

# APE

By  
Joe Woodward

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All rights reserved. *APE* is based on  
an original play, *Brother Ape*, written by Joe Woodward in 1980  
and first performed at The Pie In The Sky (PITS)  
Theatre and Bar in 1982.



*[Image by Christine Engelhardt \(Stine86Engel\)](#)*

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## Characters

Brother Ape	an ape
Poor Dear	a husband who resembles a puppet
My Love	a wife who resembles a puppet
Pet (Voice Over only)	an unseen young son (except on a video)
A daughter (Voice over)	an unseen young daughter (except on a video)

## The setting:

Upper middle class inner-city living. 1982.

**ACT ONE**

**Scene one**

*Children's playing and talking is heard.*

*Lights up on a bedroom and living space. The bed is well made, music is now playing from a radio. Suddenly a door opens and Brother Ape, a partially dressed ape comes crashing through. He dives straight onto the bed and jumps up and down trying to rock it as much as possible and in the process untidies the covers. The bed begins to rock and he loses his balance and falls over. This is a thrill. He has learnt something new and does it again...and again. The bedclothes now seem to get in his way so he begins ripping them off the bed. He is so engrossed that he manages to drape the sheet around his body and over his head. This fascinates him and he jumps off to find a mirror which he backs into. At first frightened, he then perseveres and studies himself. Disgusted by what he sees, he throws the sheet away and looks around for more things...*

*Next to the bed is a photograph of My Love which takes his fancy. Gently he touches and caresses the frame. He jumps into the centre of the unruly bed. His head drops.*

*Enter Poor Dear*

**Poor Dear**

There you are, you naughty fellow! Did you do all this?

*The ape sulks.*

**Poor Dear**

How did you get in here anyway. Oh I see, you've got My Love there have you! Give her to me. Come on...don't be naughty now...my you've been naughty...ever since the Baxbys were here you've seemed quite off...now come on...oh you bad boy...give me that picture...come on...My Love won't give you a rub. I know you like her rub.

*The ape replies and hands over the picture which Poor Dear puts down on the table. Enter My Love*

**My Love**

Good grief...Brother Ape...you baboon! Look what the silly thing has done. Listen Dear...he's your friend. Now you said...

**Poor Dear**

Oh, he's just been a little frivolous...

*The ape coyly rubs up to My Love and rests his head against her arm.*

**Poor Dear**

See My Love, he's sorry

**My Love**

How ridiculous, how many families would put up with an ape like you in the house.

**Poor Dear**

I think he's grown very attached to you...I think he prefers you to me.

**My Love**

Well you'll have to control him better

*He grabs her tentatively*

**My Love**

...and let go of me...sometimes he's more than I can handle.

**Poor Dear**

He was holding your picture in his hand.

**My Love**

Oh he's in love with me!

**Poor Dear**

I'm sure he is!

*The ape looks up at My Love and then looks at Poor Dear.*

**My Love**

Well get him outside now to where he belongs...Listen here you, you've got to behave yourself if you are going to stay.

*The ape smiles and then hugs her.*

**My Love**

You hefty thing...get out of here...come on.

**Poor Dear**

Out Brother Ape...out you go...come on.

*The ape doesn't like going.*

**My Love**

Get out. Go on, do as Poor Dear says.

*The ape opens the closed door and leaves dejectedly.*

**Poor Dear**

It's all right – here I'll help you with the bed.

**My Love**

Don't you think some people must think it odd.

*Poor Dear is puzzled.*

**My Love**

...Him! I mean...Dulcie and co...and all the Mewings.

**Poor Dear**

Oh...all the Mewing Crowd!!! He's almost one of the family...and you know he wouldn't stay at Jane and Barry's ...if anything Jane's a bit jealous. He won't even let her touch him. Remember what happened the other night...how he really clammed up...she merely touched him and he locked himself up in his cage...

**My Love**

I just sometimes...I mean...

**Poor Dear**

Ah! *(Taking her in his arms)* He's done wonders for you. You were so tense and uptight...you really were you know... I thought you were becoming really neurotic at one point.

**My Love**

*(Laughing)* Oh...poor dear...

**Poor Dear**

Brother Ape is the best thing that has ever happened...he's hardly just a pet.

**My Love**

I just shudder to think what Dulcie would say...

**Poor Dear**

Oh...you're too influenced by her. So what!

