

ZOOING TIME
by
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EXT. ZOO'S TIGER AREA - NIGHT

We hear a baby crying and discover it is a newborn tiger. The MOTHER TIGER cuddles the child, but he is inconsolable.

The FATHER TIGER approaches, annoyed.

FATHER TIGER
Any change?

MOTHER TIGER
Hmm... well, let me see.

She sarcastically holds the crying baby to her ear.

MOTHER TIGER
He's still crying.

FATHER TIGER
Well can't you do something?

MOTHER TIGER
Can't you?

FATHER TIGER
(menacing)
I don't think you'd like my idea.

Suddenly the baby quiets, as if he understood the threat.

JEFFERSON (O.S.)
A-hem.

The tigers look up. Sitting in a tree overhead is JEFFERSON, a chimpanzee.

JEFFERSON
Sorry to interrupt. I couldn't help overhearing.

FATHER TIGER
Funny how eavesdropping can lead to that.

Jefferson climbs down and sits with them.

JEFFERSON
As a concerned fellow prisoner, I can't help but point out the obvious.

MOTHER TIGER
Obvious what?

JEFFERSON

You two were born in the wild. He's first-generation captivity. Your instincts don't apply here. Not behind bars.

FATHER TIGER

Would you excuse us? This is a family matter.

JEFFERSON

But it's also a larger, society matter.

MOTHER TIGER

What do you suggest we do?

FATHER TIGER

Jefferson doesn't have suggestions. Only complaints.

JEFFERSON

They're observations. Much needed observations, I might add. And I can't possibly fix our situation alone. It will take the combined effort of all the animals to gain our freedom.

FATHER TIGER

Ridiculous.

JEFFERSON

Can't you see? Being locked in these cages is robbing us of not just our dignity, but our very being. The fact that you can't bond with your son is the perfect example --

The Father Tiger ROARS in anger, causing the baby to start crying again. Jefferson freezes in fear.

FATHER TIGER

We're not an example of anything - especially your political nonsense. Now leave us alone.

MOTHER TIGER

(to baby)

There, there. Everything's alright.

Jefferson climbs back up the tree, still frightened, but truly sorry that he didn't help.

EXT. ZOO PATHWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Jefferson walking, concerned. Down from a nearby tree comes ROSS, a fast-talking, female baboon.

ROSS
 Hey - how'd it go? Did you help?
 Did they listen? Are they going to
 join the fight for freedom?

JEFFERSON
 Badly. No. No. And no.

ROSS
 Don't give up. It's a long fight.
 You said so yourself.

JEFFERSON
 Thanks, Ross.

ROSS
 Can I help? How can I help?

Jefferson perks up a bit, and stares ahead with conviction.

JEFFERSON
 Rally in the square.

Ross' face lights up.

ROSS
 You mean it?

JEFFERSON
 You bet I do.

He walks ahead. Still smiling, she heads the other way.

EXT. ZOO PATHWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Ross passes a RHINO, a GAZELLE and a FLAMINGO hanging out by a closed-up souvenir cart. Without stopping, she tells them:

ROSS
 Rally in the square.

They roll their eyes, but after a moment, they follow her.

MONTAGE: Ross spreading the word to several different animals that there's going to be a:

ROSS
 Rally in the square.

They all react with the same annoyed boredom, but comply.

EXT. ZOO SQUARE - NIGHT

A sectioned-off, mini amphitheater used for kids' shows.

As thirty or so animals lazily file in, Ross directs the seating as if handling a riot.

ROSS

Okay, easy does it. No shoving.
There's plenty of room for
everyone. Smaller animals down to
the front. Larger folks to the
back, please.

Working with Ross is FRANKLIN, a slacker, teenage spider monkey. He mimics Ross, pointing animals in whatever direction she has already established for them.

When a pair of bats appear at the entrance, Ross immediately pays special attention to them.

ROSS

(to bats)

Right this way, sir. Miss. -- or is
it Mrs.? Ms. probably. You look
like a Ms.

(to others)

Excuse us. Visually challenged
guests coming through. Make way,
please.

(to bats)

You'll be down in front here.

(to others)

Excuse us. Pardon us. Make way for
the visually challenged.

Unable to get by the rhino, Ross snaps at him.

ROSS

Hey, a little respect here, huh?

When everyone is in place, Jefferson ascends the stage. He has pages of notes in his hand and seems confident --

-- Until he looks out at the moderately-sized crowd.

JEFFERSON

Umm... uuhhh... tonight
(gulp)
I just wanted to, um

The crowd groans. They saw this coming. Jefferson starts sweating.

JEFFERSON

No, wait. I just... it's just...
what we need is ...um, ...

From the side, Ross desperately roots for him, trying to will him the courage to succeed. Franklin stands beside her, more confused than anything.

JEFFERSON

There's this um ... You see...
(defeated)
Sorry. Thanks for coming.

Jefferson slinks off the stage and sits on a nearby bench. The animals file out shaking their heads.

CLOSE ON: The Rhino.

RHINO

(sarcastic)
Gee, didn't see that coming.

CLOSE ON: two GIRAFFES filing out.

GIRAFFE 1

Tell me again why we do this.

GIRAFFE 2

Because if we don't come as a
group, he'll come to each of our
cages and talk for hours.

Ross runs to Jefferson who sits quietly staring ahead. Franklin follows close behind her.

ROSS

You did good! That was real...
progress, I thought.
(to Franklin)
Didn't he do good, Franklin?

FRANKLIN

Kinda the same as last time. And
the time before that. And the --

Ross smacks the back of his head with her tail.

ROSS

(to Jefferson)
It's not your fault. It's a
disorder called groupatalkaphobia.
(MORE)

ROSS (cont'd)
 Instead of blaming the victim, we,
 as a society, should get you the
 help you need.

She holds his shoulders.

ROSS (CONT'D)
 We will get through this, and
 everyone will join the cause.

Franklin looks around their setting.

FRANKLIN
 You think everyone would fit in here?

Jefferson starts to hyperventilate at the thought.

ROSS
 Nice going. Quick! Get a paper bag!

Franklin darts off. Jefferson is trying to say something.

JEFFERSON
 Lin ---- Linc-- Lllll ---

ROSS
 It's going to be fine. You don't
 need him. I'm here. It's okay.

Franklin returns with a popcorn bag. Ross gives it to
 Jefferson, who sucks air from it and starts CHOKING.

Ross pulls the bag away and POPCORN FLIES everywhere. She
 glares at Franklin.

ROSS
 An empty bag, you nitwit!

Ross does the Heimlich on Jefferson by wrapping her tail
 around his waist and grabbing it with one hand.

It works. Jefferson coughs up popcorn kernels and breathes
 again. But his eyes stay staring ahead, almost catatonic.

FRANKLIN
 Why don't we just find his brother?

ROSS
 Because no one knows where he is.

FRANKLIN
 Don't you think that's weird?
 Disappearing for two hours every
 night.

ROSS

Yes. But that's Lincoln. He's weird. We'll just have to wait for him to come back from ... wherever.

