

ZOO CITY

"The One About The Cat"

Written by

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FADE IN.

EXT. JACKSONVILLE ZOO PARKING LOT - DAY

A vintage NISSAN MAXIMA, circa 1990, sits in an isolated area of the zoo's parking lot. A giant sign displaying "Jacksonville Zoo" looms overhead nearby.

INT. NISSAN MAXIMA

SETH RYAN (20s, skinny with an OCD attention to his appearance) is dressed in a nice shirt and tie and waiting impatiently in the back seat.

Zookeeper LAURA WHITMORE (20s) ENTERS. Her uniform and boots are caked in mud. She straddles Seth.

SETH

What took you so long? I've only got fifteen minutes before my interview.

LAURA

So, what are we gonna do with the other ten minutes?

Seth and Laura begin to kiss.

SETH

What is that smell? Is that you?

LAURA

Probably. Another asshole threw a hotdog in the gorilla paddock again. Do you have any idea what processed meat does to a gorilla's stomach?

Laura resumes kissing Seth.

SETH

I think it's your shoes. Let me just roll the window down.

Seth leans across Laura into the front seat, bending her back into an awkward position, and puts the window down.

LAURA

Jesus Christ, Seth! You're interviewing to work at a zoo. Shit's part of the deal.

SETH

I'm interviewing for the head of  
marketing not the head of poop  
scooping.

LAURA

Fine! I'll take them off!

SETH

Just watch the upholstery.

Laura tosses her boots out.

LAURA

Better?

SETH

(After a BEAT)  
I can still smell it.

Seth reaches back across Laura and raises the window.

LAURA

I'm starting to understand why my  
father wants to kill you.

SETH

Is he still mad about your  
grandmother?

SMASH CUT TO:

FLASHBACK: INT. LAURA'S HOUSE - DAY

Laura and Seth are getting hot and heavy in her living room. They bump up against a fireplace mantle, jarring an urn next to a photograph of an elderly woman.

LAURA

Careful! That's my grandmother.

SETH

Well, no wonder she's always  
cranky. You make her stay in that  
tiny, little jar.

Seth and Laura resume making out. Seth peers at the photograph of Laura's grandmother and faces it away from him. When he moves his hand back he knocks the urn off of the shelf.

LAURA

Nana?!

MR. WHITMORE (50s) ENTERS through the front door and freezes at the sight of Seth and Laura standing over the ashes of his mother.

The family DOG ENTERS, sniffs the ashes then urinates on the pile.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. NISSAN MAXIMA - PRESENT DAY

LAURA

If he finds out we're about to work together, he'll lose his mind.

Laura and Seth kiss again.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Oh, baby..oh..DADDY?!

SETH

Yeah, okay. Who's your daddy, baby?

Laura points at the rear windshield.

LAURA

HE IS!

Seth turns to see Mr. Whitmore standing behind his car, cocking a shotgun.

SETH

HOLY..!

Seth dives over Laura into the driver's seat. Laura EXITS the car.

SETH (CONT'D)

Please start you piece of..

The engine turns over and Seth floors it. Mr. Whitmore fires a shot which shatters Seth's rear windshield.

EXT. JACKSONVILLE ZOO PARKING LOT

MR. WHITMORE

There's nowhere to hide, Seth!

LAURA

CALL ME!

EXT. INTERSTATE 80, PARK CITY, UTAH - DAY

It's a warm, spring morning in the Wasatch mountains of northern Utah. A small SEDAN drives along a canyon road surrounded by a beautiful mountain landscape.

Up ahead a street sign reads, "Park City, Utah".

INT. SEDAN

Seth, dressed in the same shirt and tie, sits in the backseat.

The DRIVER makes small talk.

DRIVER  
Is this your first time?

SETH  
No, I've taken *Uber* before.

DRIVER  
I mean, Utah? Your first time in Utah?

SETH  
Oh, yes. First time.

DRIVER  
Well, you're gonna love it.  
Beautiful mountains, lots of outdoor activities and, believe it or not, quite the festive night life.

INT. STRIP CLUB, SALT LAKE CITY - NIGHT

In a dimly lit strip club, groups of YOUNG MEN (20-30s), all dressed in white shirts and black ties are cat calling and throwing money onto a stage.

Dancing on the stage is a WOMAN (20s), dressed in a long, conservative pioneer dress and bonnet. She slowly moves around a pole while carrying a BABY. Three more CHILDREN sit on the stage with her, entertaining themselves with toys.

