

The Zoo Keeper

by

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EXT. BALTIMORE ZOO - DAY

It's a beautiful spring day at the charming, old-fashioned zoo on the outskirts of town. The sun is shining. The trees are blooming. And yet, only a few visitors are there.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - ELEPHANT HABITAT - DAY

One of the ZOOKEEPERS is making his daily rounds. This is ANDREW BRECKMAN, late thirties, lovable and sweet. He enters the elephant habitat carrying an open bale of hay and dumps it on the ground.

A family of ELEPHANTS, including a baby, stand watching.

ANDREW
There you go, guys.

The elephants just stare at him.

ANDREW
We're just having it plain today.

The elephants continue to stare. Andrew finally caves.

ANDREW
Alright, fine...

Andrew looks around, then surreptitiously takes out a large plastic squirt bottle from his wheelbarrow.

ANDREW
...a little peanut oil.

He squirts some oil onto the hay. The elephants step forward to eat.

ANDREW
But if I see anyone's blood pressure go up, it's gonna be nothing but wheatgrass for a month. Understand?

EXT. GORILLA HABITAT - DAY

A father GORILLA has little baby gorillas climbing all over him. Andrew stands outside the pen holding something behind his back.

ANDREW
...so I went downtown to see Maria at the Caribbean Market. The bad news is she's still not interested in dating a zookeeper. The good news is I got...

Andrew pulls out a large bunch of those TINY TROPICAL BANANAS.

ANDREW
...mini bananas!

The little gorillas GO CRAZY with excitement.

EXT. GIRAFFE'S HABITAT - DAY

Andrew is up on a ladder. He is digging his elbow into the back of a GIRAFFE, giving it a massage.

ANDREW
God, you've got a real knot in there.

Just then a YOUNG COUPLE IN LOVE passes by. They stop and kiss before continuing on. As Andrew watches, he inadvertently digs his elbow even harder into the giraffe. The giraffe YELPS and looks back at him.

ANDREW
Sorry.

INT. TORTOISE HABITAT - DAY

Kevin is working hard, buffing the large shell of a GIANT TORTOISE with two shoeshine brushes.

KEVIN
Do you realize, as a tortoise, you mate once every 3 years - and you still get more action than me?

EXT. LION HABITAT - DAY

A MOTHER LIONESS lazes in the sun watching her 6 cubs who play rambunctiously. Andrew talks to her through the bars.

ANDREW
I got the cubs some chew toys 'cause they're starting to teethe.

Andrew tosses in a handful of rubber "penguin" chew toys.

ANDREW
They're little penguins.
(then, whispering)
Don't tell the penguins.

The regal MALE LION sits at a distance staring at Andrew.

ANDREW
 (to lion)
 What? Just 'cause you're King of
 the Jungle doesn't mean I have to
 bring you a treat every time I
 bring something for...
 (patting pockets)
 ...wait a minute!

Andrew pulls a DEVIL DOG out of his breast pocket.

ANDREW
 I can't believe it. A Devil Dog!
 Your favorite!

The Lion walks over. Andrew looks around.

ANDREW
 Don't tell anyone.

Andrew tosses in the Devil Dog. The Lion starts to eat it.
 Andrew lingers at the cage.

ANDREW
 (wistfully, to lion)
 It must be nice for you Francisco,
 having a family. I wish I had one.
 I can't even meet a girl. They all
 want to date a lawyer, or a stock
 broker, or something.
 (then)
 Nobody cares about a zookeeper.

EXT. PANDA HABITAT - DAY

At the far end of the zoo, away from everything else, is a
 large Panda Habitat. A full grown MALE PANDA lives there.
 Outside the cage, a young British boy, WILL, 10, stands
 talking to the bear.

WILL
 Your name's Sammy, right? My mom
 told me all about you...

Down the path we see Andrew approaching, pushing a
 wheelbarrow.

WILL
 (still to panda)
 You're the only one in the zoo
 who's all by himself.

ANDREW (O.S.)
 You want to feed him?

Will looks over and sees Andrew, dressed in his khaki uniform. He obviously works for the zoo.

WILL
Really?!

ANDREW
Absolutely. Pandas love bamboo. In fact, adult Pandas can eat up to 12% of their weight in bamboo every day. What do you weigh?

WILL
73 pounds.

ANDREW
Do you know what 12% of 73 is?

WILL
No.

ANDREW
Neither do I. But I bet it's a lot of bamboo.

Andrew hands Will a stalk of bamboo from his wheelbarrow.

WILL
So what do I do?

ANDREW
Just hand it to him.

Suddenly a voice rings out.

KATE
Will. There you are.

Will looks over. A woman approaches. This is KATE QUINLIN. She's 34 and STUNNINGLY BEAUTIFUL.

WILL
Hey, mom.

Kate comes over. Andrew IS MESMERIZED by her.

KATE
(to Will)
What are you doing?

WILL
Feeding the panda. This man gave me some bamboo.

Kate turns to Andrew.

KATE
Hi. I'm Kate Quinlin.

Kate extends her hand. Andrew shakes her hand, still in awe.

ANDREW
Hi. Andrew. It's nice to make
your pleasure.

KATE
You must be one of the zoo keepers.

ANDREW
Yes. Well, Habitational Engineers
is the official title, but you
could definitely call me Andrew.

WILL
Mom's a panda expert.

ANDREW
Really?
(then)
Wait. You're not the zoologist
who's bringing the female panda for
Sammy, are you?

KATE
You seem surprised.

ANDREW
(fumpfering)
Oh no. I just didn't expect a
zoologist to have... lipstick...
and legs in a skirt like that...

KATE
You were expecting a legless,
lipless zoologist?

ANDREW
No. I just mean...

KATE
It's okay. I get this a lot.

ANDREW
You came from London, right?

KATE
Yes. We just arrived.

ANDREW
And you brought your whole family.

KATE
 Actually, it's just me and Will
 these days...
 (putting arm around Will)
 ...right pal?

WILL
 Right.

ANDREW
 Just you two?
 (then)
 Well, I should give you my pager
 number. You know, in case you need
 someone to show you around or
 something.

KATE
 Oh, that's...

ANDREW
 No, it's fine. I've got a pad and
 pen right...

Andrew pulls out a pad from his breast pocket. The pad is
 COVERED IN A DISGUSTING GOOEY SLIME.

ANDREW
 Oh, the giraffes. They're always
 looking for food in my pockets.
 Their drool is a little slimy.
 Wait, I've got a handkerchief...

Andrew pulls out a hanky from pants pocket. WET DOLLOPS of
 DARK GOOP fall out of it.

ANDREW
 Oh yeah, I used this for the bat
 guano on the snack cart...

Just then a voice rings out.

VOICE
 Kate. There you are.

Everyone looks up to see a HANDSOME MAN approaching. This is
 TRENT RAMSEY, 39, the Director of the Zoo.

KATE
 Trent.

Trent reaches them.

KATE
 So good to see you again.

Kate and Trent exchange a hug and a kiss on each cheek.

TRENT
I was worried you got lost.

KATE
Oh, no. We were on our way to your office, but we ran into Clark here.

ANDREW
(correcting)
Andrew.

TRENT
Andrew is one of our zoo keepers.

ANDREW
(correcting again)
Habitational Engineers.

Trent turns to Will. He offers his hand.

TRENT
And you must be Will.
(shaking hand)
It's nice to meet you...
(then, feigning pain)
Oh my God! That's some grip you've got there, mister. And what a good looking young man, too! But I guess that's to be expected with such a beautiful mother.

KATE
That's very sweet. Thank you.

Andrew tries to join the conversation.

ANDREW
He is very good looking. I noticed that too.

Kate and Trent look at Andrew. Andrew gives Will the "thumbs up". It's an awkward moment, and everyone feels it.

TRENT
Oh, Andrew. Several of the spider monkeys are having some intestinal issues. There's a fair bit of liquid fecal matter that needs your expert attention.

ANDREW
Sure. Of course.

TRENT
 Kate, Will, why don't you come with me?

Trent starts to lead them off.

TRENT
 I made us all a pot of tea.

KATE
 That's very thoughtful, Trent.
 Thank you.

TRENT
 Well, I wanted you all to feel at home.

Andrew watches them walk off, embarrassed and depressed.

ANDREW
 (to self)
 I'm such an idiot.

EXT. SPIDER MONKEY HABITAT - DAY

Andrew is mopping up the monkey cage. He's not happy.

ANDREW
 (mimicking himself)
 Why don't you take my pager number?
 Or how 'bout some of this Camel spit?
 (then, muttering)
 What was I thinking? A woman like that. I mop up poop for a living!

The MONKEYS ALL LOOK AT ANDREW, quizzically.

INT. REPTILE ENCLOSURE - AFTERNOON

Continuing with his chores, Andrew feeds cockroaches to a PAIR of IGUANAS.

ANDREW
 (still muttering)
 Everyone's got someone in their life except me.

The LIZARDS ALL LOOK AT ANDREW, concerned.

EXT. CAMEL HABITAT - LATE AFTERNOON

It's late in the day. Andrew is using a large brush to clean a camel's teeth.

ANDREW
 You know why? Because I smell like
 camels.

The camel looks at him.

ANDREW
 No offense.

EXT. FLAMINGO HABITAT - EARLY EVENING

It's getting dark. Andrew is raking up the feathers and
 droppings.

ANDREW
 I want a life - or at least a
 girlfriend.

Behind Andrew, all the FLAMINGOS TURN AND LOOK at him.

EXT. LION HABITAT - EVENING

It's now dark out. Andrew stands outside the Lion cage
 filling the drinking trough with a hose.

ANDREW
 I can't do this anymore.

Andrew turns off the hose.

ANDREW
 That's it. Tomorrow I'm gonna
 start looking for a new job.

Hearing this, all the ANIMALS STRAIGHTEN UP, seemingly
 ALARMED.

Andrew stows the hose and heads for the zoo exit. The
 animals watch as Andrew exits the gate, locking it behind
 him.

As soon as he disappears from sight, the Lion, obviously
 distressed, steps to the front of his habitat, turns to the
 other animals, opens his mouth, and... SPEAKS.

LION
 MEETING!!!!

Immediately, the animals scramble into action.

EXT. GORILLA'S HABITAT - EVENING

The Gorilla takes a key out from under a rock and inserts it
 into the rear door of his habitat.

EXT. ELEPHANT HABITAT - EVENING

The Elephant uses his trunk to reach around to the outside handle of his gate and open it.

EXT. FLAMINGO HABITAT - EVENING

The Flamingo turns sideways and slips out between the bars of his habitat.

EXT. ANIMAL COMMON SPACE - EVENING

Behind the habitats is a large common space used for exercising the animals, cleaning them, etc. All the animals of the zoo have gathered there now to meet.

The scene is bedlam, with animals running every which way. There's squawking, grunting, and squealing. THE ELEPHANT, (ORVILLE) British, very proper, (think John Cleese) is disgusted by the lack of order.

ELEPHANT (ORVILLE)
(upper crusty English accent)
My God, it's like a zoo in here.

The LION, FRANCISCO, a Latin lover, with swagger and machismo, (think Antonio Banderas) tries to settle everyone.

LION (FRANCISCO)
(Castillian accent)
Quiet everyone! Quiet, please!

The animals continue their rumpus. The ZEBRA, (VITO) a Jersey mobster (think James Gandolfini) turns to the Lion.

ZEBRA (VITO)
I got this.

The Zebra stomps on the tail of a big SCARLET MACAW who lets out a piercing scream.

MACAW
Ahhhhhhh!

Suddenly, everyone goes quiet.

ZEBRA (VITO)
(to Lion)
Go ahead.

The Lion addresses the crowd.

LION (FRANCISCO)
Greetings, everyone. I think you
all know why we are here.
(MORE)

LION (FRANCISCO) (cont'd)
 Andrew, the greatest zoo keeper in
 the history of the world is
 thinking about leaving us.

All the animals react, upset.

ANTEATER
 He's the only one who goes through
 our food and picks out the fire
 ants.

LITTLE ANIMAL WITH HUGE EARS
 He cleans my ears - which is no
 small feat.

OWL
 He sings us to sleep every morning.

The GIRAFFE, SHAWN, a total stoner (think Seth Rogan meets
 Jeff Spicoli) interrupts.

GIRAFFE (SHAWN)
 Hold on, dudes. Which one is
 Andrew again?

PENGUIN
 The one that massages your rump
 every time your hip goes out.

GIRAFFE (SHAWN)
 Ohhhhh. That dude is awesome!!

LION (FRANCISCO)
 Yes, but he's lonely, and wants to
 leave.

The GORILLA, STANLEY, sensitive, neurotic, (think Ray
 Romano), who always has his kids climbing all over him,
 speaks up.

GORILLA (STANLEY)
 I'd hate to be alone. Having a
 family is the best. Kids around
 all the time - it's bliss.
 (then, yelling at kids)
 Jeremy, stop pulling my ears!
 Blake, that's your private area!
 No one wants to see that.

ELEPHANT (ORVILLE)
 We can not afford to lose Andrew.
 We must find a mate for him.

The PEACOCK, (CLYDE) a black street hustler (think Katt
 Williams) speaks up.

PEACOCK (CLYDE)
 Look, if all he needs is a little
 female companiontude, I'll just
 hook him up with one of my ladies.
 (then)
 Doreen, come on out here and give
 these fellas a little taste of what
 I'm talkin' 'bout.

A FEMALE PEACOCK struts into the common area and prances
 about.

PEACOCK (CLYDE)
 That's right, baby. Shake ya tail
 feather.
 (then to other animals)
 Now who's gonna say "no" to that?

EMU
 Anyone but a peacock.

PEACOCK (CLYDE)
 That's cold, man. Especially
 coming from an Emu.

The PANDA, SAMMY, Chinese, (think Jackie Chan) chimes in.

PANDA (SAMMY)
 (heavy Chinese accent)
 This problem not so easy. Andrew
 not want just any female. He like
 lady who come see me. Her name
 Kate. She very pretty.

ZEBRA (VITO)
 Guys, I've seen this broad.
 There's no way a regular joe like
 Andrew is gonna score a classy dame
 like that.

LION (FRANCISCO)
 He can, if I help him. Remember my
 friends, I am a master in the art
 of love.

A voice comes from behind him.

VOICE
 Pfft.

Francisco whips around.

LION (FRANCISCO)
 Who said "pfft"? I distinctly
 heard a "pfft"!

Two sexy LIONESSES, CLAUDIA and ANA (think Penelope Cruz and Salma Hayek) step forward.

LIONESSE (CLAUDIA)
 What are you going to teach him,
 Francisco? How to lie around all
 day and eat Devil Dogs until his
 butt's the size of a warthog?

LION (FRANCISCO)
 Be careful what you say, woman. If
 this were the wild, I'd cast you
 out.

LIONESSE (ANA)
 If this were the wild, you'd be a
 rug in a safari lodge somewhere.

The Lionesses exit. There's an awkward silence.

ANTEATER
 (sing-song)
 Awwwk-ward.

WARTHOG
 (looking over his shoulder)
 Is my butt really that big?

Just then, THE FLAMINGO (LENNY), who thinks he's an ACTION HERO, steps out of the group.

FLAMINGO (LENNY)
 (a la movie action hero)
 That's it! Enough! The time for
 talk is over, people. This is a
 crisis, and a crisis demands
 action.

The Flamingo turns to Francisco and squints his eyes, dramatically.

FLAMINGO (LENNY)
 I'll take it from here. But I work
 alone. I don't need a partner.
 (deep voice a la movie
 trailer)
 Because this time... it's personal.

ZEBRA (VITO)
 Hey pinkie, you're not an action
 hero, capiche? So shut your beak
 or I'm gonna shut it for you.