FRANKLIN

Just like last time...

EXT. ZOO WALKWAYS - NIGHT

Quiet and dark.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D - O.S.)

... and the time before that. And the time before that.

We track along a perimeter fence. SUSPENSEFUL MUSIC slowly builds as we approach an unknown building and track INTO an exhaust vent in the exterior wall.

INT. AIR VENTS - CONTINUOUS

Continuing track as music builds. Faint voices can be heard in the distance, coming from somewhere in the building and traveling through the vents. Their volume steadily increases.

GOOD GUY (O.S.)

You'll never get away with this.

BAD GUY (O.S.)

We'll see about that.

We hear the rumbling of a fight as we turn a corner.

A spooky blue glow flickers throughout this 15-foot of air vent. The light comes from a grate at the end of the tunnel. Sitting in front of the grate, his back to us, is another chimp, Jefferson's brother LINCOLN.

TRACK IN over Lincoln's shoulder and we see what he sees:

INT. SECURITY OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The only light in the room comes from a 20-inch TV in one corner. A lazy, film-geek GUARD (early 20s) sits in the desk chair, intently watching a 1970s cop movie.

He is unaware of Lincoln, who is also transfixed by the film.

CLOSE ON: TV SCREEN

The two men have finished their fight. The Bad Guy has the Good Guy pinned to a wall.

GOOD GUY
The police know about your scheme.
They're on their way right now.

BAD GUY
I got news for you...

CLOSE ON: Lincoln, watching.

BAD GUY (O.S.)
... the police work for me.

Lincoln's eyes go wide, surprised by the revelation.

BAD GUY (CONT'D)
And your friends won't be bothering
me any more. I've seen to that.

GOOD GUY (O.S.)
You animal!

Taken from the moment, Lincoln rolls his eyes with a "yeah, yeah" look, then reacts in inspired awe as we HEAR the Good Guy escape and the forces of good take over.

BAD GUY
No!! Ahhhgggghhh!!!

GOOD GUY
That'll teach you to operate on the
wrong side of the law.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SECURITY OFFICE - 10 MINUTES LATER

Still on a satisfied Lincoln, we hear theme music and see the scrolling credits reflected in his still-focused eyes.

EXT. ZOO SQUARE - LATE NIGHT

Ross tries to console a still anxiety-ridden Jefferson while Franklin tosses a rock in the air and tries unsuccessfully to bat it with a stick.

Lincoln approaches the trio.

LINCOLN
Hi guys. What's up?

ROSS
We had another rally.

LINCOLN
How'd it go?

FRANKLIN
Same as last time... and the --

ROSS
Alright!

LINCOLN
Thanks for watching him. I'll take
it from here.

Ross reluctantly makes room for Lincoln, who puts his arm
around Jefferson, who is visibly calmer with Lincoln there.

ROSS
Good night, Jefferson. See you
tomorrow.

Jefferson just nods as he and Lincoln walk off.

EXT. ZOO WALKWAY - NIGHT

Lincoln and Jefferson walking. Jefferson is a bit calmer.

LINCOLN
It's just nerves. Public speaking
just isn't your thing.

JEFFERSON
How can I be a political leader if
I can't face a bunch of friends in
a familiar place?

LINCOLN
I'm not sure a political leader is
what's needed here.

JEFFERSON
That's because you're oblivious to
the oppression.

They get to their cage. Lincoln takes a key from under a
"hide-a-key" fake rock and unlocks the door.

INT. MONKEY CAGE - CONTINUOUS

JEFFERSON (CONT'D)

No one takes me seriously.

LINCOLN

That's because you take yourself too seriously. Did you ever think of that?

JEFFERSON

We have an obligation to the animals who aren't as smart as we are.

LINCOLN

An obligation to do what?

JEFFERSON

To better our situation. You want to spend the rest of your life in this cage? We're prisoners! And everyone is too blind to see it.

LINCOLN

No one is blind --

(to himself)

Well, except the bats.

(back to Jefferson)

Look. We're here. We're fed. We're taken care of. We have doctors, for crying out loud. Kids love us.

JEFFERSON

Their kids.

LINCOLN

There's nothing we can do about it. All your activism. Do you really think you can achieve equal rights for zoo animals?

JEFFERSON

See how they brainwash you? There shouldn't be any such thing as a zoo animal. We're just animals. They're responsible for the zoo part.

LINCOLN

So we should -- what?

JEFFERSON

Unite! Rise up! Take our freedom back!

LINCOLN
That's impossible.

JEFFERSON
Nothing's impossible.

LINCOLN
You can't win.

JEFFERSON
So you should only fight if you
know you can win?

LINCOLN
Ummm...Kinda - yeah.

JEFFERSON
That's some life philosophy. Remind
me to write that down sometime so
I'll never forget it.

Disappointed, Jefferson slinks off to a dark corner.

LINCOLN
Jefferson, I --

JEFFERSON (O.S.)
-- good night.

Lincoln sighs, knowing this talk is over - for tonight.

EXT. ZOO MAIN GATE - MORNING

A beautiful, sunny day. Throngs of people enter the gates.
Kids run ahead of bag-holding, stroller-pushing parents.

Looking out of place in this crowd is ETHAN LATTE. A pale,
thin artist-poser-type, Ethan is bald, has a goatee and is
dressed all in black: turtleneck, sunglasses and blazer --
even though it's obviously hot out.

Ethan talks on a cell phone as he walks.

ETHAN
That's not going to happen. We're
shooting the scene just as I wrote
it. Tell them that Ethan Latte
doesn't compromise his art for
anything. -- Look, I'm in the
middle of something here. Kind of a
blind date. Never mind where. I'll
call you back.

He flips his phone closed. As the crowd disperses in different directions, we see that Ethan is with an attractive single MOM in her thirties and her 7-year-old DAUGHTER.

The daughter runs ahead. Ethan does little to hide his disdain for this outing.

MOM

All set?

ETHAN

Yes, let's ... zoo.

MOM

Sorry again about the mix-up. She really is supposed to be with her father today. It's really nice of you to come along.

Ethan takes out a DV camera and checks the gauges.

ETHAN

Uh-huh.

While looking through the lens to test light, Ethan steps in something, soiling his expensive, trendy shoes.

The leather shoes have distinctive ORANGE TIPS.

ETHAN

(to himself)

Wonderful.

EXT. CHIMP AREA - 10 MINUTES LATER

Ethan and the Mom approach the daughter, who hangs on the fence, trying to engage the chimps.

MOM

My sister says you make movies.
That's interes--.

ETHAN

-- Films. I make films. Movies have clichés and car chases.

Lincoln hears this exchange, perks up and comes down to sit closer to them.

MOM

I see. And what do your films have?

ETHAN

Meaningful stories. Strong, conflicted characters. Redeeming social commentary. See the difference?

MOM

Uh ... sure.

She is annoyed at his arrogance, but tries to make the best of it, for her daughter's sake.

MOM

I used to see lots of movies. All kids' stuff these days, though.