EXT. INTERSTATE 80 - DAY

The sedan turns down a side road towards a billboard for "Zoo City".

EXT. ZOO CITY PARKING LOT - SECONDS LATER

The sedan pulls into an employee parking lot and parks near a tall, wooden fence. Seth EXITS the car and thanks the driver who DRIVES OFF.

Seth's phone rings. The screen displays a picture of Laura. Seth answers.

SETH

Hey. I just got to the zoo. Are you sure about this?

LAURA'S VOICE (O.C.)

My father can't shoot you if you're three thousand miles away in Utah.

SETH

Then why do I jump every time someone pops their gum?

LAURA'S VOICE (O.C.)

Just get that marketing job so you can put in a good word for me and we can finally be together.

SETH

Yeah, piece of cake. Listen, I gotta go or I'm going to be late.

LAURA'S VOICE (O.C.)

I Love you.

SETH

Love you, too.

EXT. ZOO CITY GROUNDS - DAY

Seth is WALKING through the zoo passing by a few ANIMAL HABITATS. The architecture of the habitats and shops gives the zoo a rustic, mountain resort feel.

Other than Seth, the zoo seems abandoned.

Zookeeper CLARY NOBLE (20s, blonde and beautiful) ENTERS from behind.

CLARY

Sir?! Excuse me! We don't open until nine! How the hell'd you even get in here?

SETH  
I tunneled in with the prairie  
dogs. Hard workers but their small  
talk can be a little "ruff".

Clary stares stone faced.

SETH (CONT'D)  
I'm Seth. Seth Ryan. I'm here for  
an interview with Allistar Fox?

CLARY  
Then follow me. And try to keep up.

Clary LEADS the way at a quick pace.

EXT. HOLDING PEN, ZOO GROUNDS - DAY

Zoo Director ALLISTAR FOX (50s, slightly pudgy and balding with large eye glasses) is leaning against the fence post of a small corral. In the distance the Wasatch mountain range wraps around the zoo.

Clary and Seth ENTER.

CLARY  
Sir? I've got a Shaun Ryan here?

SETH  
Seth Ryan.

CLARY  
Don't care.

SETH  
I'm supposed to have an interview  
today?

DIRECTOR FOX  
Interview? Oh my god, the Florida  
boy. No one told you?

SETH  
Told me what?

DIRECTOR FOX  
Thank you, Clary.

Clary EXITS.

SETH  
Am I here on the wrong day? I get  
confused by the time differences.

DIRECTOR FOX

I'm sorry you had to fly all the way out here. I know that's a long flight.

SETH

The pilot did most of the flying so, it wasn't that bad. Why do I feel like I'm about to be asked to do the eulogy at my own funeral?

Director Fox motions Seth over to the fence.

DIRECTOR FOX

I'll have to be honest with you, Shaun.

SETH

Seth.

DIRECTOR FOX

Seth. I can't hire you as our marketing director. My assistant was supposed to send you an email.

SETH

May I ask why? When I talked to you on the phone you made me feel like I'd be a good fit here. Those were your words. I even paid for my own ticket. Round trip.

DIRECTOR FOX

It's not you, Seth. Your resume is great and I do think you'd be a great fit but I just can't hire you or anyone else for that matter. We're going to be closing soon.

SETH

Closing? Why?

A TRUCK ENTERS the pen towing a flatbed trailer with a male BLACK RHINOCEROUS secured in a harness.

DIRECTOR FOX

Ah. It's showtime.

Clary EXITS the truck along with DR. ROBERT RANLY (50s, with a cool, Matthew McConaughey vibe). Clary puts on a pair of latex gloves and climbs onto the trailer.

DIRECTOR FOX (CONT'D)  
Between you and me, we haven't hit  
our attendance numbers for some  
time now.

Clary begins to manually stimulate the rhinoceros, catching  
Seth completely off guard.

DIRECTOR FOX (CONT'D)  
With Covid and inflation and that  
other zoo down in Salt Lake City,  
whose name we won't mention, it's  
costing more money to keep this  
place open than it's making. We're  
already fifteen hundred people  
short for this month.

Director Fox notices Seth's fixation on Clary.

DIRECTOR FOX (CONT'D)  
Clary's quite the keeper. Knows  
more about the animals here than  
anyone.

SETH  
She seems really..hands on.

DIRECTOR FOX  
Did you sneak a peak at her hooters  
when you came in?