FLAMINGO (LENNY)
 Go ahead, punk. Make my day.

The animals start to squawk and whinny, taking sides in the conflict.

LION (FRANCISCO)
Silence, please!

All the animals quiet down.

LION (FRANCISCO)
We need to find ways to help Andrew attract this woman, Kate.

PEACOCK (CLYDE)
I got it. Let's get him wet, and roll him in bird seed. She'll see that and go bananas.

GORILLA (STANLEY)
Bananas! Now, there's an idea. We'll just cover him head to toe in bananas. Who can resist that?

A slightly scary and sinister looking WOLF speaks from the shadows.

WOLF
(slightly sinister)
Why don't we just take the child?

All the animals look at the Wolf, creeped out.

PENGUIN
Why is it always "take the child" with you? How is that even going to help?

WOLF
I'm just saying, it's worth a shot.

LION (FRANCISCO)
This is ridiculous! We're getting nowhere. It is obvious, there is only one thing for us to do.
(then)
We must talk to Andrew.

ELEPHANT (ORVILLE)
(taken aback)
Talk to him?

LION (FRANCISCO)
Yes, tell him exactly how to woo Kate.

ZEBRA (VITO)
You mean break the code?

LION (FRANCISCO)
 Yes, yes. Break the code. This is too important to risk failure.

ELEPHANT (ORVILLE)
 (outraged)
 Hold on now, man! You can't break the code. The rules are very clear. We do not talk to humans.

GORILLA (STANLEY)
 It's true. My cousin Coco the Gorilla. All she did was a little signing - now they're working her to the bone.

LION (FRANCISCO)
 Look, I'll decide what we can and cannot do. Who's the King of the Jungle, eh?

ELEPHANT (ORVILLE)
 You're not King of the Jungle. My God, man, you're not even king of your own castle.

Just then a voice calls out from above.

VOICE (O.S.)
 If anyone's king around here, it's me.

Everyone looks up and sees a PIGEON, JAKE, cool, confident (think VINCE VAUGHN) in a branch overhead.

PIGEON (JAKE)
 Can anyone else here come and go as they please? No? I didn't think so.

PEACOCK (CLYDE)
 We could leave... if we wanted.

ZEBRA (VITO)
 We just don't wanna.

PIGEON (JAKE)
 'Cause you're scared. Not me. I'm free. Free as a bird.
 (then, singing)
 ...and this bird you can not chaaa-ange. Whoa-whoa-whoa...!

ELEPHANT (ORVILLE)
 This is ridiculous! I am not going
 to stand here and be lectured by
 some filthy rat with wings...

A RAT looks up from the corner.

RAT
 Hey! I heard that!

ELEPHANT (ORVILLE)
 No one is leaving the zoo, and we
 are certainly not breaking the
 code. And that is final!!!

Orville storms out. Everyone looks at Francisco.

LION (FRANCISCO)
 Fine. We will help him without
 breaking the code. I only hope it
 works. Life without Andrew would
 be... unthinkable.

Francisco exits.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - MORNING

It's the next morning. Kate is walking around the zoo. She
 gets to the Tropical Rainforest Building. Curious, she goes
 inside to look around.

Outside the building, behind some bushes, we see the Zebra,
 hiding, watching. He turns to the Flamingo next to him.

ZEBRA
 Alright, she's in.

FLAMINGO
 Copy that, Cobra One.

ZEBRA
 Don't call me Cobra One.

FLAMINGO
 It's a code name to protect your...

ZEBRA
 Just go!

Disappointed, the Flamingo heads off.

ZEBRA
 Freakin' bird.

INT. ZOO KEEPER'S LOUNGE - MORNING

Andrew is alone in the lounge circling HELP WANTED ADS in the NEWSPAPER. The Flamingo enters the lounge.

ANDREW
What are you doing out of your
cage?

The Flamingo grabs the pen out of Andrew's hand and runs.

ANDREW
Hey!

EXT. TROPICAL RAINFOREST BUILDING - MORNING

The Flamingo runs across the pavilion and into the Rainforest Building. Andrew chases after him.

ANDREW
Come back here!

Andrew enters the building. The moment he does, the Zebra steps out of the bushes with big stick in his mouth and wedges it through the handles of the doors, effectively locking them.

INT. TROPICAL RAINFOREST BUILDING - MORNING

Andrew enters the artificial rainforest looking for the Flamingo. Up ahead he sees his pen lying on the path. He goes to pick it up.

KATE (O.S.)
Andrew?

Andrew looks up and sees Kate.

ANDREW
Oh, hi.

KATE
I was just familiarizing myself
with the zoo.

ANDREW
(deer in headlights)
I was getting my pen.

A safe distance away, behind some ferns, several of the animals are hiding, watching. They speak in hushed tones.

LION
Oh my God, look at those fireworks!

SMALL ANIMAL WITH BIG EARS
Her body temperature just went up 3
degrees.

PEACOCK
("clearing air" with wing)
And those pheromones.
(then)
These two are made for each other.
Any idiot can smell that.

LION
This could be a lot easier than I
thought.

FLAMINGO
(confused)
But she has no idea she's attracted
to him.

LION
No, not yet. But we will fix that.

The Lion signals to Big Ears, who hits a red button on the
wall with his paw. Suddenly, it starts "raining" in the
"forest".

Andrew and Kate notice the "rain" as it begins to fall.

KATE
Uh-oh.

ANDREW
C'mon.

Andrew leads Kate to the doors but he can't open them.

ANDREW
(confused)
It's locked.

KATE
My dress is soaking.

ANDREW
(fighting doors)
I don't understand.

KATE
(pointing)
Look, there's an overhang. We can
huddle underneath until it stops.

They run for the overhang like two lovers caught in a storm.
It's a perfect romantic set up until suddenly Andrew SLIPS on
the WET PAVEMENT...

ANDREW

Ahhhh!

Andrew GOES DOWN HARD.

KATE

Are you okay?

ANDREW

I think I pulled my groin. God, it hurts! Ahhh. Ahhh!

Kate moves to help him up.

ANDREW

Don't touch me. Don't touch me!!
Ahhh!!

The animals watch from under a tarp.

PEACOCK

Homeboy ain't exactly a playa, is he?

LION

This may be more difficult than I thought.

EXT. OUTDOOR DINING AREA - DAY

The zoo has an indoor/outdoor cafeteria. Kate and Will sit at an outdoor table having lunch.

KATE

How's the veggie burger?

WILL

Not so good. But... I hate eating meat at a zoo.

KATE

(smiling)
I know what you mean.

A little ways off, several of the animals watch from behind some brush. The Lion sees Andrew approaching, still limping slightly, with his paper lunch bag and his Want Ads.

LION

Here he comes.

PEACOCK

A'ight.

The Peacock turns to the Female Peacocks.

PEACOCK
Do your thing, girls.

The free-roaming female peacocks walk over to the dining area. As they pass Kate and Will's table, they "accidentally" knock over their drinks.

WILL
Whoa!

Kate laughs at the craziness of what just happened.

KATE
C'mon, let's get refills.

Kate and Will get up and go inside the cafeteria as Andrew arrives at a different table and puts his lunch down. He heads over to the condiment cart to get napkins and utensils.

PEACOCK
Alright, monkey time.

On the Peacock's cue, several SPIDER MONKEYS scamper in. They grab Kate and Will's trays and move them over to Andrew's table.

When Kate and Andrew return with their drinks they can't find their trays. Will spots them at the other table.

WILL
There they are.

Kate and Will walk over to the table just as Andrew is returning.

The Peacock looks at the Lion, pleased.

PEACOCK
Bingo. Instant lunch date.

Will sees Andrew is at their table.

WILL
(excited)
Look, Mom. We're sitting with Andrew.

KATE
(confused)
That's strange. I could've sworn we were sitting by the fountain.

ANDREW
Oh, do you want to sit by the fountain? Here, let me help.

The animals watch in disbelief as Andrew chivalrously helps Kate and Will with their trays back to their original table - and then returns, alone, to his. They groan in frustration.

PEACOCK

The man is absolutely clueless.

LION

Then we must turn him into a hero.
It is our only hope. No female can
resist a hero.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - OUTSIDE GORILLA HABITAT - AFTERNOON

Three 19 year old boys, TROUBLEMAKERS, stand outside the habitat, tormenting the Gorilla, making obnoxious monkey noises and exaggerated ape gestures. The Gorilla just stares at them. Andrew approaches.

ANDREW

Hey guys, cut that out.

The Troublemakers stop.

ANDREW

Be respectful of the animals.
Alright?

Andrew continues on. The second he's gone, the boys resume their obnoxious behavior.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - MAIN PAVILION AREA - AFTERNOON

Will is outside the Zebra cage, talking to the Zebra inside.

WILL

(to Zebra)
If you can understand what I'm
saying, nod your head like this.

Will demonstrates. The Zebra just stares at him. Trent, passing through the pavilion, sees this and heads over.

TRENT

You know Will, animals are fun to
look at, but, for the most part,
they're not very intelligent
creatures...

Kate comes walking down a path and, from a distance, sees Trent with Will. She assumes they are bonding and smiles.

From his habitat, the Lion spots Kate. He turns to one of his CUBS.

LION
 Alright, son. Make it good.

The Lion goes and hides behind some rocks as the Lion Cub shoves his paw under a large boulder and, pretending to be stuck, wails in "agony".

LION CUB
 Aaaahhh!

Kate turns and sees the trapped cub in "pain" and alone in the empty habitat.

KATE
 Oh, no.

Kate rushes over to the habitat. She uses her key to unlock the zookeeper's gate, and hurries inside to aid the cub.

The Lion, still hiding behind the rock, sees Andrew approaching from the other direction. It's perfect timing. The Lion steps out from behind his hiding place and moves towards Kate. Kate, who's "freed" the cub, suddenly sees the full grown male Lion approaching her in a low, hunting crouch. She freezes. The Lion ROARS WITH EVERYTHING HE'S GOT, trying to sound as menacing as possible.

Andrew hears the roar and looks over. He sees Kate trapped, and rushes for the cage.

Kate starts to back away from the Lion, slowly.

KATE
 It's okay, big fella. Everyone's fine.

Kate puts the cub down safely on the ground and continues to back away. The Lion roars again and Kate trips, falling backwards down a small embankment.

Andrew comes charging into the cage holding a pack of Devil Dogs.

ANDREW
 Francisco. Look! Devil Dog!

Andrew dangles the pack. The Lion stops and turns, heading towards Andrew. Using the bait, Andrew lures the Lion back into the rear holding area.

Down on the ground behind the embankment Kate SEES NONE OF THIS. All she sees is Trent rush "heroically" into the now lion-less cage. He hurries over and scoops her into his arms.

TRENT

It's okay. I've got you.

Trent carries Kate out of the cage.

Back in the holding area with Andrew, the Lion has finally gotten his Devil Dog. As he eats, he sees Trent carrying Kate out of the habitat. He stops chewing and stares slack-jawed, in total disbelief.

Outside the habitat, Trent continues walking, holding Kate in his arms.

KATE

Thank you, Trent.

TRENT

Well, we can't have our specialists getting eaten, can we?

Will comes hurrying over.

WILL

Mom!

TRENT

You mother's fine, Will. I'm just taking her to first aid.
(then, to Kate)
Just to be safe.

From inside the cage, the Lion and Andrew watch helplessly as Trent carries Kate off, Will following behind. Trent looks every bit the hero. Kate rests her head on Trent's shoulder as they disappear from view.

As the Lion watches them go, the anger builds in him until HE JUST CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE. FINALLY, HE TURNS TO Andrew... AND SCREAMS!

LION

YOU IDIOT!!!

Andrew stares at the Lion, dumbfounded. He's not sure, but he thinks the lion just called him an idiot.

LION

What's wrong with you? We put you in situation after situation, and you are totally incapable of even the most basic courting rituals!

Andrew just stares, mouth agape.

LION
Why are you staring at me like a
wounded antelope?

ANDREW
You're... talking.

LION
Of course I am talking. How can I
not talk? You are such an idiot.
(then)
Now give me that other Devil Dog,
I'm starving.

ANDREW
Oh my God, I'm losing my mind.

Andrew drops the Devil Dog, and runs out of the Lion's
habitat.

The Gorilla, who is next door, sees what's happening.

GORILLA
Oh, boy. Francisco broke the code.

Andrew moves away from the Lion's habitat, totally
disoriented. As he does, he passes right in front of the
Gorilla who has come to the front of his cage.

GORILLA
Don't take it personally, Andrew.
He gets angry. He yells. It's a
Latin thing.

ANDREW
Oh, God. You too?

GORILLA
Well, I figure, if the Lion's doing
it...

Andrew is beside himself. He's sure he's going crazy.

ANDREW
I've gotta get out of this place.

Andrew starts to walk away quickly. But from EACH CAGE he
passes, the ANIMALS inside CALL OUT to him.

ZEBRA
Don't go, Andrew. You're part of
the family.

PEACOCK
We need you, baby!

GIRAFFE
Don't go, bro! Please.

Until finally Andrew reaches the Elephant habitat. Orville stands right at the front. He stares him dead in the eye, SWINGING HIS TRUNK back and forth, desperately trying to HYPNOTIZE him.

ELEPHANT
(hypnotizing voice)
You heard nothing. Animals can't talk. You will remember nothing...

ANDREW
Everybody, stop talking! I'm going crazy!!

Andrew turns and sprints for the zoo exit. He's almost out the gates, when, in a LAST DITCH EFFORT, The Lion calls out.

LION
Don't go, Andrew! Kate is completely in love with you!!!

Suddenly Andrew stops short. Slowly he turns around and looks at the Lion.

ANDREW
(intrigued)
I'm sorry. What did you just say?

FADE OUT.

EXT. ANIMAL COMMON SPACE - EVENING

It's late. The zoo is closed. The animals have all convened in the common area. Andrew stands among them, looking uneasy.

LION
(to Andrew)
She's completely taken with you.
She just doesn't... realize it yet.
You understand?

Andrew shakes his head no.

ZEBRA
What part don't you get?

ANDREW
The part where the lion and zebra are talking to me.

PEACOCK

This is exactly what happened to Doolittle. Took him weeks to wrap his mind around it.

ANDREW

If animals can talk - why haven't you been talking all this time?

ELEPHANT

Because there is a code - established eons ago to help maintain order in the universe.

(glaring at Lion)

A code which some overgrown alley cats don't seem to take very seriously.

LION

It just came out. I couldn't help it.

PORCUPINE

The point is, animals don't talk 'cause people need to think they're superior to us.

MACAW

It's an ego thing.

GIRAFFE

Plus, dude, if humans knew we could understand them... they'd make us do even more of their bogus work.

BIG EARS

Including their most dangerous jobs.

ANDREW

Humans would never make animals do anything dangerous.

WOLF

Oh no? Perhaps you should ask my Uncle Aldo, the bomb sniffing dog.

FLAMINGO

Personally, I'd welcome a little danger 'round here. I'm a bird of action. Danger's my middle name.

The Flamingo does some swift kung-fu moves.

ZEBRA

(to Andrew, re: Flamingo)
He thinks he's an action hero. He sneaks into the Zookeeper's Lounge and watches all your movies.

ANDREW

So that's why all my DVD's are scratched.

FLAMINGO

(holding up foot)
These talons are registered lethal weapons. That being said... they suck at picking up DVD's when they fall on the floor.

ELEPHANT

Look Andrew, it is absolutely essential you tell no one about us speaking. Do we have your word?

ANDREW

Yes.

WOLF

And if you break this sacred oath, will you agree to give us your first born child?

All the animals stare at the Wolf, creeped out.

WOLF

It was just a thought.

ANDREW

Okay, assuming I didn't fall in the shower this morning, and this isn't all a dream - How exactly are you guys gonna help me with Kate?