ETHAN

Mmm-hmm. I have a film selected in the Moonsong Film Festival.

The mom rolls her eyes and sips from a water bottle. Lincoln listens intently.

MOM

That's nice. Is that like a contest or something?

Ethan lets out a condescending laugh.

ETHAN

It's only the biggest independent film showcase in the world. You get recognized there and you can write your own ticket in Hollywood, baby.

In the middle of another water sip, she nearly chokes on Ethan's "baby." She's about to lean into him when:

DAUGHTER (O.S.)

Look, mom! He likes me!

The daughter is up on the monkey cage railing, leaning over.

MOM

Honey, don't climb on that.

She scurries ahead and helps her daughter down.

DAUGHTER

(whispers)

That Ethan guy is weird.

MOM
That's actually one of his better
qualities.

She turns back to Ethan, who is again talking on his cell phone, and checking himself out in the glass reflection of another section of the monkey area.

Lincoln comes up to the glass and mimics an oblivious Ethan. The mom and daughter laugh. Ethan hangs up.

MOM
Can you get a shot of us?

ETHAN
A ... shot?

MOM
Yeah. Take some video of us in
front of the monkeys.

ETHAN
What would be the point of that?

MOM
To remember what great fun we had
at the zoo.

Ethan sighs, checks his camera, the sunlight, and . . .

CUT TO:

20 MINUTES LATER

Ethan has set up an elaborate shoot, with barriers to hold patrons back - until he cues them to walk past as extras.

Lincoln watches, riveted. The mom and daughter are MORTIFIED as Ethan calls to them:

ETHAN
Again! and action!

The mom and daughter smile awkwardly and wave at the camera.

ETHAN
Don't wave! ... Define the moment!
Share the moment! Be the moment ...
Don't react! Act!

During the shooting, Lincoln holds his fingers up and frames the mom and daughter. His composition is better than Ethan's.

ETHAN

(groans)

Cut! Must you be so stiff?

MOM

Okay, look, we should really be getting home.

ETHAN

I was only trying to say something with the film.

MOM

You said plenty. Thanks. It's been a real . . . treat. I'll be sure to thank my sister for setting us up.

She takes her daughter's hand. As they walk away, the daughter looks back.

DAUGHTER

Bye - freak!

Ethan erases the footage and turns to leave, but realizes he has no idea which way the exit is.

EXT. CROCODILE PIT - 40 MINUTES LATER

Tired and sweating, Ethan is still trying to find the exit. He sits on a bench, puts his camera down and tries to make a cell phone call. No reception.

Frustrated, he gets up quickly, knocking his camera into the crocodile pit. It lands, intact, in a bush. MIKEY, the crocodile immediately eyes it.

Ethan starts to climb in. MIKEY moves, and Ethan thinks better of it and calls out.

ETHAN

Excuse me! A little help here! I need to speak with a zoo employee.

A small crowd gathers around the yelling Ethan.

INT. MONKEY CAGE - CONTINUOUS

Lincoln is relaxing in a hammock when BRAD, a free-flying bird lands nearby.

LINCOLN
What's all the commotion over
there? Did Mikey eat someone?

BRAD
Nah. Some guy dropped his video
camera in the pit.

LINCOLN
(perks)
Really?

BRAD
Yeah. No big --

LINCOLN
-- Get to Mikey. Quick! Tell him --

Suddenly, a family is at Lincoln's cage, peering in, so he slyly whispers something to Brad, who shrugs and flies off.

Now watched by the family, Lincoln scratches himself and swings on the hammock.

EXT. ZOO CROC PIT - MOMENTS LATER

Ethan with a portly ZOOKEEPER who takes his job very seriously, gesturing dramatically with his hands as he speaks.

ETHAN
Can't you just climb down there?
Isn't that your job?!

ZOOKEEPER
Not exactly, sir. But we can lure
the croc back inside - there - to
create a safe path - here - from
which we can retrieve your personal
belonging.

ETHAN
How long will that take?

ZOOKEEPER
Well, croc manipulation is by no
means an exact science, but I can
assure you we will do our best to
retrieve your personal belonging.

Brad lands on Mikey's head and whispers something to him. The croc looks puzzled at him. Brad just shrugs.

Suddenly, the croc moves for the camera.

ETHAN

He's moving! He's going to it! Do something!

ZOOKEEPER

He's just exhibiting instinctive behavior. Crocs are naturally very curious. An often overlooked fact about the giant reptile.

ETHAN

He's going to eat it!

ZOOKEEPER

(chuckles)

Oh, I doubt that, sir. He's not like a shark. If it's not food or food-smelling, he'll just --

Suddenly the croc opens its jaws and eats the camera.

ZOOKEEPER

-- well, hoo-dee-dumpkin. There's somethin' you don't see every day.

Ethan doesn't know whether to lash out or weep.

ETHAN

Your filthy, wretched zoo is going to pay for that.

ZOOKEEPER

I'm afraid the zoo is not responsible for personal belongings lost, stolen or damaged during your visit. Your admittance ticket is also a contract --

ETHAN

Oh, shut up!

He storms off, but not necessarily in the right direction, so he stops and turns back.

ETHAN

How do I get out of here!?

ZOOKEEPER

Oh that's easy. Down to the giraffes, turn right, through the tunnel and around the flamingo garden. If ya see hippos, you've gone too far!

ETHAN
How utterly....easy!

ZOOKEEPER
Enjoy the rest of your stay, sir.

Ethan storms off.

Mikey sits motionless in his pit

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CROCODILE PIT - NIGHT

Mikey still motionless. He hasn't moved.

LINCOLN (O.S.)
Bravo.

Lincoln climbs down next to Mikey and holds out his hand.

LINCOLN
Let's have it.

Mikey opens his jaws, revealing the camera, perfectly intact. Lincoln reaches, but Mikey CLAMPS shut.

Lincoln pulls his hand away just in time.

LINCOLN
Was that supposed to be funny?

Mikey's talk is dumb-sounding with the camera in his mouth.

MIKEY
What's in it for me?

LINCOLN
Nothing.

MIKEY
Well that's not good enough.

Lincoln sighs and looks around. He expected this to be a short visit.

LINCOLN
What would you like?

MIKEY
I don't know.

LINCOLN
Haven't you had quite a bit of time
to think about it?

MIKEY
I guess.

LINCOLN
How about some food?

MIKEY
Okay.

LINCOLN
Okay. You give me the camera, and
I'll see to it that that rock over
there has food on it first thing in
the morning.

MIKEY
Stuff I like?

LINCOLN
Absolutely. Right by that little
door over there. How's eight
o'clock?

Mikey thinks about it and finally sticks his tongue out, the camera sitting on it. Lincoln takes the slimy camera and wipes it off as best he can.

INT. MONKEY CAGE - LATER

Lincoln is testing the camera, learning its features, when Jefferson comes in.

JEFFERSON
And just what do you plan on doing
with that?

LINCOLN
Make a movie, write my own ticket
to Hollywood and get recognized at
the Moonsong Film Festival.