*The telephone rings.*

**My Love**

Hmm...maybe if they knew about you...you'd go down a few rungs *(picking up the telephone)* Hello...Melly! Yes...you caught us arguing...Oh!..No! about nothing...how'd you know. I suppose everyone is in on the story now *(she laughs)* No, he's here...I don't know that I should...I mean Mells...okay, see you tonight. Here he is..

*She passes the telephone.*

**Poor Dear**

Good day gorgeous...

*My Love exits*

**Poor Dear**

*(He laughs)* Ah no...she's a little upset because he spoilt our bed...*(he laughs)* I'm sure he's in love with her...*(serious)* Good no problems eh? Great, how much did you get...What! *(he laughs)* Oh we're a wicked lot aren't we? No she's not at the moment...Look Mells! I said I was sorry...I just couldn't meet you yesterday. It was too risky...she'd be furious. She's alright now...I just want to keep it that way...what...oh fuck you! No way...fuck you Mells...you can be a real bitch sometimes.

*He is interrupted as My Love re-enters.*

**My Love**

Oh! Long face! Nothing serious I hope *(into telephone)* All right Mells, stop trying to make love to my husband over the phone...I've got you pegged...

*They laugh. She passes the phone back.*

**Poor Dear**

Caught out *(he laughs)*

**My Love**

Again! Poor Dear...can't win can you...eight thirty Mells...

*My Love exits*

**Poor Dear**

*(Laughing)* All right...I'm going...see you...Oh...I'm curious to see how Brother Ape cops you this time. Uh! Ha! *(he laughs foolishly)* Bye...

*He begins to leave the room but is met at the door by My Love who is carrying some ironing.*

**My Love**

Don't tell me. She wants to make mad passionate love to you...again!

**Poor Dear**

No! She scored some really good dope from that friend of her's back from Mexico ... or somewhere.

**My Love**

Oh! Another one of those nights eh! You know what I'm like when I'm stoned.

**Poor Dear**

You're worried about it!

**My Love**

No...not really

**Poor Dear**

We've come a long way, My Love.

**My Love**

Don't let's talk about all that again...

**Poor Dear**

Life's a funny thing...I suppose you just get carried along. Who'd have dreamed of you and I smoking dope and snorting coke ...

**My Love**

You just get carried along. We've only one life. Might as well enjoy it!

**Poor Dear**

*(Laughing)* And what's that supposed to mean

**My Love**

Oh, Poor Dear...don't be so sensitive...I didn't mean anything.

**Poor Dear'**

Huh, what would your friend Dulcie think of us smoking dope?

**My Love**

*(Laughing)* Oh! Who knows... who cares! But lets get all of this cleaned up.

*Poor Dear laughs leaving My Love to pick up all the leftover untidiness...she turns the radio on again and when almost finished she goes to straighten her photograph. She picks it up, holds it, and then falls to the bed just looking at it.*

*Poor Dear enters again.*

**Poor Dear**

*(turning off the radio)* I just realised Brother Ape might be able to serve dinner tonight...Well don't you think that would be a great idea...I'm sure Jane and Melly will be jealous...they got nowhere with him...after all...that's the ultimate function...what a trick if Brother Ape could do that. And I just KNOW he can!

**My Love**

Oh Poor Dear...you expect too much of that animal...he is an animal...animals don't serve people dinners. You've got it around the wrong way.

**Poor Dear**

Oh really darling...it would be good if he could...you know how Jane is always skiting about her pets: her talking dog and that idiot of a husband.

**My Love**

Poor Dear!

*She gets up and puts the photograph down on the table*

**Poor Dear**

He's quite different though...isn't he. He has made a difference in our house...hasn't he!

**My Love**

Well, he'll have to perform some other trick (*she pauses*) He's become quite a problem of late... sometimes he looks at me and...well he looks at me...

**Poor Dear**

You undress in front of him...you bitch. No wonder he goes APE...(he laughs at his pun)

**My Love**

Oh really!

**Poor Dear**

You like teasing him...it brings out the natural primitive in you.

**My Love**

Oh!

**Poor Dear**

I've watched you sometimes. You enjoy it. You do. There's a lot of fuckin animal in you My Love...a lot of basic animal...

**My Love**

Fuck off!

**Poor Dear**

You never get the same kick out of me, do you My Love!

**My Love**

Poor Dear...jealous of your gorilla now!