LION

It is simple. You must go beyond her logic, and connect with her on a more primitive level. To win the human, you must become more like an animal.

ANDREW

How do I do that?

PEACOCK

It's easy, brother. See, in nature, it's all about the show.

(MORE)

PEACOCK (cont'd)
 If you want to get a honey, all you
 gotta do is walk up to her and do
 this... SLA-BAAAM!

The Peacock FANS OUT HIS TAIL FEATURES in a DRAMATIC DISPLAY.

ZEBRA
 Forget colors. You don't want to
 look like some fruity bird. To
 impress the ladies, what you want
 to be sporting... is stripes.
 They're very sophisticated,
 dignified, and let me just add...
 very slimming.

PEACOCK
 No, man. It's all about color.

ZEBRA
 Stripes.

PEACOCK
 Color!

ZEBRA
 Stripes!

SCARLET MACAW
 Striped colors!

RAM
 (to Andrew)
 Is there any chance you could grow
 horns?

CONDOR
 Or one of these bulbous red things
 on top of your head?

GORILLA
 Hold on, everybody. Let me just
 ask him something.
 (to Andrew)
 This girl you like... have you
 thrown poop at her yet? No? Then
 what are we even talking about.
 This is basic stuff, people.
 Basic!

Suddenly a voice rings out.

VOICE (O.S.)
 Why do you even want to be in a
 relationship?

Everyone looks up and sees the Pigeon is back on his branch.

ELEPHANT

Oh Lord, not him again.

ANDREW

The pigeon talks, too?

PIGEON

Listen to me, my friend. Right now you've got freedom - just like me. But the second you get in a relationship - it's Lockdown! You might as well be in a cage like these suckers. That's why I say romance is for the birds. I mean, other birds. Not me.

The Elephant sprays the Pigeon with a trunk full of water, and the Pigeon flies away.

ANDREW

Okay, before I was just freaked out. Now I'm freaked out and confused.

The Wolf steps forward.

WOLF

Let me boil this down for you, Andrew. In the animal world, everything begins with scent.

ANDREW

Scent?

WOLF

Yes. You will never get anywhere with this woman until you've first marked your territory.

Finally, all the animals AGREE ON SOMETHING. They respond with "It's true", "Absolutely", "I should've thought of that", etc.

ANDREW

Mark my territory? But people don't do that - I mean, unless they're camping.

LION

The Wolf is right, Andrew. This is definitely the first step.

PEACOCK

A brother's gotta slap his stink on things.

ZEBRA

Let her know she's living on your
turf.

GORILLA

Or, if you prefer, you could just
throw poop at her.

EXT. ZOO - MORNING

It's early morning the next day.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - OUTER PERIMETER - MORNING

The Wolf has led Andrew to the outer perimeters of the zoo
grounds.

WOLF

It's always best to leave your mark
before the morning dew burns off.

ANDREW

(looking around)
And before anyone is awake to see
you.

The Wolf finds a spot and stops.

WOLF

Okay, right here.

ANDREW

(pointing at spot)
You want me to pee here?

WOLF

No, I want you to bake a tart here.
What do you think?

Andrew unzips his pants.

ANDREW

No one likes a sarcastic wolf.

Andrew starts to pee.

WOLF

Alright, stop.

ANDREW

Stop?

WOLF

Yes, that's enough. Stop!

ANDREW
I can't just...

WOLF
Stop!!

Andrew forces himself to stop peeing.

ANDREW
(grimacing)
Oh, that doesn't feel good.

The Wolf starts walking.

WOLF
Conserve your urine. We've got at
least 12 more spots.

ANDREW
12?!!

The Wolf stops at a different spot.

WOLF
Now here.

Andrew walks over to the next spot.

WOLF
Go.

Andrew stands there for a moment.

WOLF
Go!

ANDREW
I'm trying. You turned the water
off. It doesn't just come roaring
back on.

Just then, a voice,

KATE (O.S.)
Andrew?

Andrew turns around and sees Kate approaching. He's
literally caught with his pants down.

KATE
What are you doing?

ANDREW
Oh, I'm glad you're here, 'cause I
was just...

KATE
Peeing?

ANDREW
Yes! Peeing.

KATE
(alarmed)
Why is the wolf out of his enclosure?

ANDREW
(scrambling)
Oh, well, that's why I was peeing. See, um, I was taking the wolf for some exercise when suddenly he stepped on a... poison toad.

KATE
Poison toad?

ANDREW
Yes. See how much pain he's in?

They both look at the Wolf. He's fine. Andrew shoots him a look and suddenly the Wolf begins whimpering and feigning terrible pain in his foot.

ANDREW
And the only way to stop the pain is to pee on it - which is what I was doing.

KATE
Oh my God. Well, go ahead.

ANDREW
What?

KATE
Urinate on him! He's obviously in great pain.

ANDREW
Uh... Yeah.

The Wolf shoots Andrew an intimidating look.

KATE
Hurry! Get the whole leg. Really soak him, or the poison will travel.

ANDREW
Uh. Okay.

Kate turns her back to give Andrew some privacy. Andrew looks at the Wolf, trapped in his lie.

ANDREW
(sotto, to Wolf)
I'm so sorry.

We see the urine stream hit the Wolf's leg, soaking it. The Wolf just stares at Andrew, loathsomely.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. WOLF'S HABITAT - DAY

Andrew is shampooing the Wolf, working up a huge lather of soap and suds.

ANDREW
I think we got it.

WOLF
(deadly serious)
Rinse and repeat.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - PANDA'S HABITAT - DAY

A flatbed truck carrying a cage with a FEMALE PANDA in it, backs towards the Panda habitat. A small crowd of people are there. Kate is directing the truck.

KATE
That's perfect! Right there!

On the other side of the habitat, the free roaming Peacock walks to the edge of the enclosure and quietly talks to Sammy, the zoo's male Panda.

PEACOCK
Check it out, Sammy. They're bringing you a honey.

SAMMY THE PANDA
(Chinese accent)
I know. I been alone in a cage for 12 years! Now they finally bring me woman! I so happy! I so happy! What her name? Never mind. I don't care!

Kate has positioned the Female Panda's cage right next to the entrance of the habitat.

KATE
Okay, here we go.

Kate opens the cage and allows the Female Panda to enter the habitat.

KATE
Sammy, this is Ling-Ling. She's come all the way from Beijing to be with you. Is it okay if she shares your cage for a little while?

Sammy responds by walking over and nuzzling Ling-Ling affectionately. Kate smiles. She turns to Trent who is watching.

KATE
Looks good.

Trent smiles back and gives her a "thumbs up".

EXT. ANIMAL COMMON SPACE - DAY

Andrew is in the back area with several of the animals.

ANDREW
Okay, so I've peed everywhere.

LION
Excellent.

ANDREW
So now how does this work? Is she just gonna smell it and fall in love with me? 'Cause if it's that easy, why am I not in love with the homeless guy who lives on my corner?

LION
Marking your territory is only the first step, Andrew. Now you must establish yourself as the dominant male in that territory.

ANDREW
The dominant male?

ZEBRA
What he's saying is, it's time to earn your stripes.

PEACOCK
Ruffle some feathers.

ELEPHANT
Trunk it up a bit.

Everyone looks at the elephant.

WOLF

That's not a saying.

ELEPHANT

Well, it should be. It's very descriptive.

ANDREW

So what do I do?

FROG

To be an Alpha Male you gotta be big and intimidating like me.

ANDREW

But you're like the smallest guy here.

FROG

Oh, yeah?

The Frog suddenly PUMPS UP HIS CHEST with air, swelling it enormously, practically TRIPLING HIS SIZE. The animals respond with praise and cheers.

GIRAFFE

(to Andrew)

That's hot. Do that!

FLAMINGO

Alright! Enough talk!

The Flamingo strides forward like an action hero, again.

FLAMINGO

Look, you want to be a dominant male, then you've got to dominate. You gotta walk into a room and knock some punk on their butt. That's how you send a message.

ANDREW

I'm not sure I...

FLAMINGO

Front and center. Let's go, Nancy-boy.

ANDREW

But...

FLAMINGO

I said front and center!!!

Andrew hurries over.

FLAMINGO
 Now let's see what you've got.
 C'mon, let's go. Head to head.
 Mano a mano. Last man standing.

ANDREW
 You want me to hit you?

FLAMINGO
 Me? No, not me. Him.

The Flamingo points to the Ram.

RAM
 I'm ready.

FLAMINGO
 Good.
 (quickly)
 On your mark. Get set. Go!

The Ram lowers his horns and charges the unprepared Andrew, ramming into his chest...

ANDREW
 Oooof!

... sending him flying backwards onto the ground.

FLAMINGO
 (shaking his head)
 Looks like we've got some work to do.

ZEBRA
 That's it. I can't take this anymore.

FLAMINGO
 What?

ZEBRA
 You! Acting like a tough guy when you ain't nothin' but a big pink bird with pipe cleaners for legs.

FLAMINGO
 First of all, I'm light red...

ZEBRA
 No, what you are is pathetic. You call yourself a bird, and you can't even fly.

FLAMINGO
 I can fly.

ZEBRA
Yeah? Go ahead, then.

All the animals look at the Flamingo.

FLAMINGO
I don't feel like it.

ZEBRA
That's what I thought.

Embarrassed, the Flamingo marches off.

GIRAFFE
Dude, that was harsh.

ZEBRA
He had it coming.

As all the animals start to bicker about what just happened, the Ram walks over to Andrew.

RAM
Listen kid, if you want some pointers on establishing male dominance - I'm your ram.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - DAY

Kate is walking with Will.

WILL
Why do I have to go to camp?

KATE
Honey, I'm working. I can't watch you all day.

Will looks unhappy.

KATE
Trent's nephew is visiting him for the summer. He goes to this camp and loves it.

WILL
Oh, Trent's nephew. He must be a blast.

KATE
Will...

Will stops, right in front of the Gorilla's cage, looking unhappy.

KATE
It won't be for very long.

WILL
How long?

KATE
Just until Ling Ling gets pregnant,
then we can go home.

WILL
You promise?

KATE
I promise.
(then)
C'mon. Let's get some ice cream.

Kate puts her arm around Will and they head towards the snack area. The Gorilla turns to the Lion in the neighboring habitat.

GORILLA
Did you hear that?

LION
We've got to tell Sammy.

INT. PANDA HABITAT - AFTERNOON

Sammy is alone with Ling-Ling.

SAMMY THE PANDA
You so pretty. You mind if Sammy
give you little bear hug?

LING LING
(coyly)
Maybe just little one.

Sammy moves in for the hug. Suddenly the Lion and the Gorilla come running up behind Sammy's habitat.

LION
Sammy!

SAMMY THE PANDA
Not now, fellas. Kinda busy.

GORILLA
It's important!

Sammy gives them a look. They seem insistent.

SAMMY THE PANDA
 (to Ling-Ling)
 'Scuse me one second.

Sammy hurries over to the Lion and Gorilla.

SAMMY THE PANDA
 What you want? This very bad
 timing.

LION
 You can't do this. You have to
 stop.

SAMMY THE PANDA
 What you mean stop? I have girl
 panda here. I'm in the middle of a
 date. First date in 12 years!

LION
 You don't understand. If she gets
 pregnant, Kate will leave. That
 means Andrew will leave too.

SAMMY THE PANDA
 But... girl panda.

GORILLA
 You can't. For all of us.

LION
 Please. Just until we can get
 Andrew and Kate together.

Sammy looks back at the beautiful Ling-Ling, his heart
 breaking.

SAMMY THE PANDA
 I don't believe this!

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - AFTERNOON

Kate walks with Will. They both eating ice cream cones.

WILL
 Is the mint chip any good?

KATE
 You better check.

Kate smiles and gives Will a big lick of her cone.

Up ahead, the same three 19 year old Troublemakers from
 before are standing in front of the Anteater habitat,
 shooting spitballs at the family of Anteaters. Kate sees
 them and gets angry.

KATE
Hey! Stop that!

The Troublemakers look at Kate, "caught".

TROUBLEMAKER #1
Sorry. We won't do it again.

While the first boy is saying this, a second fires another spitball at the Anteater. The Troublemakers laugh.

Will looks at his mom, nervously. Kate tries to take charge.

KATE
(to Boys)
I'm going to have to ask you to
leave the zoo. Right now.

TROUBLEMAKER #2
Yeah, well we're gonna have to ask
you to...

Suddenly, out of nowhere, Andrew COMES CHARGING down the path. He's wearing a FOOTBALL HELMET. Lowering his head like a ram, he slams right into the chest of Troublemaker #1...

TROUBLEMAKER #1
Ooooff!

...and sends him flying.

Nearby, behind some foliage, the real Ram is watching proudly.

RAM
That was a good clean hit.

Back at the Anteater habitat, Kate and Will are surprised to see it's Andrew inside the helmet.

KATE
Andrew?

WILL
Andrew!

Andrew turns to Troublemaker #2, who is a little shocked by what just happened.

ANDREW
I believe the lady asked you to
leave.

Troublemaker #2 tries to throw a punch, but Andrew blocks it and HEAD BUTTS him on the FOREHEAD. The kid goes down holding his head.

Andrew turns to Troublemaker #3, menacingly. The kid TURNS AND RUNS. The other two scramble to their feet and also take off. Kate stares at Andrew, impressed.

KATE

Wow, I usually don't condone violence, but... nice job.

ANDREW

This is my territory. I'm the boss here.

Andrew reaches down and PULLS A SMALL CHORD that is hanging out of the bottom of his shirt. Suddenly, the life vest he is wearing under his clothes INFLATES, in effect puffing up his chest a la the Puffing Frog. Andrew strides off, confidently.

WILL

That was awesome!

Just then, Trent comes around a corner.

TRENT

Kate, I was looking for you.

KATE

Sorry. I've been with Will.

Will turns to his mom.

WILL

I'll meet you at home.

KATE

Okay.

Will smiles politely at Trent and heads off.

TRENT

Is Will okay?

KATE

He's a little nervous about starting camp.

TRENT

It's tough being the new guy.

(then)

I wanted to check on the pandas.

KATE
Great. Let's go.

EXT. PANDA HABITAT - DAY

Sammy is sitting on one side of the cage. Ling Ling is on the other. THEY COULDN'T BE FURTHER APART. Kate stands with Trent, stunned.

TRENT
What happened?

KATE
I don't know.

Kate looks concerned.

EXT. ZOO - EVENING

Everyone is gone. It's quiet.

EXT. DOVE'S CAGE - EVENING

A family of doves live in a large outdoor cage. The beautiful young female dove, GRACE, is talking through the wire to the Pigeon, Jake, who's giving her a red and white checkered napkin.

GRACE THE DOVE
It's beautiful, Jake. Where'd you get it?

PIGEON
This restaurant I go to sometimes.
I saw it, and thought of you.

Grace looks at him sweetly.

GRACE
Thanks. I love it.

They are about to rub beaks when suddenly the FATHER DOVE appears and sees the Pigeon.

FATHER DOVE
Hey! Get the hell away from my daughter!

The Father Dove comes flying over. Jake quickly flies off.

FATHER DOVE
And stay away, you low-life pigeon.
She's a dove. She's too good for you!

GRACE
 Why do you always have to be so
 mean to him?

Grace flies to the back of the cage. The Father watches her go, hurt.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - MAIN ENTRANCE - MORNING

It's the next day. Several yellow camp buses are parked outside the zoo entrance. Children are getting off the busses, boisterous and excited.

Trent stands with Kate inside the zoo gates, watching.

TRENT
 I thought having the camp come here
 for a field trip might break up
 their routine a little - give Will
 a better chance to fit in.

KATE
 (touched)
 That was incredibly thoughtful of
 you, Trent.