SETH  
I..maybe?

DIRECTOR FOX  
They're breathtaking. Award  
winning, actually. She takes  
excellent care of them.

SETH  
Now that you mention it, they are  
pretty nice. Almost perfectly  
cylindrical.

DIRECTOR FOX  
What are you talking about? They're  
up front in our owls of North  
America exhibit.

SETH  
Oh..right.

Dr. Ranly catches the end result in a garbage bag just as Clary finishes. They high five then, Clary lights herself a "post stimulation" cigarette.

DIRECTOR FOX

Now I have to tell them they're out of a job.

SETH

What if you didn't have to tell them?

DIRECTOR FOX

Good idea. Make human resources do it.

SETH

No, I mean, what if they didn't have to lose their jobs? You need fifteen hundred people to make your goal for this month, right? So, give me one week. One week to meet your quota. And, if I do, you can hold off on closing and I can stay on as your marketing director. What do you say? Please? I need this job.

DIRECTOR FOX

You must really want to get out of Florida, kid.

SMASH CUT TO:

FLASHBACK: EXT. JACKSONVILLE ZOO PARKING LOT - DAY

MR. WHITMORE

There's no where to hide, Seth!

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. HOLDING PEN - PRESENT DAY

SETH

You have no idea.

INT. MARKETING OFFICE - DAY

Seth ENTERS the marketing office where a handful of EMPLOYEES sit at computers. The room has a very low energy vibe. They look at Seth.

SETH  
Which one of you handles the social media accounts?

REGGIE (12 yrs old) raises his hand.

SETH (CONT'D)  
That, strangely makes sense.  
(Handing Reggie a piece of paper)  
I need you to post this message for me. Half off admission to all visitors tomorrow only. Make sure it's bold and flashy. Stevie Wonder should be able to see it.

REGGIE  
Cool. Who's Stevie Wonder?

EXT. ZOO CITY GROUNDS - THE NEXT MORNING

Seth, wearing the same outfit, WALKS through the zoo. This time there are ZOO KEEPERS and other EMPLOYEES RUSHING around everywhere.

A MERCHANDISE EMPLOYEE ENTERS, RUSHING past Seth with a lantern.

MERCHANDISE EMPLOYEE  
The Mormons are coming! The Mormons are coming!

Director Fox ENTERS, comically RUNNING towards Seth.

DIRECTOR FOX  
(Winded)  
Seth! Seth! We have a huge problem! You posted something about half off admission to the zoo today?

SETH  
Yes, and?

DIRECTOR FOX  
Well, there happens to be a Latter-Day Saints conference in town this weekend and they saw the post.

SETH  
What's a Latter-Day Saints conference?

DIRECTOR FOX

Twice a year every Latter-Day Saint  
in the lower 48 comes to Salt Lake  
City to binge themselves on Jesus  
and frozen yogurt and they're  
coming here, today!

SETH

Okay. What does that mean, they?  
How many is they?

DIRECTOR FOX

All of they! The typical conference  
can host up to ten thousand people!

SETH

TEN THOU...??!!

DIRECTOR FOX

You have a plan, right? Tell me you  
have a plan?

SETH

Can you just, I need, one minute,  
I'll..yeah.

Seth quickly RUNS OFF.

DIRECTOR FOX

Seth?! So, I'll just wait here,  
then?

INT. GROOMING ROOM - DAY

JESSICA MOWEN (20s, very conservative, everything about her screams boring and sheltered) is grooming ZARA (An African Black Footed Cat) on a small grooming table. It's the size of an average house cat with brown fur and black stripes along its body and feet.

Seth BURSTS into the room, opens a window and sticks his head out, breathing erratically.

JESSICA

Are you okay?

Startled, Seth hits his head against the window.

SETH

Ouch!..I'm fine. I'm just having a  
slight panic attack.

JESSICA

I get those all the time.

(Demonstrating)

Breath IN and OUT. IN and OUT.

After a few slow breaths, Seth slumps onto the floor.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

I'm Jessica. You must be the new guy?

SETH

Seth. And I'm the guy who somehow managed to gather more Mormons in one spot than a Donny Osmond concert.

JESSICA

I know, it's going to be so fun!

SETH

I'd use a different F word.

JESSICA

Fabulous?

SETH

Uh-huh. That's the one.

JESSICA

Hey, can you watch Zara for a second? I need to wash my hands.

Jessica WALKS to a sink and starts washing her hands.

SETH

Zara?