**Poor Dear**

Well I'm not an exciting brute...am I...when was the last time we really got into it?

**My Love**

Last week when we shared a bong with Jane! Have you forgotten already?

**Poor Dear**

Yeah, but that was different.



**My Love**

How? Because Jane was so high she flashed her tits for you and got you horny? I just happened to be the one who spread my legs. Look! When have you last bothered to really look at me.

**Poor Dear**

*(Laughs)* I don't have time...I've got work to do...you're my wife...I'm your husband...it's as simple as that...We're really quite typical I suppose.

**My Love**

Do you ever masturbate over me?

*Pause*

**Poor Dear**

Of course!

**My Love**

Over Mells!

**Poor Dear**

Oh! No No No...you're trying to trap me again...you're a real bitch, aren't you? You bitch...

**My Love**

*(Laughing)* Can't you handle me lover boy?

**Poor Dear**

Oh I know how to handle you! But what's more to the point...you know how to handle me! And you know what? I think you misuse me...

**My Love**

Of course I do...Poor Dear! Now come to mummy and stop fretting.

*She takes him in her arms and clasps him to her.*

**Poor Dear**

I love you.

**My Love**

*(Coldly)* Do you dear!

*A white faced Brother Ape wearing trickster cap, wizards cloak and ball then charges at the doorway almost knocking the two of them over. He gestures almost desperately at My Love...while crying out.*

**Poor Dear**

Brother Ape...you rude boy...interrupting us like that ...I think it's time for his rub...he does look very excited.

**My Love**

Oh really! In our very bedroom.

**Poor Dear**

Well, My Love we decided we'd look after him and be responsible for him...Now, he is improving don't you think!

**My Love**

Oh I know...the poor thing...he's so helpless without us...Aren't you?...Oh you poor darling (*she hugs the Ape*) I wouldn't think of neglecting the poor brute...

*The Ape then becomes relaxed and less agitated.*

**Poor Dear**

We'll take him outside if you really want to...

**My Love**

No. Bring the rug over...it's cold outside...

**Poor Dear**

(*Dragging over a rug*) Here...

*Brother Ape begins to get very excited and when he sees the rug jumps down onto it, sprawled out ready for his rub down.*

**My Love**

He's still got those bruises...

*The Ape suddenly jumps after forgetting something...he removes his trousers and then jumps back onto the rug.*

**Poor Dear**

That's a good ape!

**My Love**

(*Rolling up her sleeves*) Relax...dear...give me a hand

**Poor Dear**

I've got him...poor fellow...all bruises aren't you...

*She begins the rub.*

**My Love**

His muscles are very tense...he's been out of captivity for a long time now...wouldn't you think he'd have loosened up somewhat by now!

**Poor Dear**

Oh! He's pretty worried...he lives an unlikely sort of life for an Ape...(seriously) Apes, like people, adjust to their own particular life styles. It's taking him time to settle into ours.

**My Love**

I sometimes wonder who the monkey really is around here

*The ape is very pleased and shows his contentment.*

**My Love**

You like that don't you...

**Poor Dear**

Barry was telling me...there was a party at the Hague's nearly a month ago and Jenny Hague and another two women stripped each other naked ...

**My Love**

Jenny Hague...I don't believe it...who told you...

**Poor Dear**

Oh, they were pretty high...you know how they get...

**My Love**

Was Barry there?

**Poor Dear**

No...

*The ape turns round to face My Love*

**Poor Dear**

They not only stripped each other...while their...

**My Love**

Where were their husbands????

**Poor Dear**

Watching!!!!

**My Love**

However did they do it?

**Poor Dear**

You know how Jenny is always crapping on about being free, not being trapped by conventions and marriage etc., well, apparently, she did it...I never thought she'd go that far... Oh they got into the whole works.

*The ape begins groaning.*

**My Love**

...what's the matter with him? (*the ape moves his arms about and gets noisier*) Brother Ape...what's the matter with him?

*The ape springs to his feet.*

**Poor Dear**

What's up Boy?

*The ape begins jumping around on his haunches and throwing his arms in the air...after circling round he jumps into the centre of the bed where he begins crying and moaning. He has an erection he is trying to hide.*

**Poor Dear**

Stop it! (*he laughs*)

**My Love**

What is wrong?