Kate looks out at the children. They are all playing and horsing around - except for Will, who stands alone.

KATE
 I hope it works.

TRENT
 Leave it to me.

Trent approaches the campers.

TRENT
 Good morning, campers. Welcome.
 I'm Trent Ramsey, Director of the
 Zoo.

Among the boys we see CYRUS, 11, Trent's nephew. He's a good looking kid who thinks he's cool. Cyrus whispers to a few campers.

CYRUS
 That's my uncle.

The campers respond with "Really?" and "Cool", etc.

TRENT
 You're in for a real treat today,
 because I'll be showing you around
 the zoo, personally. Just remember
 as we go, try and stay close.
 (MORE)

TRENT (cont'd)
 On our last field trip several boys disappeared. We also noticed that for about a week afterwards the alligators weren't hungry at all.
 Hmmmm.

(then)
 I'm just kidding. That's a little zoo humor....

(turning to Will)
 ...right, Will? Buddy.

All the kids turn and look at Will. He shrinks at the attention. Watching from a distance, Kate looks concerned.

TRENT
 Alright, well, let's begin.

EXT. ELEPHANT HABITAT - DAY

Andrew is with the elephants, feeding them.

ELEPHANT
 Sounds like it went bloody well.

ANDREW
 Well, she definitely took notice of me.

ELEPHANT
 A man should always project strength. Virility. Otherwise you could end up like that woeful excuse for a patriarch.

Orville indicates the neighboring habitat where the Gorillas live. As usual, Stanley has kids crawling all over him.

GORILLA
 Are you talking about me?

ELEPHANT
 I most certainly am. You're supposed to be a powerful male figure. Instead you let those little heathens run all over you.

GORILLA
 They're kids, Dumbo, they need love, gentleness... a little finesse.

ELEPHANT
 I'll take strength over finesse any day.

Trent approaches the Elephant habitat, followed by the campers. The kids look INCREDIBLY BORED.

TRENT

And right over here children, we have our elephants or *Loxodonta Africana*. Elephants are best known for their long trunks which scientists call... Anyone? Raise your hand if you know.

None of the children raise a hand. They couldn't be more uninterested.

TRENT

That's right. A proboscis. Isn't that a funny word. Pro-bo-scis! Now let's talk a little about an elephant's diet. It's fascinating - consisting mostly of dry, ordinary grasses.

(seeing Andrew)

In fact, this is Andrew, one of the manual laborers who feeds the elephants.

(to Andrew)

Andrew, tell the children a little about these dry ordinary grasses.

ANDREW

(to kids)

Well, the most interesting thing is they eat so much of the stuff, it creates these big pockets of gas inside them. In fact...

(indicating Orville)

...my scientific name for this guy here is "Fartimus Maximus".

The kids laugh, suddenly coming to life.

ANDREW

You want to see why?

All the kids scream "Yes!!!"

ANDREW

Alright, but I'm gonna need a volunteer.

All the kids shoot their hands into the air and shout "Me!", "Pick me!", etc.

ANDREW

Wow, everyone? Okay, I'll just have to pick the coolest looking kid... You!

Andrew points to Will. All the kids groan with envy as Will steps forward. Andrew helps him into the habitat. Will seems a little nervous.

ANDREW
It's okay. Just stay close to me.

Andrew walks Will over to the side of the Elephant.

ANDREW
(quietly, to Elephant)
Move over a little, Orville.

The Elephant takes a step sideways. Will has HEARD this and looks a little surprised at how the Elephant responded.

ANDREW
Alright young man, tell everyone your name.

WILL
Will.

ANDREW
Okay, Will. Now put your hand right there...

Andrew places Will's hand on the side of the Elephant's stomach.

ANDREW
...and push.

Will pushes. A LONG DEEP FART comes out of the Elephant. The kids love this. They squeal with delight.

ANDREW
That's the low register. Now try here.

Andrew repositions Will's hand. Will pushes, and a much HIGHER PITCHED FART emanates from the Elephant. The kids are beside themselves with glee.

ANDREW
That's the soprano. Which leaves only one more area. The Grand Daddy of them all. But I'm not sure you guys want to see Will do that...

The kids scream "Do it, Will!", "Go for it!", etc.

ANDREW
Okay, you asked for it.

Andrew places both of Will's hands below the Elephant's stomach. Will pushes. Suddenly a HUGE explosion of gas comes bursting out of the Elephant's rear with tremendous force, 'causing his tail to sail up in the air. The kids go crazy with delight.

Andrew takes a step towards the back of the habitat and motions for Will to follow.

ANDREW
You might want to get up-wind.

WILL
Why?

Just then a WAVE OF NOXIOUS, FOUL FUMES hits the group of campers outside the cage. They scream in disgust and delight as they begin to run away in search of fresh air.

TRENT
Wait! Stay together!

Trent runs off, chasing after them.

Back in the habitat, Will is smiling ear to ear.

ANDREW
C'mon, I'll let you out the back.

Andrew guides Will towards the rear gate.

WILL
Thanks for letting me do that.

ANDREW
Hey, any time you want to help, I can always use a Deputy Zookeeper.

Andrew reaches the gate and opens it.

WILL
You know, you're pretty cool - for a grown up.

ANDREW
Thanks. You're a pretty cool kid.

Will smiles. He starts to leave.

ANDREW
Hey, Will...

Will stops.

ANDREW
Your mom said it was just you and
her these days. Where's your dad?

WILL
He died. 3 years ago.

ANDREW
Oh. I'm sorry.

WILL
Me too.

They share a moment of silent understanding, then Will runs off. Once he's gone, Orville comes over, upset.

ELEPHANT
Absolutely humiliating!

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - LATE AFTERNOON

The kids are loading back onto the camp busses. Will is the center of attention. All the kids clamor around him as he recounts his experience. Cyrus is not enjoying Will's new found popularity.

CYRUS
(to other camp)
It wasn't that awesome. It was
just an elephant farting.

OTHER CAMPER
Dude, that's pretty awesome.

Kate stands next to Trent, watching Will from a distance. Will's friends slap him on the back and get on the bus to leave saying "See you tomorrow." Will looks over at Kate and smiles, happy.

KATE
Oh my God, look at that smile,
Trent! I can't possibly thank you
enough.

TRENT
Children are easy. You just have
to know how to relate to them.

Further back, behind some bushes, we see several animals watching.

LION
Look at him. Taking credit for
everything Andrew did.

Back on Trent and Kate.

TRENT
Speaking of relating, I've been thinking it might be nice for us to get to know each other a little better, you know, outside of "the office".

KATE
Oh.
(then)
Sure. That sounds nice.

TRENT
Perhaps tomorrow night we could...

Suddenly, from out of the sky, a BLUE PARROT comes STREAKING DOWNWARD, like a dive bomber. He let's go of a GIANT POOP that falls... falls... falls and lands directly on TRENT'S FOREHEAD, SPLATTERING all over his face.

KATE
Oh God!

TRENT
(deeply embarrassed)
Excuse me.

Trent hurries away.

Back behind the bushes,

LION
Impressive aim.

ZEBRA
They don't call him the Blue Baron for nothing.

PEACOCK
You don't think Kate's actually falling for that creep, do you?

The Lion sniffs the air.

LION
Unfortunately, it's starting to smell that way.

EXT. ANIMAL COMMON SPACE - EVENING

The zoo is closed. The animals are meeting with Andrew again.

ANDREW
But I thought you said Kate was totally into me.

LION

Yes, that was before the very good looking, more successful male began wooing her.

WARTHOG

It's a jungle out there, man.

ANDREW

But I've been peeing and ramming people. He hasn't done any of that!

PEACOCK

Don't sweat it, baby. You're still good. Look, you've claimed your turf. Establulated your dominance. Now all you got to do is initiate your mating ritual.

ANDREW

My mating ritual?

PEACOCK

Yeah, baby. You can't get no play without a mating ritual.

ANDREW

You mean like bring her flowers or something?

GOAT

Flowers? Why? Is she hungry?

PEACOCK

No, man. A mating ritual always begins with an alluring, seductive dance. Show him, Otis.

Otis, the GIANT TOUCAN steps forward.

OTIS

(deep voice, very cool)
Alright, just do what I do. First you're gonna hit her with the floppy neck.

Otis starts doing that head-bobbing courtship thing birds do.

OTIS

C'mon, front to back...

Andrew begins to imitate him.

OTIS

Now side to side.

Otis does the side to side move. Andrew copies him.

OTIS
Good. Now wings up...

Andrew raises his "wings" like Otis.

OTIS
Stand on one leg...

Andrew stands on one leg.

OTIS
And coo.

Otis begins to coo. Andrew coo's along with him.

PEACOCK
Damn, that's hot! Ain't no female
in the world gonna say no to that.

The Zebra steps forward.

ZEBRA
No. No coo-ing. This is bird
crap. He's human. He's got to use
a human love call.

GIRAFFE
It's true, dude. Every species has
got it's own unique love call.

ELEPHANT
In the elephant world, it goes like
this.

The Elephant raises his trunk and "bugles".

GORILLA
With apes it's like this.

The Gorilla pounds his chest and yells.

BIG EARS
This is mine.

Big Ears opens his mouth, but NO SOUND comes out.

ANDREW
You didn't say anything.

BIG EARS
Oh, no?

Big Ears points. 3 female Big Ears are suddenly at the
window, peering in with love struck eyes.

LION
 They are right, Andrew. I could
 never be the King of Romance
 without my love roar. Observe how
 it whips my women into a frenzy of
 lustful fury and desire.

The Lion LETS OUT HIS ROAR. From off screen we hear his
 Lionesses call back.

LIONESSE (CLAUDIA)
 Not on your life, fatty!

LIONESSE (ANA)
 Why don't you have a Devil Dog
 instead!!

LION
 (to Andrew)
 Some days it works better than
 others.

ANDREW
 So you guys think I should like...
 sing to Kate?

ZEBRA
 Absolutely.

PEACOCK
 It'll definitely work.

WARTHOG
 Trust us. We're animals.

EXT. PANDA HABITAT - NIGHT

Ling Ling is on one side of the enclosure.

LING LING
 (asian accent like Sammy)
 Sammy, don't you want come over and
 cuddle with Ling Ling?

REVEAL Sammy sitting on the other side of the habitat, his
 back to Ling Ling, SOFTLY KNOCKING HIS HEAD against the bars.

SAMMY THE PANDA
 No, I just sit here. Very happy.

LING LING
 (seductively)
 You sure? 'Cause I feel like give
 you special massage.

Sammy perks up.

SAMMY THE PANDA
 Special massage?! What kind of
 special massage? No! Don't tell
 me. Sammy no want to know.

Sammy goes back to knocking his head on the bars.

SAMMY THE PANDA
 (to himself)
 Think about yaks. Think about
 yaks.

INT. KATE'S HOUSE - EVENING

Kate and Will are on the floor of the living room doing a
 jigsaw puzzle.

WILL
 It's a father son picnic, mom.

KATE
 I'm sure there will be a lot of
 other kids who's father's won't be
 there.

WILL
 Why can't I just miss camp for one
 day? Andrew said I could be his
 deputy zoo keeper whenever I want.

KATE
 Honey, things like this are gonna
 come up in our lives. We can't
 just run and hide every time they
 do.

Will looks unhappy. Kate scoots over and puts an arm around
 him.

KATE
 Look, how about I leave work early
 and come in time for the picnic.
 I'll be your "dad" for a day, okay?

Will doesn't look pleased.

EXT. ZOO - MORNING

It's the next morning at the zoo.

EXT. PANDA HABITAT - MORNING

Kate is inside the cage placing a large dish of bamboo in
 front of Sammy. Ling Ling watches from the other side.
 Trent stands outside the habitat.

TRENT
 What's wrong? Why aren't they mating?

KATE
 Sometimes an animal that's been alone for so long just... forgets.

Kate comes out of the cage.

TRENT
 Kate, you realize, if they don't...

KATE
 Don't worry. They'll mate.

Kate locks the gate.

KATE
 I soaked Sammy's food in a powerful stimulant. A few bites and he'll be all over her. C'mon, let's give them some space.

Kate and Trent walk away from the habitat. The second they are gone, Sammy pushes his food dish away.

SAMMY THE PANDA
 Great. Now Sammy can't eat, too.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - MORNING

Trent and Kate continue to walk together.

TRENT
 So Kate, yesterday we were talking about having dinner together - before we were "interrupted" by that bird.

KATE
 You know, they say that's good luck.

TRENT
 It didn't feel lucky.

Kate smiles.

TRENT
 In any case, I was thinking maybe tonight...

Suddenly A SKUNK jumps out of the bushes, turns it's hind quarters to Trent, and SPRAYS HIM RIGHT IN THE FACE.

TRENT

Ahhh!

KATE

Oh my God!
(covering mouth and nose)
That's horrible.

TRENT

Good God!

Trent hurries off.

A short distance away, we see the Zebra behind some shrubs.

ZEBRA

That kid shoots a good stink.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - MAIN PAVILION/SEAL TANK - DAY

A small crowd of people have gathered to watch the seals get fed. The trainers wear headset microphones, and put on an educational show for the crowd.

SEAL TRAINER

...most seals don't chew their
food. They swallow it whole...

Kate approaches. She sees the show and stops to watch.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - OUTSIDE ZOO KEEPERS LOUNGE - DAY

Andrew is with some of the animals peeking at the crowded seal tank. He is holding a wireless microphone.

ANDREW

(nervous)
There's a lot of people out there.

LION

Good. The more people, the more
meaningful your gesture.

The Peacock pokes his head out of the Zookeeper's Lounge.

PEACOCK

All set in here.

Andrew looks scared.

PEACOCK

Chill, baby. You're a superstar.
You're gonna be great.

EXT. MAIN PAVILION/SEAL TANK - DAY

The seal show continues.

SEAL TRAINER

...and can stay under water for up
to 25 minutes at a...

Suddenly the Trainer's voice cuts out even though his mouth
keeps moving. Over the loud speakers comes a new, deep,
announcer's voice.

DEEP VOICE OVER SPEAKERS

Ladies and gentlemen, we interrupt
this seal show to bring you a
special presentation...

INT. ZOO KEEPER'S LOUNGE - DAY

We see a number of animals in front of the lounge's
RUDIMENTARY ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT. The Warthog is speaking
into a microphone, putting on his deep voice.

WARTHOG

...Please welcome, everyone's
favorite zoo keeper, Andrew...
(doesn't know last name)
...the zoo keeper!!

The Peacock hits a switch with his beak and music begins to
play.

EXT. MAIN PAVILION/SEAL TANK - DAY

The crowd looks around confused as they hear the opening
chords of Elvis Presley's, "Teddy Bear".

EXT. OUTSIDE ZOO KEEPERS LOUNGE - DAY

Andrew looks terrified.

LION

Go!

Andrew hesitates.

LION

Trust me. After this she will be
yours.

The Lion pushes Andrew out towards the people.

EXT. MAIN PAVILION/SEAL TANK - DAY

The crowd notices Andrew as he steps out selfconsciously, holding a microphone. Andrew smiles awkwardly and begins to sing, meekly at first.

ANDREW
 Baby let me be...
 your lovin teddy bear.
 Put a chain around my neck.
 And lead me anywhere...

The crowd loves it. They start to applaud. Emboldened by their response, Andrew gets a little bolder. He begins using some of the bird "dance" moves from before.

ANDREW
 Oh let me be...

INT. ZOO KEEPER'S LOUNGE - DAY

The animals are SINGING back-up vocals into the mic.

ANIMALS
 (deep voices)
 Oh let him be...

EXT. MAIN PAVILION/SEAL TANK - DAY

Back on Andrew.

ANDREW
 Your teddy bear.

Kate is watching him, laughing, enjoying it. Andrew moves towards her. The crowd parts as he approaches Kate.