JESSICA

She's an African black footed cat.

The sound of a bird outside attracts Zara's attention and she JUMPS across Seth and EXITS through the open window after it.

Jessica returns to the table.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

WHERE'S ZARA?!

SETH

Breath IN and OUT. IN and OUT...

EXT. NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS OF PREY HABITATS - DAY

Clary and Seth pace along the outside of a pen housing several TURKEY VULTURES.

CLARY

This is a total clusterfuck!  
I can't believe this is happening!

SETH

I know, I know but that's why I came to you first. If there's anyone who can find this thing discretely and without anyone knowing it's you.

CLARY

Shit, this is so against protocol.  
Promise me you're serious about the zoo closing?

SETH

I heard it from the big guy himself.

CLARY

Shit.

SETH

But you can fix this, I know you can. When it comes to the animals, everyone says you're the best.

CLARY

Everyone?

SETH

Well, Director Fox anyway. You should've heard the way he went on about your hooters.

CLARY

Excuse me?

SETH

Point is, Jessica's already out there looking but there's a lot of ground to cover. She really needs your help.

CLARY

OUR help. You're coming with me.

SETH

What? No. I can't. I mean, I can't. I've got the Mormons coming any minute.

CLARY

Maybe instead of marketing you should've applied to be the new janitor because you've got two messes to clean up now. Or, I can go tell Fox there's a wild animal loose in the zoo?

SETH

Alright, fine. I'll help. What do you want me to do?

CLARY

First thing's first. There's no telling where she is by now. Lost, alone, terrified..we'll need something to lure her out into the open.

SETH

Maybe a bowl of milk or something?

CLARY

I'm talking about Jessica, not the cat. Go to the commissary and get a snare pole; Meet me at the training yard behind reptile house.

SETH

Right, yes. What's a snare pole?

CLARY

It's the thing I'm going to hang you with if you don't hurry up.

Clary EXITS.

SETH

Okay. This is fine. This is all going to work out. I can feel it.

A bird squawks. Seth looks over his shoulder to see a vulture perched above him with it's wings spread wide.

SETH (CONT'D)

Oh, shut up.

EXT. ELEPHANT PADDOCK - DAY

A FOOD SERVICE and MERCHANDISE EMPLOYEE are near the elephant habitat in the middle of a discussion. Two ASIAN ELEPHANTS meander around their habitat behind them.

Seth ENTERS, HURRYING for the commissary.

FOOD SERVICE EMPLOYEE

(Stopping Seth)

Hey, hey, hey! You're the guy who invited all of the children of the corn here, right?

SETH

I...m not sure what that means?

FOOD SERVICE EMPLOYEE

Maybe you can solve some problems for us?

SETH

I'm really in a hurry..

FOOD SERVICE EMPLOYEE

Okay, good. So, we're not going to have enough turkey legs to cover all of these people..

MERCHANDISE EMPLOYEE

And I only have two employees to run the front shop. That's just not going to be enough unless we rope off half of the shop?

SETH

If you could just give me a few minutes..

FOOD SERVICE EMPLOYEE

So, should we go with hotdogs instead? Or can they even eat pork?

MERCHANDISE EMPLOYEE

Hotdogs aren't real pork and they're Mormon not Jewish.

FOOD SERVICE EMPLOYEE

I'm just trying not to cause an international incident.

MERCHANDISE EMPLOYEE

This is Park City not the Gaza Strip for Christ's sake.

SETH

Guys, guys...

(To the merchandise  
employee)

Just rope off the turkey legs for  
now...

(To the food service  
employee)

And I'll do my best to find you  
some more Jews, okay?

Seth EXITS.

MERCHANDISE EMPLOYEE

We could always just go across the  
street, grab a beer and watch the  
whole thing burn?

FOOD SERVICE EMPLOYEE

Sounds good to me.

EXT. ANIMAL TRAINING AREA - DAY

Jessica is concealing herself behind some bushes near a small, grassy area where cat trees, houses, rope bridges and bird perches are placed for animal training. A white string stretches across the field to a stick propping up a box.

Clary ENTERS next to Jesscia.

CLARY

Okay, I've got a trail of treats  
all the way to the box.

JESSICA

Now what?

CLARY

Now we wait for shithead.

JESSICA

You mean, Seth?

CLARY

That's what I said. Shithead.

JESSICA

(After a BEAT)

He seems kind of nice, right?

CLARY

No, Jess. He's not right for you.