JEFFERSON
What? The Moon-who what festival?

Lincoln imitates Ethan, but just to amuse himself.

LINCOLN
It's only the biggest independent
film showcase in the world, baby.

JEFFERSON

When are you going to stop playing
and get serious?

Lincoln points the camera at his brother.

LINCOLN

Who's playing? C'mon, pout - oh,
you're already pouting.

JEFFERSON

Very funny.

LINCOLN

Okay, funny. Funny is good. If only
we had a banana peel.

Jefferson laughs. Lincoln is stunned.

LINCOLN

Was that a laugh?

JEFFERSON

No.

LINCOLN

Yes it was. I have it on tape.

JEFFERSON

It wasn't on.

LINCOLN

But I saw it. ... It's not a crime,
you know. Laughing.

JEFFERSON

I know.

LINCOLN

(joking)
But don't let me see it again! This
is serious business! I am an arteest!

JEFFERSON

And I'm going to bed.

He goes to his corner.

LINCOLN

Fine, be that way. But you'll never
work in this town again!

JEFFERSON (O.S.)

What?

LINCOLN
Never mind. Good night.

Lincoln fiddles some more with the camera.

EXT. ZOO SQUARE ENTRANCE - LATE EVENING

A long line of animals waits to get in.

EXT. ZOO SQUARE STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Lincoln points the camera at us, looking out from one side.

LINCOLN
Okay, this is called a screen test.

Opposite him is a FLAMINGO holding a sheet of paper.

FLAMINGO
You want us to talk?

LINCOLN
Yeah.

FLAMINGO
And humans are gonna see this?

LINCOLN
It's okay. Animals talk in movies
all the time. Just read the lines.
The important thing is to relax and
have fun.

He looks back into the camera. The flamingo opens his mouth
to speak and Lincoln cuts him off:

LINCOLN (O.S.)
And remember - you just discovered
you have a horrible disease and
that your children are actually
aliens from outer space.

The flamingo's face goes blank. He looks down at the page and
then back up at Lincoln.

LINCOLN (O.S.)
Whenever you're ready . . .

The flamingo can only manage a GULP and a GRUNT.

MONTAGE: SCREEN TESTS - NIGHT

We see various zoo animals through Lincoln's camera frame.

A male rhino:

RHINO
(deadpan)
You'll never take me alive,
coppers.

LINCOLN (O.S.)
Good. Try it again, a little
tougher. You're mean. Everyone's
afraid of you.

RHINO
(identical deadpan)
You'll never take me alive,
coppers.

A female gazelle:

GAZELLE
I know you don't lose me anymore.

LINCOLN (O.S.)
Love.

GAZELLE
What?

LINCOLN
You don't love me anymore.

GAZELLE
I never loved you. We're not even
the same species-- That's disgust--
oh! The line. Sorry. I get it.

A male OTTER stands silent for a beat, then suddenly looks
scared and points to the sky:

OTTER
Look out!!!!

Lincoln looks up from his camera, and checks his script.

LINCOLN
That was good, but the line is --

BONK! Lincoln gets hit on the head with a falling pine cone.

EXT. ZOO SQUARE - AN HOUR LATER

The tests are done. Lincoln starts packing up and sees Ross, watching curiously. She's conflicted throughout the scene.

LINCOLN

Oh, hey Ross. Didn't see you there.
C'mon down. Thanks for waiting.

ROSS

(dreamy)
Me?
(catches herself)
Oh, no. I'm not here to be part of
this movie thing.

She moves in closer to Lincoln, unable to hide her fascination with the camera.

LINCOLN

No?

ROSS

I'm here to scold you. Playing with
human people toys when they lock --
(points)
What does that do?

LINCOLN

It zooms the picture closer. Wanna
see?

ROSS

Of course not! -- okay.

Lincoln smiles and lets her try the camera. As she looks through, Ross reaches in front of the camera, trying to touch whatever is obviously zoomed in close in her view.

LINCOLN

You were scolding . . .?

ROSS

(still looking)
Huh? Right. People toys.

LINCOLN

You don't have to impress my
brother. He likes you.

Ross looks up from the camera.

ROSS

That has nothing to do with -- did he say something? What did he say?

LINCOLN

He doesn't have to say anything to me. I know.

(beat)

I also know he wouldn't mind if you were in the movie.

ROSS

Really? I don't know. That would be kinda -- okay! -- No, I couldn't. He'd be mad. . . wouldn't he?

LINCOLN

Yeah, probably.

(beat)

But what if you weren't actually in the movie?

Ross pretends to get it, nodding.

ROSS

Aaahhhhhh --

(gives up)

What do you mean?

CUT TO:

EXT. REPTILE HOUSE - NIGHT

A compelling aerial shot moves down and tracks left around a corner of the building as a scared-looking LEOPARD runs by at top speed. Some moments later, as the dust settles, an exhausted OSTRICH runs by in pursuit.

CUT TO:

Lincoln sitting high on the neck of Ben, the giraffe. The camera is fastened to Ben's head and his neck is bent low and turned, having provided the shot we just saw.

LINCOLN

Cut! That was great!

The giraffe slowly straightens his neck, lifting Lincoln above the crowd. He looks down to the ostrich.

LINCOLN

How did that feel? Was that alright?

OSTRICH

(winded)

I just don't think anyone will believe that I could catch him.

Murmurs of agreement from the animals.

LINCOLN

They only have to believe that you want to catch him.

Inspired, admiring approvals resonate. Lincoln is revered.

LINCOLN

Alright everyone. That's it for tonight. Remember, eight-o'clock tomorrow night. We'll be... where are we tomorrow?

He turns to Ross, who wears a cap and holds a clipboard.

ROSS

Gift shop.

LINCOLN

Gift shop. Eight o'clock. Get some rest, everyone. Great job tonight.

The giraffe puts Lincoln down next to Ross.

ROSS

You sure you wanna rip?

LINCOLN

Huh?

ROSS

Stop filming for the night.

LINCOLN

Oh, wrap. It's wrap. Yeah, I got a ... thing I gotta do.

ROSS

Oh, your ... nightly ... thing.

LINCOLN

Yeah, the thing. I'll see ya tomorrow.

Lincoln starts off.

ROSS

Alright then, have fun -- I mean,
if it's a fun thing.

Lincoln waves without turning around.

EXT. ZOO PATHWAY - SEVERAL MINUTES LATER

Lincoln is walking with his camera, elated. He passes a quiet, dark cage and stops. He thinks a moment and goes back.

INT. GORILLA CAGE AREA - NIGHT

Lincoln enters. No one seems to be around, but he suddenly hears a menacing GRUNT from a dark corner. Looking closer, Lincoln sees the glowing eyes of WASHINGTON, a huge, intimidating gorilla.

LINCOLN

Washington?

The gorilla GRUNTS again in the darkness.

LINCOLN

Hi. Sorry to disturb you.

WASHINGTON

Then why did you?