ANDREW
 I don't wanna be a tiger,
 Cause tigers play too rough.
 I don't wanna be a lion,
 Cause lions ain't the kind
 You love enoooouuugh.

Andrew hits a few moves. Kate dances with him for a moment before losing herself to embarrassment and laughing. The crowd cheers. Andrew moves to the seal tank.

ANDREW
 Baby let me be...
 Around you every night,

Andrew reaches the seal tank and begins to dance his way up the big rock in the center of the tank. The crowd is totally with him.

ANDREW
Run your fingers through my hair,
And cuddle me real tight,

Andrew gets to a upper ledge of the seal rock as the song builds. Kate and everyone else are completely focused on him. Andrew digs in and REALLY GOES FOR IT.

ANDREW
Just let me be...

ANIMALS (O.S.)
Just let him be...

ANDREW
Your teddy beeeeeaar...

Suddenly Andrew'S FOOT HITS A WET PATCH AND HE SLIPS. Andrew falls, bouncing off the rocks and SPLASHING INTO THE WATER below. The crowd reacts. The music scratches to a halt.

Kate winces, embarrassed for Andrew.

Andrew surfaces in the pool, feeling foolish. He starts to swim to the side, but THE SEALS RUSH OVER. They nudge their new visitor and start playing with him.

ANDREW
Hey! Cut it out!

The crowd starts to LAUGH. Andrew tries to fight his way free, but the delighted seals won't let go. They take turns PUSHING HIM AROUND THE TANK.

The CROWD HOWLS AND POINTS. Some even take pictures. This is the funniest seal show they've ever seen.

Trent, in fresh clothes, approaches the crowd looking around for Kate. He sees her and heads over.

TRENT
(to Kate)
I'm heading over to the camp picnic. Would you like a ride?

KATE
(looking at her watch)
Oh God, is it noon already? Sure.

They start to head for the exit. Trent never sees that it is Andrew in the tank.

TRENT
(re: crowd)
They really seem to be enjoying the seal show today.

KATE

Yeah, it was hysterical.

Back in the seal tank, Andrew climbs up the center rock to escape the seals. As he does, he SEES TRENT AND KATE leaving the zoo together. Trent puts his arm around Kate to lead her out of the gates.

Andrew stares in horror - until a seal grabs his pants and yanks him back into the water. The crowd howls again.

From behind the bushes, several animals are watching, aghast.

LION

Uh-oh.

INT. ZOO KEEPER'S LOUNGE - DAY

Andrew is in his civilian clothes. He's emptying out his locker, packing everything into a duffle bag. Several animals are there.

ANDREW

(fuming)

I've never been so humiliated in my life!

The locker emptied, Andrew zips up the bag.

ANDREW

Listening to a bunch of talking animals. I should have my head examined.

The Giraffe has his neck stuck in through the window.

GIRAFFE

(towering over Andrew)

Your head looks fine from up here, dude.

Andrew slams the locker shut and heads for the door.

ZEBRA

Andrew, you can't do this.

LION

As King of the Zoo, I am commanding you to stay!!!

ANDREW

I'm not listening to you anymore.

Andrew exits.

LION
 (to self, defeated)
 You and my wives.

The animals follow Andrew out.

EXT. ZOO KEEPER'S LOUNGE - DAY

As Andrew comes out, there are more animals waiting for him.

GORILLA
 Andrew, please...

PEACOCK
 You can't bounce on us, baby.

ANDREW
 It's too late. I've already turned
 in my letter of resignation.

The animals go quiet, defeated. Andrew stops.

ANDREW
 Look. I need a life. Okay? A
 life with humans. I'll never meet
 anyone working here.

The Pigeon is watching all this from a branch.

PIGEON
 Strong move, you breakin' out like
 this, Andy.

ELEPHANT
 Oh, God.

ZEBRA
 Don't you have a statue to go crap
 on?

PIGEON
 (ignoring them, to Andrew)
 It ain't worth getting tied down
 here just 'cause of some girl.
 Love leads to pain. Who needs it,
 right?
 (then)
 Come on, you and me. Let's head
 over to the lake. Will's camp is
 having a Father Son picnic there.
 It's a bachelor's paradise. Food
 scraps everywhere. Beautiful girls
 on every branch...

ANDREW
 (concerned)
 Will's camp is having a Father Son
 Picnic?

PIGEON
 Yeah.

ANDREW
 Who's he there with?

PIGEON
 His mom. Poor kid looks miserable -
 there without a dad. See? That's
 exactly what I'm saying. All
 relationships lead to pain.

Andrew looks concerned.

EXT. CAMP GROUND BY LAKE - DAY

A beautiful camp ground by a large lake. There are picnic
 blankets, food, games. Boys and dads run everywhere.

Out on the field, Will and Kate have just finished a potato
 sack relay race. They've lost badly. Will looks unhappy.

KATE
 Sorry, Will.

WILL
 It doesn't matter.

Trent and Cyrus, who won the race, come over.

TRENT
 Nice try, guys.

KATE
 I'm afraid I'm a bit of a handicap
 for Will here.

TRENT
 You know, under the circumstances,
 I'm sure Cyrus wouldn't mind if I
 teamed up with Will for some of the
 events.

KATE
 Oh, that would be...

WILL
 (quickly)
 No, thanks.

Trent looks surprised.

KATE
Will.

CYRUS
He probably just wants to be with
his mom.

Cyrus smiles at Will, getting in a dig. Kate notices something.

KATE
Is that Andrew?

They all follow Kate's gaze and see Andrew arriving at the picnic. Will's eyes light up. Trent looks annoyed.

TRENT
What's he doing here?

Andrew sees them and starts to head over.

TRENT
Andrew, you're supposed to be at work.

ANDREW
(reaching the group)
I know, but I heard about the picnic and...

Andrew looks over at Will.

ANDREW
...I just thought I'd check to see if Will wanted a little company on some of the father son events.

KATE
That's very considerate of you, but Trent just offered and...

WILL
That would be awesome!

Kate looks at Will, surprised.

WILL
(to Kate)
You don't mind, do you?

KATE
Of course not.

WILL
 (to Andrew)
 Come on. They're setting up for
 the 3-legged race.

Will and Andrew hurry off. Trent turns to Kate.

TRENT
 It's sweet. They have a rapport.

Trent smiles, then he and Cyrus turn and walk towards the race.

TRENT
 (quietly to Cyrus)
 I want to crush them.

CYRUS
 No problem.

A MUSIC CUE begins as we go to...

EXT. CAMP GROUND BY LAKE - DAY - MONTAGE

A MONTAGE of scenes showing Andrew and Will competing together in the various events.

3-Legged Race

We see Andrew and Will at the starting line, tied together at the leg. The starting gun sounds. Andrew and Will hobble forward awkwardly. Almost immediately they are passed by half the field, including Trent and Cyrus.

Andrew sees what's happening. He puts his arm around Will and they find a groove. They move forward quickly, catching the rest of the race and then just barely beating Trent and Cyrus at the finish line to win.

Andrew and Will high five. Kate watches from the sidelines. She smiles.

Water Balloon Dodgeball

Andrew and Will are on one side, with half the dads and kids. Trent and Cyrus are on the other, with the other half. The whistle sounds and everyone starts heaving water balloons at each other. If you're hit, you're out.

TIME DISSOLVE. A number of people have been hit. Fewer dads and kids remain.

TIME DISSOLVE. Another dad gets hit. Now it's just Andrew and Will versus Trent and Cyrus. Andrew lofts a balloon high in the air. While Cyrus is watching it, Will picks him off. Trent however responds with a rapid shot - which nails Will.

Before he can celebrate, however, he's blasted by a balloon from Andrew.

Kate laughs.

Water Catapult

A giant, plastic, inflated float (looks like a huge bean bag chair) sits on the surface of the lake near the dock. A boy sits on one side of it. His father stands atop a platform on the dock. The father jumps down onto the giant float, jettisoning the boy into the air, sending him about 20 feet before he splashes into the water. A Counselor in a rowboat quickly marks the distance.

Next up is Cyrus and Trent. Trent sends Cyrus flying. He passes all the other marks, to take the lead.

The last team to go is Will and Andrew. Andrew hits the pillow with considerable force and Will flies into the air. Cyrus watches as Will lands past his mark. Everyone cheers.

Will pops up from the water and points at Andrew "You the man!". Andrew points back.

Kate is on the dock, beaming. Will swims over to her. As he does, Andrew climbs back onto the dock and SNEAKS up behind Kate. He PICKS HER UP. Kate pleads, but Will encourages Andrew, so Andrew JUMPS INTO THE LAKE with Kate. They all surface, laughing. Kate playfully splashes Andrew.

Trent watches from a distance, fuming.

MUSIC Fades as we cut to:

INT. ZOO GROUNDS - EARLY EVENING

Andrew, Kate and Will return to the zoo together looking dirty, exhausted, and very happy. Will is holding a big trophy, grinning.

ANDREW

(to Will, re: trophy)
Be sure to put that thing in a good spot, partner.

WILL

I will.

They get to where the path splits into two directions.

KATE

You know tomorrow's Saturday.
There's no camp, so...
(to Andrew, re: Will)
...maybe you could use a deputy zoo keeper?

ANDREW

Any time.

Andrew ruffles Will's hair. Will smiles.

ANDREW

Well, I guess I'll see you tomorrow then.

KATE AND WILL

Good night.

Andrew heads off. Kate calls to him.

KATE

Andrew.

Andrew stops.

KATE

Thank you.

Andrew smiles and nods. He then continues on, back towards the Zoo Keeper's Lounge. Kate and Will head the other way.

We see that all the ANIMALS HAVE BEEN WATCHING FROM THEIR CAGES. They quickly RUSH BACK TO MEET Andrew.

EXT. ZOO KEEPER'S LOUNGE - EVENING

Andrew approaches the lounge as the animals converge on him.

LION

My God Andrew, what did you do?

ANDREW

What do you mean?

LION

She's completely smitten with you. More than ever before.

ANDREW

Really?

GIRAFFE

It's obvious.

ZEBRA

Any idiot can smell that.

ANDREW

Well, it did go pretty well.

PEACOCK

Now's your chance. You gotta capitalize on this and go ask her out.

ANDREW

Ask her out? Now?

LION

Andrew, this is the moment. You must strike while the iron is hot.

ZEBRA

Seize the day.

ELEPHANT

Get out there and trunk it up a bit!

All the animals look at the Elephant.

ELEPHANT

Oh c'mon. If people would just start using it...

The Macaw flies in.

MACAW

Kate sent Will home, and went to her office to work.

WOLF

The child is alone?

PENGUIN

(enough already)
Dude!

WOLF

Sorry.

ZEBRA

Andrew, it's perfect. Go talk to her through her window. It'll be romantic-like.

GIRAFFE

C'mon, bro. I'll give you a lift up.

Andrew gathers his courage.

ANDREW

Okay.

The Giraffe starts to lead Andrew off, then suddenly he stops.

ANDREW
Wait! My letter of resignation.
It's sitting on Trent's desk.

GORILLA
Not anymore. I sent my troops in.

The Gorilla points to several of his young Gorillas. They are all holding pieces of Andrew's torn letter.

GORILLA
That's called Gorilla warfare.

EXT. ZOO ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - EVENING

Through a second story window we can see Kate at her desk working. The CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal Andrew up on a branch of a nearby tree watching her. The Giraffe's head is right next to him.

ANDREW
Isn't she gonna ask what I'm doing
in a tree?

GIRAFFE
No way, bro. She's not even gonna
notice.

Andrew gives him a dubious look.

GIRAFFE
Dude, scoring chicks is what I do.

The Giraffe picks a few acorns from the tree and spit-fires them at the window. Inside, Kate hears the noise and gets up.

GIRAFFE
Relax. I'll be right behind you.

The Giraffe quickly hides behind the tree trunk. Kate opens the window and looks out. IT'S DARK. She can barely make out Andrew in the tree.

KATE
Andrew?

ANDREW
Hi, Kate.

KATE
What are you doing up in a tree?

GIRAFFE
 (sotto, from behind tree)
 My bad.

ANDREW
 Oh... I... um...

GIRAFFE
 (sotto)
 Tell her you're looking for yummy
 leaves.

ANDREW
 ...I'm looking for yummy leaves.
 (then, covering)
 For the Giraffes. To eat.
 Tomorrow.

KATE
 That's nice of you.

ANDREW
 Yeah. But while I'm up here, I
 also wanted to talk to you.

KATE
 About what?

ANDREW
 Well, I just wanted to say today
 was really great and...

GIRAFFE
 (sotto to Andrew)
 Tell her you want to recite her a
 sonnet.

ANDREW
 ...and, um...

GIRAFFE
 (sotto to Andrew)
 A sonnet, dude. Sonnet. Sonnet.
 Sonnet!

ANDREW
 ...And I think I want to recite you
 a sonnet.

KATE
 Oh. Well, that's... fancy.

ANDREW
 Yes.
 (then, horrified)
 I'm excited about this.

GIRAFFE

(sotto to Andrew)

Alright dude, repeat after me.
"Shall I compare thee to a summer's
day?"

ANDREW

(to Kate)

Shall I compare thee to a summer's
day?

GIRAFFE

(sotto to Andrew)

"Thou art lovely with your long
neck and tiny horns."

ANDREW

Thou art lovely with your long neck
and tiny... ears.

GIRAFFE

(sotto to Andrew)

"I've been with a lot of babes in
my life, and trust me, you're
definitely the hottest."

ANDREW

What?

KATE

I didn't say anything.

GIRAFFE

(sotto to Andrew)

Sorry, dude. I might be getting
things a little mixed up.

KATE

(to Andrew)

Keep going. I'm enjoying it.

ANDREW

Oh, that's all I really want to do
right now. The rest is just more
words that... rhyme.

KATE

Andrew, is this your way of trying
to ask me out?

ANDREW

No.

GIRAFFE

(out loud)

Yes!

Kate looks confused.

ANDREW
(covering)
I'm torn.

KATE
I'd love to go out with you.

ANDREW
You would?!

GIRAFFE
Score!

Kate thinks Andrew said this and laughs.

KATE
There's a benefit dinner for the
Wildlife Fund tomorrow night. I've
got 2 tickets if you'd like to come
with me.

ANDREW
I'd love to.

KATE
Okay. Tomorrow night, then. Do
you need any help getting down?

ANDREW
No, I'm fine.

KATE
Okay. Goodnight.

Kate closes the window and returns to her desk. The Giraffe
pokes his head out from behind the tree.

GIRAFFE
You're welcome, Dude.

INT. WILL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kate is tucking Will in for the night.

KATE
Good night, love.

She gives him a kiss on the forehead then goes to turn off
the bathroom light.

WILL
Leave it on.

Kate doesn't understand.

WILL
I want to see the trophy.

Will indicates the trophy which sits on his dresser. Kate smiles.

KATE
It was a good day today, wasn't it?

Will nods.

WILL
I really like Andrew.

KATE
You know, I wasn't sure about him at first, but... I do too.
(then)
In fact, I'm going on a date with him tomorrow night.

WILL
(excited)
You are? Really?

KATE
Yes, really.

Kate gives him one more kiss on the forehead.

KATE
Now go to sleep.

Kate leaves the room. Will rolls over on his side to sleep, a huge smile on his face.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - HILL - NIGHT

The Flamingo has climbed up to the highest hill at the zoo.

FLAMINGO
(to himself)
C'mon. You're a bird. You can do this.

The Flamingo runs and leaps into the air. His wings fail to catch the air, and he goes tumbling down the hill. When he reaches the bottom of the hill, he sees the Zebra standing there, watching the whole thing.

ZEBRA
Like I said - pathetic.

The Zebra walks away.