JESSICA

Why? Because I'm "Mormon"?

CLARY

No, because he's an idiot. Besides, I thought you and Doug were still dating?

JESSICA

Doug? No. He dumped me because he said I wasn't "circular" enough for him.

CLARY

Secular. You weren't secular enough.

JESSICA

No, circular. He's always had a thing for chubby women.

Seth ENTERS with a snare pole.

CLARY

Where the hell have you been?

SETH

Averting an international incident, I think?

JESSICA

(Enamored)

Sounds important.

CLARY

It wasn't.

SETH

It was.

Zara ENTERS, eating from the trail of treats.

CLARY (CONT'D)

(Hushed)

There he is!

JESSICA

What now?!

CLARY

Shh! Don't get your magic underwear all twisted.

JESSICA

Undergarments are not magic, Clary. I wish people would stop saying that.

(MORE)

JESSICA (CONT'D)

The only magical thing that happens  
with my underwear runs on two  
double A batteries.

(Instantly embarrassed)

Oh, my goodness, I can't believe I  
just said that!

Zara MOVES close to the box.

SETH

Look, it's close!

CLARY

Okay, get the pole ready. Nobody  
move until I drop the box.

A BEE ENTERS and lands on Jessica's nose.

JESSICA

Clary, Clary, Clary! THERE'S A BEE  
ON MY NOSE!

CLARY

Relax, Amber Heard, it's just a  
bee.

JESSICA

But I think I'm allergic to bees!

Jessica feels a sneeze coming on.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

And I have to sneeze!

CLARY

Don't you do it. Don't you fucking  
do it. You better hold it in.

Jessica tries holding back her sneeze as Zara MOVES under the box, but just as Clary begins to pull the string, she sneezes in Clary's face. Clary drops the string and Jessica stands up, grabbing her nose.

JESICA

IT STUNG ME!! IT STUNG ME!!

Zara SCURRIES OFF. Seth throws the snare pole like a javelin at Zara but it bounces way off target. She EXITS into the zoo.

CLARY

DAMN IT! And what the hell was  
that, Seth?

SETH  
I don't know?! I panicked!

Out of frustration, Clary picks up a rock and hurls it. The rock sails into a cat house sending out a swarm of BEES.

CLARY  
HEAD FOR WATER!

INT. AFRICAN PENGUIN UNDERWATER VIEWING AREA - DAY

In a dark room CHILDREN watch AFRICAN PENGUINS swim underwater behind a giant glass aquarium window.

Jessica SPLASHES down into the icy water, startling some of the children. She swims towards the surface.

EXT. AFRICAN PENGUIN HABITAT - DAY

A freezing Jessica pulls herself up onto a rocky island with Seth, surrounded by PENGUINS. Seth's phone rings and he retrieves it from his pocket.

JESSICA  
Who is it?

Seth tilts his phone and water pours from the side.

SETH  
I don't know? Jacques Cousteau?

Laura's picture displays across the screen just as Clary EMERGES from the water similar to the way Ursula Andress emerges from the water in "Dr. No."

Jessica catches Seth gawking at Clary and looks at her own chest in disappointment. Seth's phone stops ringing.

CLARY  
(Noticing the stares)  
What? Is there still a bee?

A garbled voice comes over Seth's water logged radio...

VOICE (O.C.)  
Attention, everyone..  
(*Poltergeist style*)  
They're here.

INT. TICKET BOOTH - DAY

Director Fox stands in a tiny ticket booth along with an ADMISSIONS EMPLOYEE. The line of VISITORS, all dressed in their "Sunday best", grows increasingly longer at the window.

Seth ENTERS the booth, soaking wet.

SETH  
You wanted to see me, sir?

DIRECTOR FOX  
Where have you been?

SETH  
I've been, uh, helping Clary.

DIRECTOR FOX  
With what? Her backstroke?

Zookeeper CHLOE (20s) ENTERS the booth with a BURMESE PYTHON around her neck.

CHLOE  
Where do you want me for the encounter?

DIRECTOR FOX  
What do you think, Seth?

SETH  
Um..Maybe start at the end of the line and *snake* your way through?

CHLOE  
(Dryly)  
You're hissssterical.

Zookeeper BECKY (20s) ENTERS the now, crowded booth, with a TWO TOED SLOTH.

BECKY  
Someone order an encounter?

CHLOE  
I'm already here, Becky.

BECKY  
Bite me, Chloe.