*The ape moves slowly across the bed and hops off it up to My Love and looks at her when with a scream he strips her blouse from her and before she can do anything he rips off her loose skirt leaving her in bra and panties. The ape then quickly scampers after her forcing his head into her breasts and with his arms tight around her...she struggles.*

**Poor Dear**

Stop it! (*he laughs*)

**My Love**

Stop laughing dear...look what he's up too...stop him...the beggar...

*Poor Dear takes the ape by the shoulders and then he stops.*

**Poor Dear**

Put your pants back on ...you...you...sex maniac!

*Poor Dear hands the ape his pants and the ape takes them...puts them on and leaves in a sulk.*

**My Love**

I hope he doesn't behave that way tonight.

**Poor Dear**

Listen darling, he'll be alright...you'll see...tonight he'll be just like one of the family.

**My Love**

Some family...

**Poor Dear**

We'll have him serving dinner yet...you'll see. Mells will be so jealous...none of them could get any positive result like that. It'll be a good trick, you'll see...

**My Love**

Hmm...I'm not so concerned with his tricks...just so long as he behaves himself.

**Poor Dear**

Come on, let's get to work.

*Pause*

**My Love**

Do I look sexy? (*she poses*)

*Pause*

**Poor Dear**

Come on, you make me feel very randy...

**My Love**

Well then, how about it?

**Poor Dear**

My Love!!!!

**My Love**

I was just curious...after all...that ape finds me sexy.

**Poor Dear**

Yes well...I'm not jealous of the monkey if that's what you're thinking...come on let's get things ready. And of course I find you sexy.

*Children's voices and the sounds of their playing are heard. Poor Dear and My Love both exit leaving the room silent and bare. A couple of hours pass and in the background can be heard music and the voices of the dinner party...there is considerable laughing...time passes as the music gets softer and the pattern of the voices becomes more subdued. Brother Ape enters dejected and sits on the bed. Twiddles his thumbs and then jumps into the cupboard. Finally there is only music and no voices. Poor Dear and My Love enter the bedroom while the music is still playing. They are arm in arm and are quite high...neither is fully dressed...and both are very bedraggled looking.*

**My Love**

I told you...I told you...that there was...no way...that ape...Brother Ape would do the trick...he's just not up to our standard...not...up...up...(they giggle)

*They claw each other and collapse on the bed. My Love is being very sexually overt towards Poor Dear. The music matches the tempo of their foreplay. Suddenly My Love stops. She sits up.*

**My Love**

Poor Dear...there are giant mosquitoes in here.

*Poor Dear gets out of bed and drops the net down from the frame. The net has a stripe like texture in its folds as it falls down around the pillows on the bed. At that moment Brother Ape enters the room.*

**Poor Dear**

Oh...poor Brother Ape...everyone upset you....those nasty ladies!

**My Love**

Dear...leave the ape and come to bed.

**Poor Dear**

Poor upset monkey.

**My Love**

Darling!

**Poor Dear**

You did all right...I'll be there in a second My Love...oh look at him...the poor creature really feels so out of it.

**My Love**

Oh really.

*The ape looks at her.*

**Poor Dear**

It's you he wants...you ignored him all night...those women made it very difficult...and we had such a good time...he feels out of it all...look...I think he wants to apologise for this afternoon.

**My Love**

Oh! What can I do... (*Poor Dear lifts up the net*) Brother Ape...aw...

**Poor Dear**

Be careful you big oaf...

**My Love**

My dear...this is all so difficult.

**Poor Dear**

(*Pulling back the net*) He just wants to join us. We're responsible for him. Poor Ape. It was a bit much wasn't it. Poor Fellow.

**My Love**

I think he was embarrassed. Ah! The big baby...come and join us you big ape.

*The ape jumps onto the bed and plants himself between My Love and Poor Dear.*

**My Love**

This is all so ridiculous (*the ape begins nudging her*) Ridiculous. (*She is nudged harder and laughs*)

**Poor Dear**

I know he likes you.

**My Love**

I can feel that...

**Poor Dear**

Don't you love the big oaf?

**My Love**

Of course I do! Don't I Brother Ape. (*Changing the subject*) I feel like a joint.

**Poor Dear**

So do I. And for just the occasion ...

*He pulls out a pouch and a bong and begins to prepare it.*

**My Love**

I wonder what would happen if Brother Ape smoked dope?

**Poor Dear**

You are the devil, My Love.