LINCOLN

I'm making a movie, and I need a
big tough guy. So I was wonder--

Washington suddenly ROARS and CHARGES at Lincoln, who drops the camera in fear and jumps up a tree.

LINCOLN

Yeeez, man. What's that all about?
We're on the same team here.

WASHINGTON

No we're not. Get out of here!

LINCOLN

I gotta get my camera. Can I get it
without you hurting me?

WASHINGTON

I don't know. Can you?

Washington picks up the camera, looks at it, then suddenly holds it up high as if he will smash it on the ground.

LINCOLN

Don't! It's not mine! It's borrowed. C'mon. Gimme a break. You don't want to do it, fine. A lot of others do, though. You'll be ruining it for everyone.

Washington puts the camera down, growling some more, then moves back to his dark-corner spot.

Lincoln climbs down, picks up the camera and scoots quickly to safety. Before leaving, he calls back in:

LINCOLN

What's with you, anyway?

Silence. Lincoln shakes his head and leaves.

EXT. ZOO PATHWAY - CONTINUOUS

Lincoln walks on and suddenly Jefferson is in his face.

JEFFERSON

Funny thing happened on the way to the rally.

LINCOLN

Huh?

JEFFERSON

Nobody showed up. It was me in front of a crowd of zero.

LINCOLN

There's an easy joke there, but I'm not going to say it.

JEFFERSON

Your little movie nonsense with this toy of our captors is setting back the cause.

Lincoln is angered by his brother's selfishness.

LINCOLN

Oh, here we go again. The cause. Freedom for all. So we can walk out into the street and get hit by a bus.

JEFFERSON

Getting out of this prison is the only thing that matters.

LINCOLN

-- to you.

JEFFERSON

You're not helping.

LINCOLN

And you're just jealous because everyone's more interested in doing what I want them to do.

JEFFERSON

They don't know any better.

LINCOLN

And you do?

JEFFERSON

Yes! Movies are pointless.

LINCOLN

You've never even seen one. Movies have a ... power. They can make you laugh, cry, and think in all kinds of new, exciting ways. They can ... they can change the world.

JEFFERSON

Have you been eating bugs off the orangutans again?

LINCOLN

That was one time.

JEFFERSON

How can you honestly think all that make-believe nonsense could possibly matter?

LINCOLN

They're stories. Everyone has one.

JEFFERSON

They're a waste of time.

Lincoln thinks. Eureka.

LINCOLN

Prove it.

JEFFERSON

What?

LINCOLN
Waste some time with me. Right now.

JEFFERSON
What? Where? --
(realizes)
Is that where you -- ? Figures.

LINCOLN
Come with me. ... C'mon.

JEFFERSON
Alright, fine. But only to show you
just how stupid movies are.

LINCOLN
Just give it a fair chance.

JEFFERSON
Yeah, yeah.

They head off together, Lincoln leading the way.

INT. GUARD HOUSE AIR VENT - LATER

Lincoln's movie-watching spot is far more cramped now that he's sharing it. Jefferson fidgets mercilessly.

The security office below is empty and dark, except for a small desk lamp.

JEFFERSON
How can you sit here every night?
Where are we?

Suddenly the office door opens.

LINCOLN
Shhhhhh.

JEFFERSON
(whispers)
This is stupid already.

Lincoln puts a finger to his lips. He's serious.

The Guard takes a DVD from its case and ceremoniously puts it in the player.

He adeptly works the remote through menus and starts the film. Onscreen we see an office building with a MEGAMULACORP sign on top. A narrator speaks in voice-over:

NARRATOR (V.O.)

What you about to see is true. The people involved are not actors.

Lincoln sighs in disappointment, but Jefferson is intrigued.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Ten years ago, nine employees of Megamulacorp lost their life savings while company executives got rich.

Onscreen image cuts to a group of sad-looking people.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

These employees fought the system, beat the odds and won their justice. This is their story.

Lincoln shakes his head and leans to Jefferson.

LINCOLN

(whispers)

This is a documentary. They're boring. We can come back another ni--

JEFFERSON

Shhhhhh.

Lincoln suddenly realizes - of course - this is exactly the kind of movie Jefferson would be into.

And into it he is. Riveted. Lincoln tries again to watch.

OLD WOMAN (V.O.)

Worked there all my life. Thought I could trust 'em. Guess I was wrong.

Bored already, Lincoln's eyes wander. He starts inspecting and biting his nails.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. AIR VENTS - 90 MINUTES LATER

Jefferson in the same spot, watching. Lincoln lies next to him, fast asleep, drool hanging from his open mouth.

As the credits roll, the guard leaves the office. Jefferson discovers the sleeping Lincoln and shakes him.

LINCOLN

Huh? What? Who? I'm ready. -- Oh it's over...So, what did you think?

Jefferson has a determined, inspired look.

JEFFERSON
Where's that camera?

He starts away down the vent.

LINCOLN
Ha. You see? I told you. Movies can
-- wait, my camera?

Lincoln follows.

LINCOLN
Why do you want my camera?

EXT. CHIMP AREA - DAY

The chimps draw their usual crowd. Lincoln and Jefferson sit in a hammock, concealed by tree foliage. They speak softly to mask their conversation from the watchful humans.

LINCOLN
I don't know. Documentaries are so boring.

JEFFERSON
We finally have a chance to tell our story. Really tell it.

LINCOLN
I was telling a story.

JEFFERSON
About what?

LINCOLN
An unlikely hero who saves the world.

JEFFERSON
From ... what?

LINCOLN
(duh)
The bad guys.

JEFFERSON
Okay. And your hero is...?

LINCOLN
(proudly)
Featherman!
(MORE)

LINCOLN (cont'd)
 (reluctant)
 Stuart.

JEFFERSON
 The ostrich? A superhero?

LINCOLN
 Featherman actually has no super powers. He's just highly trained --

JEFFERSON
 -- Stuart?

LINCOLN
 He's the best actor I could find. He does this thing with his eyebrows.
 (imitates)
 It's really freaky.

JEFFERSON
 In a documentary, no one would have to act. We'd all be ourselves.

LINCOLN
 What about all the work we've done?

Jefferson fishes for an adequate answer. A-ha!

JEFFERSON
 You've made everyone comfortable in front of the camera.

LINCOLN
 You mean like practice?

JEFFERSON
 Rehearsal. The point is, you were right. Movies can change the world. So let's change ours. Together.

LINCOLN
 Together?

JEFFERSON
 Our story. Our movie.

LINCOLN
 I get to work the camera?

JEFFERSON
 Who else could do it?
 (beat)
 Partners?

Jefferson puts out his hand. Lincoln shakes it.

LINCOLN
Partners.

EXT ZOO GIFT SHOP - NIGHT

The cast and crew busily set up the shoot in and out of the unlocked, open gift shop.

Lincoln and Jefferson arrive to see all the confused, suspicious faces.

LINCOLN
Okay, everyone. A little change in plans. Our movie is . . . canceled.

The group groans and looks accusingly to Jefferson, who frantically coaches Lincoln in whispers:

JEFFERSON
Replaced. Improved. Fixed! Put a positive spin on it!