SETH  
Should those two be in the same room together?

DIRECTOR FOX  
They're professionals. Right,  
ladies?

SETH  
I was referring to the animals.

Zookeeper MEGHAN (20s) ENTERS the packed booth with an IGUANA. The admissions employee continues to help visitors despite being practically smooshed against the glass.

MEGHAN  
I'm here for the encounter?

SETH  
(To Director Fox)  
Did you take out an add in the newspaper?

An ADMISSIONS SUPERVISOR ENTERS.

SUPERVISOR  
Director Fox?

DIRECTOR FOX  
In here.

The supervisor ENTERS the now, unbearably crowded, booth.

SETH  
Hey, come in. We were just commenting on how there weren't enough people in here.

SUPERVISOR  
I have the first batch of numbers.

DIRECTOR FOX  
Great! Let me see them.

Starting with the supervisor, everyone takes a turn passing a piece of paper to Director Fox despite their inability to move their limbs.

DIRECTOR FOX (CONT'D)  
(Reading the paper)  
Please stop putting wasabi sauce on other people's lunches. Some of us have allergies..

SUPERVISOR  
That's the wrong memo.

Everyone passes the paper back to the supervisor who then sends another paper around to Director Fox.

DIRECTOR FOX  
Eight hundred people, that's incredible! We'll be at capacity soon!

Clary ENTERS, squeezing her way into the booth.

SETH  
Speaking of being at capacity.

CLARY  
I need to borrow Seth, ASAP.

DIRECTOR FOX  
Well, I need Seth with me. We've got to get on top of this from a marketing standpoint. This could be our biggest day in the history of this zoo.

SETH  
(Thinking quick)  
Interviews! I'll get Reggie to find a couple of people to talk about what a wonderful time they're having and put it all over social media. It's free and better than a commercial.

DIRECTOR FOX  
I love that!

CLARY  
Good. Now, let's get out of here.

SETH  
How?

EXT. WALKWAY NEAR THE PETTING ZOO - DAY

Jessica, with a swollen, red bump on her nose, is waiting with three snare poles. Sounds of the petting zoo and the CHILDREN around it are audible OFF CAMERA.

Seth and Clary ENTER and immediately react to Jessica's nose. Clary averts her eyes but Seth can't stop staring.

CLARY  
WHOA!

JESSICA

What?

CLARY

Nothing.

JESSICA

(Becoming self conscious)

Well, she's in the back of the petting zoo barn, napping.

CLARY

Good, that should make this easy.

Clary grabs a pole and EXITS leaving Seth still staring at Jessica's nose.

INT. PETTING ZOO BARN - DAY

Seth, Clary and Jessica ENTER a dimly lit barn where the petting zoo animals are kept overnight. Stalls line both walls.

SETH

Maybe we should let Jessica go in front so she can..

(Pointing to his nose)

Light the way?

JESSICA

But I didn't bring a flashlight?

Clary motions for everyone to keep MOVING. They CREEP towards the back of the barn when Seth's phone rings. He retrieves it from his pocket. Laura's picture is displayed on the screen.

SETH

I should take this.

CLARY

Are you serious?

SETH

It'll only take a second.

CLARY

Seth!

SETH

Okay, fine.

Seth reluctantly declines the call. They spot Zara on a pile of hay.

CLARY

Okay. Here's the plan..

Seth's phone rings, again. Zara jumps up and SCURRIES into a stall.

CLARY (CONT'D)

GET HER!!

Seth reaches the stall first but tries ENTERING the stall with his pole horizontal. It catches both sides of the stall and throws Seth onto his back.

Jessica FOLLOWS behind but trips over Seth, landing with her face in his crotch. Zara EXITS the stall and RUNS for the door.

CLARY (CONT'D)

No, no, no!

Clary PURSUES after her and EXITS. A PETTING ZOO ATTENDANT ENTERS the barn and sees Seth and Jessica in a "69" style position on the ground.

PETTING ZOO ATTENDANT

Whoops! My bad. Sorry, guys.

The attendant EXITS and shuts the door.

EXT. PETTING ZOO - DAY

Seth EMERGES from the barn, pole in hand. Director Fox ENTERS.

DIRECTOR FOX

Seth! There you are!

Startled, Seth throws his snare pole in the air. It hits the petting zoo attendant, carrying a box of feed, in the head. The attendant collapses, spilling the feed.

DIRECTOR FOX (CONT'D)

Some of the church elders want to use our fountain up front to perform baptisms! That would be a great place for some of those interviews! We should get up there!