EXT. ZOO - MORNING

It's the next day. The sun is shining. It's a beautiful morning. Andrew arrives at the zoo, whistling happily. The animals see him coming and call from their habitats.

 WARTHOG
Hey there, Loverboy.

 ZEBRA
Big night tonight, huh stud?

The free roaming Peacock comes up to him.

 PEACOCK
My man! You a playa, and a pimp.
And a zoo keeper. Up high!

The Peacock lifts his wing. He and Andrew high-five.

INT. PANDA HABITAT - MORNING

At the Panda habitat, Ling Ling is pissed. She is screaming at Sammy.

 LING LING
I can't take it no more. I come
all the way from China to make baby
with you, and this is treatment I
get?!

 SAMMY THE PANDA
Please Ling Ling, be patient. It
won't be long now.

 LING LING
No more patient! I want baby!
Now!

Ling Ling grabs Sammy's ear and starts tugging it hard.

 LING LING
Give me baby! Give me baby!!!

EXT. OUTDOOR DINING AREA - MORNING

Kate and Trent are having a cup of coffee. Kate is looking over some financial documents Trent has shared with her.

 KATE
You're right about these numbers,
Trent. I don't see how the zoo
survives unless you get attendance
up.

TRENT
Yes, that seems to be the
consensus.

KATE
Well, it's nothing a baby panda
can't fix, right?

Kate smiles hopefully, and hands the papers back to Trent.

TRENT
By the way Kate, the Wildlife Fund
is having a benefit this evening...

Trent checks the sky and bushes to make sure there are no
animals waiting to ambush him, then,

TRENT
...I was wondering if you'd like to
accompany me.

KATE
Oh, that's very kind. But I'm
already going with someone.

TRENT
Oh really? A friend from abroad?

KATE
No, actually I'm going with Andrew.

TRENT
Andrew? Who's Andrew?
(then, shocked)
You mean, "Andrew" Andrew?

Just then a ZOO WORKER comes rushing up them.

ZOO WORKER
Dr. Quinlin, come quick. The
Pandas are fighting!

EXT. PANDA HABITAT - MORNING

Sammy is trying to hide his face to protect himself as Ling
Ling goes nuts, slapping and kicking him. Kate comes running
up and sees what's happening.

KATE
Oh, God!

Kate hurries into the cage.

KATE
Ling Ling!

Ling Ling won't stop. Finally Kate takes out a hypodermic from her kit and jabs Ling Ling with it. The sedative works quickly. Ling Ling gets woozy, then passes out, falling to the ground. Kate looks over at Trent.

KATE
This is not good.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - DAY

Will is helping Andrew with his work. They are carrying some cleaning supplies to the Gorilla habitat.

WILL
She also likes french toast, white tulips, and T-Pain.

ANDREW
T-Pain?

WILL
The rapper.
(then)
I kinda introduced her to that.

Andrew smiles. He unlocks the door to the Gorilla habitat.

ANDREW
I appreciate the inside scoop Will, but if there's one thing I've learned lately it's to just be myself.

WILL
Uhhh. I hate when adults say that.

Andrew smiles and steps into the Gorilla habitat. Will pauses.

ANDREW
C'mon.

Will points at the Gorilla who is watching them.

WILL
Aren't male Gorillas dangerous?

ANDREW
Who? Stanley? No. He's a total pacifist. A gentle giant. In fact, it drives Orville crazy the way he won't use his strength to assert himself.

WILL
Who's Orville?

ANDREW
The elephant.

Andrew points to the neighboring habitat where Orville raises his trunk in greeting. Andrew turns back to the Gorillas.

ANDREW
(to Gorillas)
Let's go. Everyone in the back so we can clean the cage.

The Gorillas immediately head back into the indoor part of the habitat. Will watches all this, amazed.

WILL
(to Andrew)
Tell me the truth. You can talk to the animals, can't you?

ANDREW
I won't lie to you Will...

Andrew looks around carefully, then says quietly,

ANDREW
...Yes, I can.

WILL
I knew it!

ANDREW
And so can you. So can anyone. Animals like it when you talk to them. So do plants.

WILL
That's not what I meant, and you know it.

Just then Trent approaches.

TRENT
Andrew, there you are. Hello, Will.

WILL
Hi.

TRENT
Listen Andrew, we're photographing the Penguin habitat tomorrow, and it looks awful. I need it drained, scrubbed, and refilled by morning.

ANDREW
But that'll take all night.

TRENT

Yes. I'm sorry. I hope you didn't have anything planned.

Trent smiles and walks away. Will turns to Andrew.

WILL

That creep. He must've found out you have a date with my mom.

Andrew looks stumped.

WILL

Do you want me to tell her what happened? Maybe she can...

ANDREW

No. It's okay.
(a beat, then)
I'll work something out.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - MAIN ENTRANCE - EARLY EVENING

Andrew is letting the last guests out of the zoo.

ANDREW

Thanks for coming.

Andrew locks the gate behind them. He turns back towards the zoo. The place is now empty of people.

ANDREW

Meeting!!!

INT. ANIMAL COMMON SPACE - EVENING

The animals are gathered around Andrew.

ANDREW

Alright, guys. I've got 3 hours 'til my date and I need your help...

BEGIN MUSIC CUE:

EXT. PENGUIN HABITAT - EVENING

The habitat is full of animals with buckets and cups bailing the water out of the penguin's pool. The family of elephants are dipping their trunks in, filling up, then blowing the water out - everyone except Orville, that is.

ELEPHANT

(to Andrew)
This water is vile.

PUFFING FROG
Stop griping and just do it.

The Puffer Frog sucks up an unbelievable amount of water, bloating himself to 3 times his size, then spits it out of the pool.

Suddenly, the Giraffe yells jubilantly.

GIRAFFE
Cannonball!!!

The Giraffe charges and jumps into the pool, creating a huge splash that empties the pool of about a third of it's water.

TIME CUT TO:

EXT. PENGUIN HABITAT - EVENING

The pool is now completely empty, and many of the zoo animals are scrubbing it with soapy water and various brushes. Some larger animals use smaller, scruffy animals as their brushes.

While cleaning, the Warthog loses his footing and falls down the slippery side of the empty pool, slamming into the Flamingo at the bottom.

FLAMINGO
Hey, watch where you're going, pal.

WARTHOG
Sorry.

The Zebra passes by.

ZEBRA
(to Flamingo, sarcastic)
Maybe you shoul~~da~~ just flown outta the way.
(then, continuing on)
Boo-yah!

TIME CUT TO:

EXT. PENGUIN HABITAT - EVENING

The habitat is clean and rinsed. Andrew is now refilling it with a garden hose. All the animals watch. It's INCREDIBLY SLOW.

LION
(to Andrew)
You're never going to make it.

The Penguin enters.

PENGUIN
Everybody back. We're kicking this
up a notch.

Behind the Penguin, a HIPPO trots in with the nozzle end of a thick firehose in his mouth.

PENGUIN
(yelling off screen)
Let it rip!

Suddenly the hose fills up and water starts spraying out with tremendous force. The Hippo points it at the tank which begins to fill very quickly. On the other side of the tank a hyena is watching, laughing.

LAUGHING HYENA
Ha ha ha. Hippo's got a hose in
his mouth. Ha ha ha ha ha.

The Hippo lifts the hose a little, **BLASTING THE HYENA SQUARE IN THE CHEST**, blowing him back 20 yards. The Hippo then returns to filling the tank.

ZEBRA
Nice shot. I could use a hippo
like you.

INT. ZOO KEEPER'S LOUNGE - EVENING

Andrew is in the Lounge alone getting dressed for his date.

EXT. ZOO KEEPER'S LOUNGE - EVENING - MONTAGE

All the animals wait expectantly. Finally Andrew steps out of the lounge wearing his best blue suit. The animals just stare, unimpressed.

PEACOCK
That's it?! That's what you're
bringin'?

ANDREW
It's Pierre Cardin.

PEACOCK
C'mon baby. Let's see what we got
in there.

The Peacock turns him around and marches him back inside.

TIME DISSOLVE TO:

The Peacock leads Andrew out of the lounge. Andrew is now wearing a crazy PIMP SUIT of VIBRANT COLORS. The rest of the animals are still unimpressed. The Zebra shakes his head.

ZEBRA

Ridiculous. Come with me.

TIME DISSOLVE TO:

Andrew steps out of the lounge wearing a PIN-STRIPE GANGSTER ZOOT SUIT. The Zebra looks proud. The Wolf shakes his head disapprovingly.

TIME DISSOLVE TO:

Andrew stands next to the Wolf wearing a FULL LENGTH FAUX FUR COAT. The Wolf looks pleased. The Iguana shakes his head.

TIME DISSOLVE TO:

Andrew stands next to the Iguana wearing a FAUX LIZARD SKIN SUIT. The animals don't like it. They all start to shout out suggestions.

PENGUIN

Enough! Everyone back off. If anyone knows "cool", it's a penguin!

TIME DISSOLVE TO:

The Penguin leads Andrew out of the lounge wearing a beautifully tailored TUXEDO. The animals love it. They all voice their APPROVAL with roars, snorts, grunts, and whinnies.

END MUSIC CUE.

INT. BALLROOM - EVENING

The fund raiser is in full swing. A beautiful, crowded ballroom. People dressed in their finest. A band playing. Kate stands near the bar, alone. Trent approaches.

TRENT

Kate. Can I interest you in a dance?

KATE

Thanks but... I think I should wait for Andrew.

TRENT

You might be waiting a while. I understand he had quite a bit of work.

Kate spots something.

KATE
There he is.

Trent turns and sees Andrew who has just entered the front doors. He looks magnificent.

KATE
Excuse me.

Kate leaves Trent and heads over to Andrew. He sees her coming and goes to greet her.

ANDREW
Sorry I'm late.

KATE
It was only a couple minutes.

Andrew gives her a kiss on the cheek. They're both clearly a little nervous. Kate takes a step back and looks him over.

KATE
Look at you. You clean up nice.

ANDREW
So do you. I mean, not that you were dirty before, but... wow!

Kate smiles.

ANDREW
This is for you.

Andrew hands Kate a beautiful corsage.

KATE
White tulips. They're my favorite.

ANDREW
(feigning surprise)
You're kidding?

Trent comes over.

TRENT
Andrew, I thought you'd be busy.

ANDREW
No. Everything's finished. It looks great.

TRENT
Well, good. I'm so glad you could make it. It's always nice to see regular people like yourself at charitable events.

ANDREW
 (confused)
 What?

TRENT
 Look, I realize you don't make a lot of money - after all, I write your checks. But I'm sure you'd like to give something. So please allow me to make a donation on your behalf.

ANDREW
 That's very kind. Thank you.
 (then)
 And I know how much you'd like to dance with Kate, so, in exchange, please allow me to have this slow dance with her - on your behalf.

TRENT
 What?

ANDREW
 Excuse us.

Andrew leads Kate over towards the dance floor.

KATE
 I get the feeling you two don't like each other.

ANDREW
 Yeah, we're kinda like zebras and flamingos that way.

KATE
 Zebras and flamingos?

ANDREW
 I know. That surprised me too.

As they reach the floor, a new song begins to play.

ANDREW
 Shall we?

KATE
 By all means.

Kate takes his hand. They start to dance.

KATE
 You know, technically this is not our first dance.

ANDREW
You mean... Elvis?

KATE
I'm afraid so.

ANDREW
Tell me the truth. Who does that
song better, me or the King?

KATE
The King might have a slight edge
vocally - but no one tumbles into a
seal tank like you.

ANDREW
You're not the first girl to say
that.

Kate laughs. They dance together for a few moments.

ANDREW
You smell nice.

KATE
You work with elephants.

ANDREW
True.

KATE
I'll take it anyway. Thank you.
(then)
You know, scent is very important.
They say in the animal world,
everything begins with scent.

ANDREW
Yes, I've heard them say that.

KATE
Actually, it was Will who chose my
perfume tonight.

ANDREW
Will?

KATE
He also picked out my earrings. My
bracelet...

ANDREW
Is he like your stylist?

KATE
No, just tonight. He... he really
wanted tonight to go well.

Andrew smiles.

ANDREW
He's a good kid.

KATE
He's an amazing kid.

ANDREW
I think he'd be pleased with how
things are going so far.

KATE
I think he'd be very pleased.

Kate smiles and rests her head on Andrew's shoulder as they
dance.

EXT. BALLROOM BALCONY - EVENING

It's a little later. Kate and Andrew are out on the balcony,
talking.

KATE
It's always been that way for me.
Ever since I was a little girl,
I've always loved animals.

ANDREW
That's exactly how I was when I was
a kid. I mean, I wasn't a little
girl. But I loved animals. All I
wanted to do was be around them.
(then)
I guess that's why I became a zoo
keeper.

KATE
You say that like you regret it.

ANDREW
No. Not at all. I love it. It's
just... socially...

KATE
Hard to meet chicks?

ANDREW
Yeah. They think I'm a little
weird.

KATE
 You are a little weird.
 (off Andrew's look)
 But in a good way.

Andrew smiles. A beat then,

KATE
 I don't know why, Andrew, but... I
 feel very connected to you.

ANDREW
 Me too.

The energy between them builds. They hold each other's gaze
 a little longer than friends would.

KATE
 I can't believe I'm falling for the
 guy who had camel spit in his
 pocket.

Slowly Andrew and Kate lean in towards each other TO KISS.

ANDREW
 (very romantically)
 Don't forget the bat guano.

Their lips are just about to meet when Trent suddenly steps
 out onto the balcony.

TRENT
 Kate.

Trent sees what's going on, and stops.

TRENT
 Sorry, I didn't mean to interrupt.

KATE
 That's okay.

TRENT
 I have some news. I just heard
 back from the London Zoo.

KATE
 So quickly?

TRENT
 Yes. Apparently they're very
 excited. They want Ling Ling. The
 timing was perfect. They just
 acquired a male panda, and, well...
 they want her right away.

KATE
How right away?

TRENT
As soon as we can arrange
transport. There may even be a
boat tomorrow.

KATE
(shocked)
Tomorrow?

ANDREW
What's going on?

Kate looks distressed.

KATE
I didn't think this would happen so
fast.

ANDREW
What would happen so fast?

KATE
Ling Ling and Sammy were fighting.
I had to separate them. Now it
seems Trent has found her a new
home.

TRENT
Just trying to make the best of an
unfortunate situation.

ANDREW
Hold on. The pandas didn't mate?

Kate shakes her head, disappointed.

TRENT
When two individuals aren't right
for each other Andrew, obstacles
just naturally arise. It's a sort
of Darwinism, I suppose.
(then)
Now, if you'll excuse me, I better
start making arrangements.
(to Kate)
Once this becomes public, I'm
afraid the Board will move quickly.

Trent exits.

ANDREW
The Board? What's he talking
about?

KATE

It's awful, but it looks like the zoo is going to have to close.

ANDREW

Close?

KATE

It's been struggling for a long time, Andrew. That's why they brought in Ling Ling. A baby panda would have attracted thousands of visitors - it could've saved the zoo.

ANDREW

No one told me any of this.

KATE

It's not exactly the kind of thing you want to promote.

ANDREW

But... what about the animals?

KATE

Usually they get sold to other zoos. It's rough though. Families get broken up. Children often get separated from their...

ANDREW

No, no, no. This is wrong.

KATE

I know, it's horrible, but...

ANDREW

I'll get the pandas to mate.

KATE

They won't, Andrew. They're completely incompatible. Trust me, this is what I do for a living.

ANDREW

No, they will. I'm sure once they...

(then)

I gotta go.

Andrew rushes off. Kate watches him go, confused.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - NIGHT

It's night. All is quiet. Andrew comes rushing in.

ANDREW

Sammy!

The animals see him and look confused.