LINCOLN
(to group)
Improved, actually. It's a new movie. A documentary about life in the zoo. Jefferson's going to help. He knows a lot about this kinda stuff.

Ross waves to Jefferson, then coaxes Lincoln into the shop.

INT. GIFT SHOP - CONTINUOUS

ROSS
We're already set up here. Are we gonna have to move?

LINCOLN
Uh, yeah. I guess --

Jefferson has followed them in.

JEFFERSON
-- No. The gift shop is fine. Let's do a scene right here.

LINCOLN
Great! ... What scene?

Jefferson picks up a blue, badly made, stuffed kangaroo.

JEFFERSON
Exploitation.

Jefferson walks out. Lincoln nods. As soon as Jefferson is gone, Lincoln stops nodding and turns to Ross.

LINCOLN
What does that mean?

ROSS
People making money selling stuff
that looks like us.

LINCOLN
That's bad?

ROSS
Definitely bad.

LINCOLN
Alright then. Exploration it is.

CUT TO:

INT. GIFT SHOP - LATER

A KANGAROO holds the stuffed toy and looks at the camera. Lincoln films while Jefferson observes, off camera.

LINCOLN
Don't you think blue kangaroos are
more fun and exciting?

KANGAROO
(confused)
No.

LINCOLN
Human people do.

A crowd of animals has gathered behind Jefferson (and the camera). They are listening, getting steamed up, too.

KANGAROO
What do they know about kangaroos?

LINCOLN
Hard to say. They know a lot about
merchandise though. What sells and
what doesn't. That sort of thing.

The kangaroo gets angry, still holding the doll.

KANGAROO

Nobody asked me.

LINCOLN

Who cares what you think? You live
in a cage.

That does it. The kangaroo RIPS the head off the doll.
Stuffing POOFS out and flies in the air.

Before Jefferson can react, the crowd of animals bursts into
the shop and begins RANSACKING it.

Lincoln runs around and films all he can, while Jefferson
desperately tries to stop the chaos.

JEFFERSON

No, no. Stop! This is not the
point! We can't do this!

Ross tries to help control the situation, while Franklin is
torn between helping Ross help Jefferson or joining in the
mayhem which looks like fun.

Finally, Jefferson finds Lincoln as he excitedly tries to
catch all he can on tape. They yell over the ruckus.

LINCOLN

This is great!

JEFFERSON

No, it's not. It's terrible. We're
just proving we're the mindless
animals they say we are.

Lincoln stops the camera and lets that sink in.

JEFFERSON

Can you get them to stop? . . .
Please?

LINCOLN

(to the crowd)
Cut!

Everyone stops in a sudden silence and looks at Lincoln.
Jefferson can't believe his brother's control.

LINCOLN

This is not the scene we want. To
make our point - and it's a good
one - we have to be smart and
civilized. For now, take five.

The animals look to each other, confused, and each begins to take what's left of the merchandise from the shelves.

LINCOLN

Minutes. Take five minutes. Like, a break.

Understanding now, they all leave the shop, leaving Lincoln, Jefferson and Ross.

LINCOLN

It's my fault. I shouldn't have riled them up like that.

ROSS

It's okay. You couldn't have known they'd riot.

(to Jefferson)

It's good, though. He got through to them. They're mad.

JEFFERSON

We have to be more than just mad. We have to be smart and convincing.

LINCOLN

You need a central story. Something simple and emotional that the audience can relate to. But it has to be an example of the larger point.

Something triggers in Jefferson's mind. He lights up.

JEFFERSON

(to himself)

An example. . . the tigers.

(to Lincoln)

You're a genius!

LINCOLN

Thanks. What about the tigers?

JEFFERSON

They're our story. C'mon!

Jefferson runs out. Lincoln turns to Ross.

LINCOLN

Could you get everyone back in here, and --

ROSS

-- clean up. I'm on it.

LINCOLN

Thanks.

Lincoln leaves.

EXT. TIGER CAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Lincoln catches up with Jefferson.

LINCOLN

So what's their story?

JEFFERSON

New baby. First generation
captivity.

LINCOLN

And they're having trouble?

As if on cue, the baby crying starts from inside the cage.

JEFFERSON

Lots. . . The Dad is not going to
be cooperative.

LINCOLN

You sure?

JEFFERSON

Pretty sure.

EXT. ZOO'S TIGER AREA - CONTINUOUS

Jefferson enters. Lincoln follows close behind, already
filming. The baby tiger cries throughout.

FATHER TIGER

What are you doing back ---
(notices Lincoln)
What is he doing?

JEFFERSON

Don't get upset. We're making a
movie.

FATHER TIGER

A what?

JEFFERSON

It's a documentary about our
struggles here.

The tiger growls.

FATHER TIGER
Would you like to see struggle?

JEFFERSON
There's no need to threaten.

LINCOLN
It's okay. Threats are good. Very dramatic.

JEFFERSON
Yeah but, ... I could get hurt.

The tiger LUNGES for them and they both shoot up trees.

FATHER TIGER
I can climb trees, you know.

MOTHER TIGER
But you will not.

The three guys look at her, somewhat surprised.

MOTHER TIGER
If there's a chance this will help,
we will cooperate
(to her mate)
-- fully.
(to Jefferson)
What do we need to do?

JEFFERSON
Just let us document.

MOTHER TIGER
Document?

JEFFERSON
Film. With the camera.

LINCOLN
Pretend we're not here.

The filming resumes, awkward at first, but soon the parents relax, and Lincoln gets some compelling shots of the crying baby and the tigers' efforts to console him.

Interview shot of mother tiger.

MOTHER TIGER
Part of the problem is scheduling.
All babies need a schedule.
(MORE)

MOTHER TIGER (cont'd)
 Ours doesn't always match the
 zoo's. And I think that confuses
 him. Makes him upset. I think.

Looking up over the camera, Lincoln gives Jefferson a covert
 wink. Jefferson nods.

All is well when suddenly Lincoln looks at Jefferson again -
 only this time in a PANIC.

JEFFERSON
 What?

Lincoln slowly hands the camera to Jefferson. Jefferson looks
 through.

POV VIEWFINDER: WARNING! LOW BATTERY! flashes onscreen.

JEFFERSON
 (to tigers)
 Thanks. That's all for tonight.

LINCOLN
 We'll be back tomorrow.

JEFFERSON
 We hope!

They quickly climb out. The tigers watch confused. Even the
 baby stops crying long enough to watch the monkeys go.

EXT. TREETOPS - CONTINUOUS

Jefferson and Lincoln swinging home, in silhouette.

JEFFERSON (V.O.)
 Can we fix it?

LINCOLN (V.O.)
 We need more batteries. Or to
 charge this one.

JEFFERSON (V.O.)
 How are we going to do that?

LINCOLN (V.O.)
 I have an idea.

EXT. ZOO CENTER - JUST BEFORE DAWN

Under background MUSIC, we see Lincoln speaking to Franklin,
 BRAD and three other birds at a YOU ARE HERE directory sign.

