thought this was the
Lost and Found. I didn't realize you
were -

Again, there is a pause. MAN #2 looks again at the sign, then at MAN #1. He is visibly confused.

MAN #2

Um, if you don't mind me asking, what
are you doing?

MAN #1 looks up. He folds the newspaper and carefully places it on the table. He looks at MAN #2, then at the box, then back at MAN #2. He then points at the sign as if this should explain everything.

MAN #2

Uh, yeah. Yeah, I see that, but --
wait, are you saying there's a real
monkey in there?

MAN #1 looks at the box, looks at MAN #2 again, and then looks back at the box. For a moment, he seems to think, and then just shrugs. Again, he points at the sign.

MAN #2

Yes. Yes, I see the sign. It's just -
-well, it's a pretty small box for a
monkey, isn't it? I mean, can I see
the monkey first?

There is a pause as MAN #1 seems to think about this. He shakes his head. He points once again at the sign.

MAN #2

Yeah, I see the sign, but -- look, this is crazy. A monkey in a box? Touch a monkey in a box? You know, it's not even moving. How do I know there's even anything in there?

MAN #1 looks at MAN #2. Again, he seems to think for a minute, and then acts as if an idea has occurred to him. He turns the sign over so that the other side faces MAN #2 and the audience/camera. It now reads "Talk to Jesus: 50¢." MAN #2 points at the sign triumphantly.

MAN #2

Talk to -- ? What? What are you talking about? I'm not even --

The phone begins to ring. MAN #1 looks at it, looks at MAN #2, and again just shrugs. The phone continues to ring.

MAN #2

This is insane. Talk to Jesus? Of all the crazy -- okay, fine!

MAN #2 angrily picks up the phone.

MAN #2

Hello? What? Oh. Hi, Jesus. No. No, we were just -- what? Well no, I haven't touched the monkey yet. I was just -- yeah, but -- well how do I know it's a real monkey? It could be -- well, no, it's not that I don't believe you, Jesus, it's just -- well, yeah, I'm sure it's -- what? Well yeah, but -- but -- oh all right, fine.

He hangs up the phone.

MAN #2

(grumbling)

Stupid Jesus.

MAN #2 digs into his pocket and grudgingly pulls out a dollar bill, which he hands to MAN #1.

MAN #2

There. Let's see this damn monkey.

MAN #2

Sorry. We're closed for lunch.