GORILLA

Andrew, why are you back so early?

PEACOCK

You seal the deal already? My man!!

Andrew sprints past the animals and heads for the panda habitat.

EXT. PANDA HABITAT - NIGHT

Andrew reaches the Panda habitat. Sammy is there alone, looking despondent.

ANDREW

Sammy, what are you doing?

SAMMY THE PANDA

What I doing? I sit here alone, twiddling paws. That's what I doing.

ANDREW

Why didn't you mate with Ling Ling?

SAMMY THE PANDA

Because the other animals tell me not to.

ANDREW

What?

SAMMY THE PANDA

They say if Ling Ling get pregnant, then Kate gonna leave. If Kate leave, then you leave. Then everybody miserable. This way only Sammy miserable. And believe me, I so miserable.

(then, sad)

I miss my Ling Ling.

Andrew turns around and sees all the animals who are out of their cages and have come over to see what's going on.

ANDREW

(to animals)

Who told him to do this?

ANTEATER

It was the lion!

LION

Don't point your nose at me.

LIONESS

What are you gonna do, fill him with cream and eat him?

MACAW

The Gorilla did it, too.

ELEPHANT

Oh, that figures. Imposing discipline on others when he has none of his own.

GORILLA

(to Macaw)

Thanks a lot for ratting me out.

RAT

Hey, I heard that, banana breath!

All the animals start arguing with each other.

ANDREW

Enough! Enough!!

The animals all go quiet.

ANDREW

God, I am so sick of all the bickering. You're all just like people. All you can see are each other's weaknesses. You make fun of each other, belittle each other, just so you can feel better about yourselves.

The animals are chastened.

ANDREW

Who cares who's got stripes? And who's pink. And who regurgitates their food so they can eat it twice. Guys, this is our home. We're a family. We're all in this together. And we need to take care of each other if we're gonna stay together.

LION

What do you mean, stay together?

Andrew takes a beat, then,

ANDREW
They're planning on closing the zoo
and selling all of you to different
places.

All the animals react with shock and dismay.

ANDREW
It's okay! They won't close it if
there's a baby panda coming. We
just need to get Ling Ling back.
Does anyone know where they're
keeping her?

ZEBRA
They took her off site. To the
holding facility on Penrose.
(then, explaining)
My people are everywhere.

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

Kate is looking around. Trent approaches.

TRENT
Where's Andrew?

KATE
(confused)
I don't know. He left. I thought
he'd be coming back but...

TRENT
He was probably afraid he was going
to turn into a pumpkin.
(then)
In any case...

Trent shows Kate some notes he's jotted down.

TRENT
I found space on a ocean freighter.
It leaves tomorrow at 11.

KATE
(sadly)
Well, I guess I better go home and
start packing.

Trent puts a "comforting" hand on Kate's shoulder.

TRENT
C'mon. I'll give you a ride.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Andrew is driving the zoo's pick-up truck. WIDEN TO REVEAL:
sitting in the passenger seat is Ling Ling.

LING LING
That bear got some nerve, ignoring
me. You know, I was most popular
girl in my whole jungle.

ANDREW
It was all a misunderstanding.

LING LING
You better be right. He try
ignoring me again I gonna mess him
up even worse than last time.
Nobody turn down Ling Ling. My
milkshake bring all the boys to the
yard.

INT. KATE'S HOME - NIGHT

Kate has just arrived home with Trent. She's talking to
Will.

KATE
...so it looks like we're going to
have to leave tomorrow.

WILL
Tomorrow? No. Andrew didn't say
anything about that.

KATE
Andrew?

WILL
Yeah. He was just here. He needed
to get Ling Ling out of some
holding thing and didn't have the
key, so he had to borrow yours.

Kate turns and looks at Trent, concerned.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - NIGHT

Andrew enters the zoo grounds with Ling Ling.

ANDREW
C'mon!

The animals see him.

PEACOCK
Yo, there's Andrew.

GORILLA
He's got Ling Ling!

All the animals cheer, "Yeah" and "Ling Ling's back!"

LING LING
This more like reception I used to.

ANDREW
(to animals)
Everyone stay in their cages.
(to Ling Ling)
C'mon, hurry.

They rush through, on their way to the Panda habitat.

EXT. PANDA HABITAT - NIGHT

Andrew and Ling Ling reach the Panda cage. Andrew opens the door and let's Ling Ling in.

SAMMY THE PANDA
Ling Ling! I sorry I give you cold
shoulder!

LING LING
I sorry I punched you in the face.

The two pandas hug.

ANDREW
Alright, Sammy. There's not much
time. The whole zoo is depending
on you. You gotta do this. Right
now!

SAMMY THE PANDA
Boy, that's a lotta pressure.

ANDREW
You want me to go get the polar
bear?

SAMMY THE PANDA
No, no. I'm good.

Suddenly a voice calls out.

KATE (O.S.)
Andrew! What are you doing?!

Andrew turns around and sees Kate and Trent approaching.
Several ANIMAL WORKERS are with them. A police squad car is
also pulling up.

ANDREW
Oh, no.

KATE
(to animal workers)
Get the female out of there.

ANDREW
(under his breath)
You gotta be kidding me.

The animal workers head for the cage.

ANDREW
Wait! Just give them a chance.

KATE
No! They're a danger to one
another. I want her out. Now!

The workers enter the cage. Andrew moves to Kate.

ANDREW
Kate, please. They'll mate.
There's a reason they weren't doing
it before.

KATE
Oh really? And what was that?

ANDREW
It's because... well...
(then quietly to Kate)
...they wanted us to be together.

KATE
What?

TRENT
My God, he's insane.

Will comes running up.

WILL
Listen to him, Mom.

KATE
Will! I told you to stay home!

WILL
He knows what he's talking about.
He can speak to the animals.

TRENT
My God, he's warped the child, too!

WILL
 (to Andrew)
 Tell her!

ANDREW
 Will...

The animal workers begin to lead Ling Ling out of the cage.

WILL
 You've got to! Please tell her!

KATE
 (to animal workers)
 Be careful with her. She's
 probably very agitated.

Andrew approaches Kate.

ANDREW
 Kate, I know how this must look...

KATE
 Look? This is not "look", Andrew.
 You kidnapped an endangered species
 - an animal I'm responsible for.
 You jeopardized her life bringing
 her here. And if that wasn't
 enough, you manipulated my 10 year
 old son into helping you.
 (disgusted)
 The boy respected you, Andrew. He
 looked up to you. And you repay
 that trust by telling him things
 like you can "talk to animals".

Andrew says nothing.

KATE
 I thought you were someone else,
 Andrew. I was obviously very
 wrong.

Kate turns to leave.

KATE
 C'mon, Will.

Trent turns to the policemen.

TRENT
 I want him prosecuted. Nothing he
 did was authorized by the zoo.

The policemen move towards Andrew. Will rushes over and
 grabs Andrew's arm, pleading.

WILL
Andrew, please...

Kate glares at Andrew.

ANDREW
It's okay, Will.

Andrew gently guides Will back towards his mother. Will watches as the policemen lead Andrew to their squad car and put him in the back.

FADE OUT.

FADE UP ON:

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - MORNING

It's the next morning. Will stands alone in the main pavilion. There are no visitors at the zoo. It feels empty and deserted.

Trent and Kate stand over by the locked gates at the main entrance. A zoo worker approaches Trent.

ZOO WORKER
All the animals have been fed.
I've placed "closed" signs on all
the gates. Everything is secure.

TRENT
Thank you.

As the Zoo Worker walks away, Kate calls to Will.

KATE
Will, come on. We're gonna miss
the boat.

Will ignores her and doesn't budge.

KATE
(to Trent)
One second.

Kate walks over to Will.

KATE
Sweetheart...

WILL
Why does he have to come with us?

KATE
Honey, we talked about this.

WILL
Why can't Andrew come?

Trent comes walking over.

TRENT
(to Kate)
Let me try.

Trent goes over to Will.

TRENT
Will, I know it's upsetting to see the zoo closing, but look at it this way. Everything you have here, you'll have back in London. I've been offered a very attractive position at the zoo there, so you, your mother and I will all still be together. There'll be all the same animals. In fact, as one of the Directors of the zoo, I can personally guarantee you a position there as a deputy zoo keeper. So you see, everything has worked out wonderfully. Now how about a smile?

Will stares at him without smiling.

TRENT
There, isn't that better? Now c'mon, let's get going.

Trent motions for Will to follow. Will doesn't budge.

KATE
(sternly)
Will, you're 10 years old. This is not your choice. Now let's go.

Kate ushers Will towards the front gate.

EXT. POWER LINE ABOVE ZOO - MORNING

Way up above the zoo, on a power line, the Pigeon watches as Trent, Kate, and Will leave the zoo and slam the gate, locking it securely behind them. The zoo is empty.

EXT. DOVE'S CAGE - MORNING

Down below, Grace, the young female dove, looks up through her cage at the Pigeon up on the wire. A voice speaks.

FATHER DOVE (O.S.)
Do you really want to be with him?

Grace looks over and sees her Father.

GRACE THE DOVE
Yes daddy, I do.

FATHER DOVE
Then you better go now before they
take us away.

GRACE THE DOVE
Really?

The Father Dove pulls a piece of the wire fencing back,
creating a hole for his daughter.

Grace looks at the hole. She turns back to her father.

GRACE THE DOVE
I love you, daddy.

FATHER DOVE
I love you too, Grace.

Grace slips through the hole, takes one last look at her dad,
and flies off.

EXT. POWER LINE ABOVE ZOO - MORNING

Up on the wire, Jake sees Grace flying up towards him.

PIGEON
Grace!

GRACE THE DOVE
Jake!

Grace lands next to him. The moment is beyond words. He
touches her beak with his. She closes her eyes. Then,

PIGEON
C'mon.

Jake flies off. Grace follows him.

EXT. STREETS NEAR PORTS - DAY

Trent, Kate and Will ride together in a cab. Will stares out
the window looking unhappy. Trent points off in the distance
to a ship docked at the pier.

TRENT
That's our boat, Will. See? It's
going to be an adventure.

Will barely responds.

EXT. SKIES - DAY

Jake and Grace soar through the skies, spinning and twirling in a celebration of freedom.

GRACE THE DOVE
This is incredible!

PIGEON
Now you know what I've been talking about. Freedom! From up here, you can see the whole world!

The Pigeon starts to fly up even higher, but Grace sees something and stops.

GRACE THE DOVE
Jake, wait!

Grace flies over to a building. It is the local jail. She lands on the sill of a second story, bar covered window. Jake swoops down and lands right next to her. They look down into the jail cell where Andrew is sitting on his cot, his head in his hands.

GRACE THE DOVE
He looks so sad.

PIGEON
Of course he's sad. The people he loves are leaving.

GRACE THE DOVE
I wish there was something we could do.

Jake looks at her.

INT. ANIMAL COMMON SPACE - DAY

The animals have gathered one last time.

GORILLA
(children crawling on him)
They're gonna break up our families.

GIRAFFE
There's nothing we can do.

PEACOCK
If Andrew were here, he wouldn't let this happen. No way!

ZEBRA

Andrew's gone. We don't even know where he is.

PIGEON (O.S.)

I do!

Everyone looks up and sees the Pigeon on the branch. Grace is by his side.

FLAMINGO

Well go get him!

BIG EARS

Tell him he's got to come right away.

GRACE THE DOVE

He can't.

PIGEON

We've got to go to him.

The animals react to this.

WARTHOG

You mean leave the zoo?

ELEPHANT

We can't leave the zoo. That's preposterous! We've never been beyond these walls in our lives.

Suddenly a powerful voice thunders through the room.

POWERFUL VOICE (O.S.)

We are going!

Everyone looks over and sees the Lion enter.

LION

This man has given everything for us. And it is time we return the favor. We are animals of honor, integrity, and most of all, courage. And I say, we are going. Now!

With that the Lion lets out a TREMENDOUS, POWERFUL ROAR that practically shakes the walls. All the animals are inspired by this impressive show of leadership. They call out "Yeah!" "He's right!" and "Andrew would do it for us!"

LION

Follow me!

The Lion turns and charges out of the common space. All the animals rush out after him. Only the Elephant and the Lionesses remain behind. The Lionesses look at each other, impressed.

LIONESS (CLAUDIA)
You see that?

LIONESS (ANA)
He's back!

ELEPHANT
I suppose the kitty has a point.

The Elephant trots off after the others.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - FRONT GATES - DAY

The Lion and the other animals reach the LOCKED FRONT GATES. They stop, trying to figure a way out.

Suddenly they hear a TRUMPETING CRY. They turn and see the Elephant charging towards them. The animals part, making way.

Without stopping, the Elephant CHARGES STRAIGHT into the gates, SMASHING into them. The GATES FLY WIDE OPEN. The animals pour out of the zoo.

EXT. BALTIMORE STREETS - DAY

The pack of zoo animals run down a neighborhood street like a multi-specied stampede. A mom is pushing her young son in a stroller.

BOY
Look, parade!!

The mom looks up. Her jaw drops as she sees the animals trample by.

EXT. BALTIMORE CITY JAIL - DAY

The Pigeon leads the herd to the jail. As they arrive, he flies up to Andrew's window.

PIGEON
Right here! It's this window here.

The animals look up at the barred second story window.

GORILLA
(shaking head)
What is it with humans and their cages?

ELEPHANT
Everyone stand back.

The Elephant reaches up with his trunk, GRABS THE BARS, and YANKS THEM OUT of the WINDOW, taking a hunk of the facade along with it. The whole mess crashes to the ground.

PEACOCK
Damn. Now that's what I call
"trunking it up a bit!"

The Elephant turns to the Peacock, pleased.

ELEPHANT
See? It's catchy, isn't it?!

Andrew sticks his head out of the hole in the wall and sees the animals assembled there.

ANDREW
What are you guys doing?!

GIRAFFE
C'mon, dude! We're busting you
outta here!

ZEBRA
Trent took the kid and your girl.
They're getting on a boat.

FLAMINGO
(a la action movie)
This just got personal!

PEACOCK
Jump!

Andrew leaps out of the hole and grabs the Giraffe's neck. He slides down until he's sitting on the Giraffe's back.

LION
Let's go!

The animals are about to take off.

ANDREW
Wait! The pier's over 2 miles
away.

LION
 We are animals of the jungle.
 Built for power and speed. For us,
 2 miles is nothing. Watch us run -
 like the wind!!!

The Lion takes off, the other animals following, running full speed down the street.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. BALTIMORE STREET - DAY

Six blocks later the animals grind to a STOP, DOUBLED OVER, WHEEZING, and GASPING for breath.

LION
 Oh my God, I feel as though I am
 about to die!

GIRAFFE
 I don't know about you dudes, but I
 think I'm gonna blow chunks.

The Zebra notices something.

ZEBRA
 Look!

They all look over and see a large, empty, FLATBED TRUCK idling at the red light. Andrew rushes over. He climbs up the step to speak to the DRIVER through the passenger window.

ANDREW
 Excuse me, sir. We're kind of in a
 crisis here. Is there any way you
 could drop me and my friends off at
 the pier?

DRIVER
 I'm going the other way, pal. Now
 get the hell out of my window.

Just then the Gorilla RIPS THE DRIVER'S DOOR clear off the truck, sticks his head in the cab, and ROARS FULL THROTTLE.

DRIVER
 (petrified, to Andrew)
 Hop on. Let's go.

ANDREW
 (to animals)
 Everybody on the back!

All the animals climb onto the flatbed. The Elephant catches up with the Gorilla.

ELEPHANT

That was an impressive show of strength there, Stanley.

GORILLA

The guy pissed me off.