Lincoln occasionally points to the sign with a stick. Although we can't hear him, it's obvious he is relaying a strategic plan.

When he finishes, Franklin raises his hand and asks an unheard question. Lincoln reacts with dismay and, by way of answer, he slowly points to the big "You Are Here" spot.

EXT. VARIOUS ZOO AREAS - DAY

Establishing shot: the zoo is packed with loud, excited people.

Hiding behind a tree, Franklin puts headphones in his ears and turns on his iPod.

CUE MUSIC MONTAGE - Jimi Hendrix: Crosstown Traffic

Franklin slips and ducks around the zoo - COMPLETELY UNNOTICED by humans -- and PICKPOCKETS them, taking video camera batteries and accessories from bags and backpacks.

He tosses whatever he pilfers up to the birds, who catch the items in flight and bring them to ...

EXT. CHIMP AREA - DAY

Lincoln sits hidden from view behind rocks.

A bird flies in, carrying a camera battery. He lands on a branch above Lincoln and drops the battery. Lincoln catches it and tests it in the camera. It fits. He gives the bird the thumbs-up, and the bird flies away.

A few moments later another bird flies in carrying a different sized battery. Lincoln checks it, shakes his head and tosses it back to the bird who catches it and flies off.

EXT. LOST AND FOUND - DAY

When the attendant is not looking, Brad appears, places the rejected battery on the counter and flies away.

The attendant turns back and is surprised to see the battery. She takes it and puts it on a shelf -- alongside SEVERAL OTHER video camera batteries, of all shapes and sizes.

INT. MONKEY CAGE - MORNING

Lincoln sits behind the rocks checking a battery. It's good. He puts it with several others and signals to the delivery bird by dragging his finger across his neck. They're done.

END MUSIC MONTAGE

EXT. TIGER AREA - NIGHT

Lincoln works the camera as Jefferson speaks to the Mother Tiger, who holds the baby in a rare moment of quiet sleep.

MOTHER TIGER

It's the only life he'll ever know.

JEFFERSON

Captivity?

MOTHER TIGER

Yes.

The father comes into the shot. Calm. Concerned.

JEFFERSON

(to him)

And how does that make you feel?

FATHER TIGER

(thinks)

Sad, I guess.

Lincoln zooms the shot in close, then CUTS. The brothers look to each other with pride, almost disbelief.

LINCOLN

I think we got it.

JEFFERSON

I think so, too.

They nod their thanks to the Mother Tiger and quietly leave.

INT. MONKEY CAGE - LATE NIGHT

Jefferson by himself reading "Public Speaking for Dummies". Ross knocks and Jefferson scrambles to hide the book.

ROSS

Hi.

JEFFERSON
Hi, Ross. C'mon in.

ROSS
Where's Lincoln?

JEFFERSON
Taking care of some business. He'll
be back in a little while.

ROSS
Oh, no. I wasn't coming to see him.
He just wasn't here. Isn't here.

JEFFERSON
Oh.

ROSS
So what's new?

JEFFERSON
(toying)
Oh nothing really. Except that we
finished filming tonight.

ROSS
Oh, that's nice--
(realizes)
You what? You're done.
Congratulations!

She hugs him, and they awkwardly de-tangle themselves.
Jefferson clears his throat.

ROSS
That's really great. I'm so proud --
we're all so proud.

JEFFERSON
Well, we couldn't have done it
without everyone's help. Especially
yours.

ROSS
Oh, I didn't do much.

JEFFERSON
Sure you did.

ROSS
Thanks.

JEFFERSON
You're welcome.

They share yet another long, awkward moment.

ROSS
So where is Lincoln?

JEFFERSON
Taking care of some business.

ROSS
Ah.

JEFFERSON
Yeah.

INT. ZOO OFFICE - NIGHT

Lincoln sits alone at a worker's cluttered desk, clicking the mouse of a computer. The screen shows a website: FLYTIX.COM, with airplane and ticket logo. He reads and types.

LINCOLN
Destination? Hollywood. Passengers?
Two. Credit Card . . . ?

On the wall is a post-it note with a list of work-related numbers. He drags his finger down the list until he finds:

LINCOLN
Travel account.

He smiles as he types in the numbers.

EXT. ZOO SQUARE - NIGHT

The square is packed with animals. Behind the "stage" area, a huge sheet has been hung taut to act as a screen.

Franklin hooks the DV camera (red, yellow, white) to the zoo's AV equipment. He seems to know what's he's doing.

From the side of the stage, Lincoln, Jefferson and Ross watch as the place fills to capacity. Jefferson is visibly nervous.

JEFFERSON
(to himself)
...Just some opening remarks.

LINCOLN
You don't have to do this.

JEFFERSON
I can do this.

From the other side of the stage, Franklin turns off the overhead lights, leaving one like a spotlight shining on the stage. The crowd murmur dies down to a still silence.

JEFFERSON

Maybe you better do this.

LINCOLN

I'm on it.

Lincoln bounds on stage like a rock star to enthusiastic applause. We waves, milking the attention.

LINCOLN

I'd like to thank you all for coming to tonight's premiere of "In the Cage". This is your movie. Your story. Your hard work, sacrifice and honesty are what brought us here. Wait, there was one other thing. One very important someone whose strength and vision made this movie a reality. He's a very special animal...

He looks to Jefferson.

LINCOLN

... And I'm not just saying that because he's my brother. Let's give a big hand to the genius behind this movie ... Jefferson!

Lincoln leads the clapping and the crowd joins in.

Jefferson waves and nods sheepishly from the sidelines while Ross proudly goes wild next to him.

When the applause subside, some JOKER animal in the back calls out:

JOKER ANIMAL (O.S.)

Speech!

LINCOLN

Alright, that's not funny.

The crowd suppresses a laugh. Jefferson takes it in stride.

LINCOLN

Let's watch the movie, shall we?

The light on Lincoln fades and sheet/screen suddenly glows with projected light.

The movie begins with a series of close-ups of cage bars and locks. Jefferson's voice comes in under the picture, a smooth, confident V.O. narrator.

JEFFERSON (V.O.)

It looks harmless enough from the outside, but don't be fooled. Life in a zoo is no different than life in prison. Except for one thing. Those in prison, it can be assumed, have committed some crime.

The animal audience watches, intrigued. The shot switches to Stuart, the ostrich, looking helpless and hopeless.

OSTRICH

I never did anything wrong.

Shots of other animals, looking sad, in their cages.

JEFFERSON

So why is it that we are forced to live in these cages, unable to roam free as we are meant to.

(dramatic pause)

Unable to form the family bonds that are supposed to be so natural.

The film cuts to the tiger footage. The audience remains engrossed as they feel for the crying baby tiger.

IN THE WINGS:

Lincoln motions for Jefferson to follow him. While the crowd continues to watch, the two brothers quietly duck away.

INT. ZOO BATHROOM - MINUTES LATER

Jefferson at the sink. He's just finished splashing his face and looks up into the mirror.