SETH

Yeah, of course, I'll be right there. I just need to..grab a camera.

EXT. FOOD PAVILLION - DAY

A rustic style food shack is busily serving a variety of deli foods to VISITORS. HAROLD and MARGE (60s) SIT at a table with their food.

HAROLD

Six dollars for a bowl of soup?  
This place should be reported for  
extortion!

Zara stealthily stalks a RABBIT in the brush next to the table. The rabbit LEAPS from the brush onto the table, landing in Harold's soup.

HAROLD (CONT'D)  
Great! AND there's a hare in it?!

The rabbit SCURRIES OFF with Zara at its heels. Clary ENTERS, GIVING CHASE. She leaps onto the table, squishing Marge's sandwich under her boot before jumping off.

MARGE  
Would you like my sandwich?

EXT. FLAMINGO POOL - DAY

Zara RUNS past a wading pool of FLAMINGOS and EXITS into the zoo. Clary ENTERS shortly after but stops.

CLARY  
Shit!

Jessica and Seth ENTER.

CLARY (CONT'D)  
I think she's headed for the fountain.

SETH  
The fountain? Like, the fountain in the front, fountain? That's not good. That's not good at all.

CLARY  
I think it's time to bring in Dirty Harry.

JESSICA  
The maintenance guy?

EXT. ELEPHANT PADDOCK - DAY

A MAN gives his interview to the camera while two ASIAN ELEPHANTS MEANDER around their paddock in the background.

MAN

Yeah, you know, it's a pretty nice zoo. It could use some better animals, though. Like one of those Liger. That's a lion and a badger mixed.

INT. BIRD AVIARY - DAY

A WOMAN gives her interview to the camera inside of an enclosed bird aviary. BIRDS from all over the world chirp and FLY about.

WOMAN

I just love it here. There's nothing more enchanting than being surrounded by nature.

A giant stream of bird poop showers down on the woman's shoulder.

INT. VETERINARY ROOM - DAY

Jessica ENTERS a room used to perform medical procedures on the animals. Her bump has swollen twice as large as it was before.

She WALKS to a storage cabinet labeled "Emergency Use Only" and opens it. She pulls a rifle case off of the top shelf. Written on the case are the words, "Dirty Harry".

JESSICA

I could get so fired for this.

The door handle begins to jiggle. Panicked, Jessica quickly throws the case back on the shelf and scans the room for a place to hide.

On an examination table the arm of a deceased GORILLA sticks out from underneath a white sheet.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

(Disgusted)

No..

As the door opens, Jessica climbs on top of the gorilla and covers herself with the sheet.

Dr. Ranly ENTERS and retrieves a vial of medicine from a counter. He notices the open cabinet.

DR. RANLY  
How'd you get open?

Dr. Ranly shuts the door. As he EXITS he stops by the examination table.

DR. RANLY (CONT'D)  
I'll get to you later, big guy.

Dr. Ranly smacks what he thinks is the gorilla but is actually Jessica's butt. She lets out a whimper.

DR. RANLY (CONT'D)  
(Shaking off the sound)  
I've been working here too long.

Dr. Ranly EXITS. Jessica flings off the sheet and gets off of the gorilla. She breathes a sigh and WALKS to the cabinet revealing the gorilla's face who now, mysteriously, has a smile.

EXT. FRONT GATE FOUNTAIN AREA - DAY

A CHURCH ELDER is in the process of baptizing a long line of hopefuls in the water fountain at the front of the park. Each time someone is baptized the others waiting shout, "Amen".

Reggie films the event on camera as Director Fox and Seth watch along with a crowd of SPECTATORS. Seth nervously keeps on the look out for Zara.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS NEAR THE FOUNTAIN - DAY

Clary is kneeling behind some trash cans near the water fountain keeping an eye on Zara which has made herself comfortable under a VENDOR'S drink cart.

Jessica ENTERS with the rifle and kneels beside Clary. Her breathing is becoming labored and wheezy.

CLARY  
What the hell took you so long?

JESSICA  
I had to stop. I'm having trouble catching my breath.

Clary opens the case to reveal a tranquilizer rifle.

CLARY  
Make my day.

INTERCUT - THE FOUNTAIN AREA AND THE VENDOR'S CART.

The admissions supervisor ENTERS and APPROACHES Director Fox.

SUPERVISOR  
Here are the latest numbers.