EXT. PIERS - OCEAN FREIGHTER - DAY

A large ship is docked at port. It's an upscale Ocean Freighter that carries mostly cargo with some accommodations for passengers. Will and Trent stand at the railing that runs along the ship's large, wide deck. Kate approaches.

TRENT

How's Ling Ling?

KATE

She's fine. It's very comfortable down there.

TRENT

Good.

Trent notices some dock workers below.

TRENT

Look Will, they're freeing the lines. We're about to shove off.

EXT. STREETS NEAR PORTS - DAY

The truck pulls up outside the old abandoned warehouses that line the pier.

ANDREW

(then, to Driver)
Thank you very much.

DRIVER

(terrified, high pitched)
You're welcome.

Andrew gets out of the cab as the animals jump down from the flatbed.

ANDREW

This way.

Andrew leads the animals into one of the abandoned warehouses.

INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - DAY

The animals dash through the large cavernous warehouse. In the rear they are stopped by a large metal gate that prevents them from heading out onto the pier.

PEACOCK
It's locked.

GORILLA
What is it with humans and their
locked gates?

ELEPHANT
Stand back! I've got this.

The Elephant backs up to get a running start, then comes CHARGING into the gate. He HITS IT WITH THE FULL FORCE of his body, but it DOESN'T GIVE. Instead the Elephant bounces back, teeters for a moment, and falls.

ELEPHANT
Oww.

WARTHOG
It's elephant-proof!

ANDREW
(worried)
Stay here. I'll see if there's
another way.

Andrew runs out of the warehouse. The Giraffe, with his long neck, can see over the gate.

GIRAFFE
They're untying the boat, dudes.
We gotta boogie!

ZEBRA
Anybody here know how to work one
of these combo locks?

The Zebra indicates the big COMBINATION PADLOCK on the door.

WOLF
That would require thumbs.

GORILLA
Did someone say, "thumbs?"

The Gorilla steps forward, flexing his fingers.

EXT. OCEAN FREIGHTER - DAY

The large boat's huge motors start churning the water, though the boats not moving yet. Out on the deck, Kate turns to Will.

KATE
You want to go see what the rooms
are like?

WILL
That's okay. I'll stay here.

Kate looks concerned.

TRENT
He's fine. Let's give him a little
space.

Trent and Kate head inside the boat.

INT. WAREHOUSE/EXT. DOCKS - DAY

Andrew comes running back inside, out of breath.

ANDREW
I couldn't find another...

Andrew stops when he sees the Gorilla, holding the combination lock, slowly turning the dial. Big Ears has one of his ENORMOUS EARS pressed against the lock, LISTENING carefully.

BIG EARS
Left... left... left.. Stop!
That's it!

The Gorilla pulls down on the lock. It clicks open. The animals cheer. The Gorilla turns to the Elephant.

GORILLA
(to Elephant)
See? Sometimes it is about
finesse.

ELEPHANT
Touché.

GIRAFFE
They're shoving off!

ANDREW
Let's go!

The animals push the door open and rush out onto the dock only to see the gangplank has been wheeled back, and the boat is pulling away from the pier.

ZEBRA

Uh-oh.

Andrew spots A ROPE, coiled on the dock. The rope is ATTACHED TO THE BOAT. As the boat pulls away, the rope is rapidly UNCOILING.

ANDREW

Get that rope!

The animals take off for it. The Lion, the fastest of the bunch, sprints out ahead of the others.

As the boat pulls away further, the rope uncoils even faster.

From the deck of the boat, Will looks up and sees Andrew and the animals charging across the dock.

WILL

Andrew?

(then excited, yelling)

Andrew!!

As he runs, Andrew looks up and sees Will.

ANDREW

Will!

The rope is almost completely uncoiled. At the last minute the Lion POUNCES on it. He grabs it with his mouth and throws it over the huge 200 lb. cleat.

LION

I did it! We win!

The other animals arrive just as the rope goes taught... and RIPS the 200 LB CLEAT RIGHT OUT OF THE DOCK. The cleat sails 50 feet through the air before splashing harmlessly into the water.

The animals watch as the giant boat continues on, unperturbed.

GIRAFFE

Dude, that is so totally bogus!

Andrew finally catches up to the animals. He looks up and sees Will. Their eyes lock as the boat motors out towards the sea.

GORILLA

I can't believe this is how it's gonna end.

LION

If only someone could fly out there and stop that boat.

The Zebra turns and looks at the Flamingo.

FLAMINGO

Why are you looking at me?

ZEBRA

You could do this. You got the skills and you got the wings.

FLAMINGO

Me? I can't fly. You know that!

ZEBRA

Yes you can. You're a bird. And birds can fly. I believe in you, kid.

ANDREW

We all believe in you.

The Flamingo studies the faces of all the animals staring at him. Slowly and softly the animals begin to chant.

EVERYONE

(chanting softly)

Flamin-go. Flamin-go. Flamin-go.

The Flamingo takes a breath, then,

FLAMINGO

Alright, clear a path.

(then)

I feel the need. The need for speed.

The Flamingo takes several steps backwards as the animals part, creating a lane between them. The Flamingo spreads his wings and...

IN SLO MOTION: We see the Flamingo charge toward the edge of the dock, flapping his wings as he sprints all out. He beats his wings harder and harder until finally he's at the edge of the dock and he JUMPS INTO THE AIR.

The animals hold their breath as the Flamingo SAILS UPWARD - for a brief second - and then QUICKLY DROPS DOWNWARD. The Flamingo descends until his belly GRAZES THE WATER. He flaps his wings frantically to stay aloft, inches above the water.

It seems like an eternity, but FINALLY HIS WINGS CATCH AIR, and he starts to rise again.

IN REGULAR MOTION: The animals watch from the dock tensely, until they see the Flamingo ascend.

PEACOCK

He's up!

Sure enough, THE FLAMINGO SOARS INTO THE AIR gaining altitude as he heads for the boat. The animals and Andrew go crazy, cheering wildly.

ZEBRA

I knew you could do it, Pink! I knew it!

Flying out to the boat, the Flamingo cries out as he flaps with all his might.

FLAMINGO

Adrian! Adrian!

EXT. OCEAN FREIGHTER - DAY

From the deck, Will watches as the Flamingo flies over his head towards the front upper deck of the ship.

INT. OCEAN FREIGHTER - BRIDGE - DAY

The BOAT'S PILOT is alone at the helm, steering the ship. Suddenly, a giant pink bird comes soaring through one of the open doors and lands a few feet away.

BOAT'S PILOT

What the hell are you?

FLAMINGO

I'm your worst nightmare. A flamingo with an attitude.

BOAT'S PILOT

(stunned)
Huh...?

FLAMINGO

Yippie kai yay, mothersucka!

The Flamingo JUMPS UP and delivers a KARATE KID STYLE KICK right to the Pilot's chest. The Pilot goes FLYING BACKWARDS, hits his head on the wall, and sinks to the floor, out cold.

FLAMINGO

That's right. I'm bad.

INT. OCEAN FREIGHTER - HALLWAY

Trent is helping Kate open the door to her cabin. Suddenly the boat shifts. They stop.

KATE
What was that?

TRENT
(confused)
Feels like we're turning around.

INT. OCEAN FREIGHTER - CONTROL ROOM - DAY

The Flamingo is spinning the large steering wheel with his beak.

EXT. THE DOCKS - DAY

On the docks the animals see the boat turning around and heading back towards them.

LION
He did it!

The animals cheer, ecstatic.

The Flamingo steps out of the bridge and onto the upper deck. The Zebra calls to him.

ZEBRA
You're a superhero!

The Flamingo jumps up on the upper railing and raises his wings.

FLAMINGO
I'm the king of the world!!

The animals all cheer and celebrate. The boat keeps coming towards the dock. Andrew calls to the Flamingo.

ANDREW
Lenny!

FLAMINGO
What?

ANDREW
Stop the boat!

The Flamingo realizes the boat is motoring right towards the dock.

FLAMINGO
Oh, right!

The Flamingo heads back to the bridge.

EXT. OCEAN FREIGHTER - DECK - DAY

Kate and Trent come rushing out onto the deck. They see Will and head over to him.

KATE
What's going on?

WILL
Andrew and the animals are
hijacking the boat.

TRENT
What?

As the boat continues to turn back towards the dock, Andrew and the animals, standing on the dock, come into Kate's view.

KATE
Oh, no.

INT. OCEAN FREIGHTER - BRIDGE - DAY

Inside the Bridge, the Flamingo finds a big red button marked "Engine Shut Off". He hits it with his beak.

FLAMINGO
There!

EXT. THE DOCKS - DAY

Andrew and the animals watch as the boat, still moving pretty fast, continues towards the dock. They see the Flamingo step out of the bridge. Andrew calls to him.

ANDREW
Lenny, stop the boat!!!

FLAMINGO
I turned it off! What the hell
else do you want me to do!!!

The boat keeps coming. It's obviously going to crash into the dock.

ANDREW
(to animals)
Everybody, back!

EXT. OCEAN FREIGHTER - THE DECK - DAY

Kate sees what's about to happen.

KATE
Hold on!

EXT. THE DOCKS - DAY

Andrew and the animals run for the back of the dock as the ocean freighter smashes into the pier with considerable force. Several animals fall.

EXT. OCEAN FREIGHTER - THE DECK - DAY

Kate, Trent and Will fall to the ground from the impact.

EXT. THE DOCKS - DAY

The pier holds strong, and because the boat hits at an angle, it's momentum forces it to turn until the side of the boat is lined up against the dock.

The Elephant looks back and sees the boat effectively docked, and the rolling gangplank only yards away. He rushes over and pushes the gangplank up to the boat.

ELEPHANT

All aboard!

Andrew and the animals rush up the gangplank.

EXT. OCEAN FREIGHTER - THE DECK - DAY

Kate, Will and Trent are still on the ground.

KATE

(to Will)
Are you okay?

WILL

That was awesome!

As they get to their feet, they see Andrew and the animals come rushing down the wide deck towards them.

ANDREW

Kate!

KATE

Andrew, I don't know what you think you're doing, but...

Suddenly, the BOAT'S CAPTAIN and 5 members of his CREW come running down the deck from the other direction.

CAPTAIN

What the hell is going on?

TRENT

(pointing at Andrew)
This man is deranged! You must apprehend him, immediately.

The Captain and his crew head for Andrew. The Wolf steps forward and growls. The men stop.

TRENT
Don't be afraid of the animals.
They're perfectly tame.

The Wolf snarls and charges the men. The men TURN AND RUN, chased by the gnashing Wolf.

TRENT
(calling to fleeing men)
Stop! Come back! Cowards!

Just then the Lion steps forward, eyeing Trent. Trent starts to back up nervously.

TRENT
Easy boy. Settle, settle.
(then)
Andrew, tell this beast to back
off. Now! Do it!!

ANDREW
Get him, Francisco!

The Lion charges. Trent runs and JUMPS over the SHIP'S RAILING. He falls, splashing into the water below. Will can't help but smile at the sight of this.

KATE
Andrew, are you out of your mind?

ANDREW
Kate, just listen to me. If you
leave right now, you'll be making a
terrible mistake. Not only because
of the zoo, but because... because
you're supposed to be here. With
me.

Andrew looks over at Will. Will is smiling, beaming really.

ANDREW
I love you, Kate. And deep down I
think you love me. And Will and
I... We're all meant to be
together, as a family. Any idiot
can smell that.

Kate looks confused.

ANDREW
I mean, not us. The animals can.

KATE
The animals told you?

WILL
Just listen to him, mom.

Andrew wants to tell Kate the truth. He looks over at the Elephant. The Elephant nods permission.

ANDREW
(to Kate)
They don't do it often, but when they want to... animals can talk to humans.

A beat, then,

KATE
Andrew, you're a very sweet man, and... Look, I admit there was a moment there where I was hopeful about us. Even standing here right now, there's a part of me that wants to believe you. That wishes you weren't crazy...

ANDREW
I'm not crazy. Everything I've ever told you is true.

KATE
Andrew, you just said animals can talk. That's the definition of crazy.

Fed up, the Zebra turns to Kate, AND SPEAKS.

ZEBRA
Oh for God's sake, just kiss the guy!

Kate freezes. She stares at the Zebra in bewilderment. The Peacock chimes in,

PEACOCK
You heard the Zebra. Plant one on him!

And the Lion,

LION
A real kiss. So he can feel it in his toes.

Kate is stunned.

WILL
See, Mom! I told you!

KATE
But... But...

The Elephant sneaks forward.

ELEPHANT
(hushed whisper)
You can't tell anyone! There's a
code, you know.

Kate looks over at Andrew.

KATE
Oh my God.

ANDREW
I know. It's a little freaky at
first.

KATE
So that means...

ANDREW
It means you should stay.

WILL
C'mon, Mom. Kiss him.

Kate looks at Andrew. Andrew takes her into his arms and
kisses her. All the animals cheer. The kiss lasts, and
lasts.

WILL
Alright, that's enough. Now it's
just getting gross.

FADE OUT.

FADE UP ON:

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - DAY

An absolutely spectacular fall day. The ZOO IS PACKED with
visitors of all ages, laughing, enjoying themselves.

As the CAMERA PANS across this idyllic scene, we hear the
voice of a TELEVISION NEWS REPORTER.

TV REPORTER (V.O.)
What you're seeing right now is the
beautiful, revitalized Baltimore
zoo.

(MORE)

TV REPORTER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 It's hard to believe, only a few
 short months ago, this thriving zoo
 was on the verge of shutting down.

The CAMERA lands on the Reporter.

TV REPORTER
 The dramatic turnaround can be
 attributed largely to this little
 guy right here.

The SHOT WIDENS to REVEAL the Panda habitat. Inside are
 Sammy, Ling Ling, and AN INCREDIBLY ADORABLE BABY PANDA.

A short distance away, Kate stands watching. Andrew
 approaches.

ANDREW
 I didn't know we had a TV crew
 today.

KATE
 This is our second one.

They kiss. Andrew sits on the bench.

ANDREW
 Boy, with moving the monkeys,
 polishing the rhino's horn, and
 then giving the Board members a
 tour, I haven't sat down all day.

KATE
 Are you telling me this as my
 husband who wants sympathy, or as
 the Co-Director of the Zoo who
 needs a 5 minute break?

ANDREW
 As the Co-Director. But as your
 husband, let me just add... your
 butt looks phenomenal in those
 pants.

KATE
 Thank you. I'm glad it was my
 husband who said that, otherwise
 I'd have to sue you for harassment.

Kate sits next to Andrew. He puts his arm around her.

ANDREW
 Is Will home from school?

KATE
 Yeah. He's working with Francisco.

EXT. ANIMAL COMMON SPACE - DAY

An area has been fenced off. Will stands outside the fence holding a pack of Devil Dogs. Francisco the Lion is inside. The Lionesses laze on the ground behind him.

LION
Please, Will. Just one Devil Dog.

WILL
Have you done your treadmill yet?

LION
Yes. Of course.

LIONESS
(loudly)
Pfft.

Francisco looks at the Lioness, annoyed - then back at Will.

LION
(busted)
Fine. I will do my 3 miles.

Francisco steps on the treadmill. Just then, a voice interrupts.

VOICE (O.S.)
Excuse me.

Will and Francisco look over. A VERY CUTE 10 YEAR OLD GIRL has wandered into the common space.

CUTE GIRL
I'm starting the Young Zoologists Program here. We're supposed to meet in front of the Rainforest Building and... I'm kinda lost. Do you know where that is?

Will is STUNNED by her. All he can manage is to raise his hand and point in the right direction, his mouth agape.

CUTE GIRL
Thanks.

The Girl smiles and hurries off. Will remains absolutely frozen - IN LOVE. Francisco takes one look at him, rolls his eyes, then turns towards all the other animal cages...

LION
Meeting!!!!!!

FADE TO BLACK