DIRECTOR FOX  
(Reading the paper)  
Two thousand?! That's five hundred more than we needed for the whole month! I can't believe you pulled this off, Seth! This is the best day this zoo has ever had. I think you'll make a fine marketing director for us, if you still want the job?

SETH  
Yes, sir! Absolutely, sir! Thank you.

DIRECTOR FOX  
We should celebrate! How about a couple of soda's from the cart over there? My treat.

SETH  
Yes, sir.

Clary cocks the rifle and aims it at Zara under the cart.

JESSICA  
(Wheezing)  
Please don't miss?

CLARY  
I never miss.

Seth STEPS UP to the cart to order the sodas, blocking Clary's shot.

CLARY (CONT'D)  
Goddamnit, Seth! Move!

Jessica's wheezing stops and she faints, collapsing into Clary and causing her to misfire.

The tranquilizer dart sails into Seth's neck. A stunned Seth pulls out the dart and looks back at the trash cans and a shocked Clary.

SETH  
Clary? Why?

As the tranquilizer takes affect, Seth STUMBLES his way back to the fountain. Completely intoxicated, Seth WANDERS into the fountain, bypassing all of the people in line and belly flops face first into the water.

THE CROWD  
AMEN!

REGGIE  
(Catching it all on video)  
That was awesome!

Clary looks at the fountain and then at Jessica.

CLARY  
Two murders in one day? This will be hard to talk my way out of.

As Seth floats to the bottom of the fountain he sees a penny lying on the bottom. In his medicated state he sees the head of Abraham Lincoln speak to him.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN  
They got you too, huh?

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN.

INT. THE TONIGHT SHOW THEATER - DAY

JIMMY FALLON sits at his desk introducing his next guest in front of a live studio AUDIENCE.

JIMMY FALLON  
So, our next guests come to us from this little zoo out in Utah which has gained a lot of social media fame recently..

STEVE HIGGINS  
Apparently, they let the male lion have as many wives as he wants out there.

JIMMY FALLON

I guess it really is good to be the king? Let's welcome out, from Zoo City, Clary Noble, everybody.

Clary ENTERS the set from behind the curtain to applause. She has a GREAT HORNED OWL on her arm. She JOINS Jimmy by the desk.

JIMMY FALLON (CONT'D)

Aren't you beautiful?

CLARY

(Blushing)

Thank you.

JIMMY FALLON

I was talking about the owl but, okay. And what is his name?

CLARY

Owl.

JIMMY FALLON

Owl? You named your owl, owl? I love that! Easy to remember.

STEVE HIGGINS

That's the way they do things in Utah. As few vowels as possible.

INT. TONIGHT SHOW BACKSTAGE AREA

Seth watches the taping from a monitor when his phone rings. He answers.

EXT. RINGTAILED LEMUR HABITAT, JACKSONVILLE ZOO - DAY

Laura is spraying down the lemur habitat while on the phone with Seth. LEMURS jump and play all around her.

LAURA

Hey, how's the show going?

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

SETH

Great, so far. All that press from Mormon day last month really put us on the map.

LAURA  
Us? Listen to you; You've really  
adopted that place, haven't you?  
I'm beginning to wonder if you've  
forgotten about the real US?

Seth is transfixed, watching Clary on the monitor.

LAURA'S VOICE (O.C.)  
Seth?

Jessica, healthy and bump free, ENTERS with Zara in her arms.

JESSICA  
Is it my turn? Do I go out now?

LAURA  
You ARE sticking to the plan,  
right?

SETH  
(To Laura)  
Yes, yes, of course. Absolutely.

Jessica takes that as her cue and EXITS through the curtains.

SETH (CONT'D)  
I promise you, just as soon as I  
get Fox to open up another keeper  
position it's all yours.

LAURA  
Okay, well, hurry up. Things are  
boring without you around. My  
father hasn't tried to shoot anyone  
in weeks.

INT. TONIGHT SHOW STAGE

Jessica ENTERS on to the set and freezes in front of the audience.

CLARY  
Not now, Jess!

The sight of Zara scares Owl and he flaps his wings making it hard for Clary to keep him under control.

Zara leaps from Jessica's arms and SCURRIES into the audience causing a panic.

INT. TONIGHT SHOW BACKSTAGE AREA

Still on the phone, Seth watches the audience members scream and jump from their seats on the monitor.

SETH

That Jimmy Fallon sure knows how to whip up an audience.

FADE OUT.

END.