He's STARTLED to see Lincoln standing behind him, menacingly holding up a STRAIGHT RAZOR that flashes in the light.

JEFFERSON

Ahhh!!! Holy smokes! What are you-?

Lincoln laughs. Jefferson regains his breath.

LINCOLN

Sorry, I've always wanted to do that. Here you go, little brother. Time to humanize.

He hands Jefferson the razor and squirts shaving cream into his own hand.

JEFFERSON
You're sure about this?

LINCOLN
Of course.

He puts shaving cream all over his neck, chin and cheeks, and with another razor, expertly removes a section of hair .

In a MUSIC MONTAGE, Lincoln and Jefferson shave their whole bodies then get dressed in mini-outfits: jeans, trendy striped shirts, sportcoats and hip shoes.

They admire themselves in the full-length mirror.

Lincoln is completely bald, but Jefferson opted for leaving black hair on top of his head in a mod style.

JEFFERSON
Where'd you get all this stuff?

LINCOLN
I know people.

JEFFERSON
(thinks)
No you don't.

Lincoln shrugs and checks his watch.

LINCOLN
We better get back.

They head out the door.

JEFFERSON (O.S.)
How come you get a watch?

EXT. ZOO SQUARE - 90 MINUTES LATER

The animal audience still watching the screen. Their sadness has changed to determination. They're inspired.

JEFFERSON (V.O.)
Our day of freedom will come. It is
what's right. It is our destiny.

Finale music swells, and the crowd bursts into cheers.

Lincoln and Jefferson arrive back in the wings just in time. They couldn't be prouder.

LINCOLN
You did it.

JEFFERSON
We did it.

They shake hands, then yank each other into a brotherly hug.

The animals swarm over to Lincoln and Jefferson, ready to congratulate them, but the whole crowd STOPS DEAD, STUNNED SILENT when they see the shaved, dressed chimps.

Ross, in front, GULPS.

ROSS
I see you guys had a makeover thing while we, um ... a little extreme perhaps, but nice. It could work.
(beat)
I like the shoes.

LINCOLN
(to everyone)
I can explain. We're glad you liked the movie, and I'm proud to announce that Jefferson and I are leaving - tonight - to take "In the Cage" to the Moonsong Film Festival in Hollywood.

CROWD
Oooooohhhhh....

LINCOLN
If we win, uh ... I mean when we win, everyone will see our movie.

CROWD
Hooray!

Relieved, the animals resume their congratulations with back slapping and handshakes.

Franklin approaches the brothers with a Polaroid camera.

FRANKLIN
You two.

Lincoln and Jefferson turn together in a smiling pose. Franklin SNAPS the picture. As it comes out the front he hands it to Lincoln.

ROSS (O.S.)
 Folks! Excuse me. If everyone will
 come this way . . . We can continue
 this party in style.

She leads them to a nearby clearing where a "premiere party"
 has been set up with snack carts and soda machines. On the
 center table is an ice sculpture of a person in a bathtub.

The animals pick up the pace, pass Ross and dig in.

CUT TO:

INSERT THEATER: Alone, Lincoln puts the movie tape with the
 camera in a leather bag, which he carries on his shoulder.

He looks at the developing Polaroid of him and Jefferson.
 After it comes into view, he puts it in the camera bag.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

Jefferson and Ross at the party.

ROSS
 It really is great.

JEFFERSON
 Thanks.

ROSS
 So you're leaving?

JEFFERSON
 Flight's first thing in the
 morning. We gotta be outta here.

ROSS
 Oh.

JEFFERSON
 It's like three days. We'll be back
 before you miss us.

ROSS
 I miss you already.

Jefferson is surprised. Ross realizes she said that out loud.

ROSS
 I mean - I just meant... Good luck.

JEFFERSON
 Thanks.

LINCOLN

-- Because I only have two plane tickets, that's why not! Me and you.
(calms)
Look, little brother, I'm glad you asked her. That's a big step.

Lincoln looks over Jefferson's shoulder at something.

JEFFERSON

It's okay. She'll understand. She's very ... what's the word I'm looking for?

LINCOLN

Packed.

Suddenly Ross runs up to them, carrying several packed bags.

ROSS

Hi guys! This is so exciting!

JEFFERSON

Yeah ... Ross ... The thing is.

ROSS

What? What is the thing? I can't go. You're saying I can't go. That's the thing.

JEFFERSON

There are only two tickets. One for Lincoln --

Lincoln holds up the tickets. Suddenly a big gorilla hand comes into frame and takes one. Lincoln reacts.

WASHINGTON (O.S.)

-- and one for me.

LINCOLN

Hey! Give that back!

Washington inspects the ticket.

WASHINGTON

I'll be joining you on your trip.

LINCOLN

I don't think so.

WASHINGTON

I wasn't asking.

LINCOLN

Yeah, well as much as I'd enjoy your delightful company, this is our trip. So go back to your cave, Kong.

Lincoln tries to snatch the ticket back from Washington, but can't get clear before Washington grabs him by the throat.

JEFFERSON

Whoa-whoa! Wait a sec! Let go of him! What's going on here?

LINCOLN

(choked)

I think he wants a ticket.

JEFFERSON

Put him down!

Washington drops Lincoln, who lands breathing heavily.

JEFFERSON

(to Washington)

What's this about?

WASHINGTON

(seething)

I would like... very much... to accompany you to Hollywood.

JEFFERSON

Well, you can't. Sorry.

WASHINGTON

One ticket for me. One for him.

Washington points to Lincoln.

JEFFERSON

What about me?

WASHINGTON

You go in here.

He reveals a giant duffle bag.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Avoid the big ...city ... crowds.

Jefferson suddenly looks nervous. Lincoln has regained his breath and pulls Jefferson aside.

LINCOLN
Don't listen to him. He's just
trying to scare you.

JEFFERSON
(scared)
Maybe he could, you know, protect us.

LINCOLN
And who'd protect us from him?

WASHINGTON
We'd better get going. We don't
want to miss our flight.

LINCOLN
No way. This trip is about the
movie. The movie you didn't want to
be a part of.

JEFFERSON
He's right, Washington. I'm sorry.

WASHINGTON
(re duffle bag)
There's room for your friend. And
all her luggage.

Jefferson pauses. He looks at Ross, who tries to hide the
fact that she's suddenly beaming with hope.

LINCOLN
Alright, fine. You win. Hey,
everyone! What does an 800-pound
gorilla get? Anything he wants.
Ha-ha.
(to Jefferson and Ross)
Get in the bag and let's go.

CUT TO:

ROSS AND FRANKLIN

Ross holds Franklin by the shoulders. He has his headphones
in, so Ross talks loudly.

ROSS
Now I'll only be gone a few days.
You'll be alright, alright?

Franklin nods.

ROSS

Just stay out of trouble. Practice your skateboarding. I want to see new tricks when I come back, okay?

Franklin nods again.

CUT TO:

ZOO CLEARING - MOMENTS LATER

The animals wish the group well. Jefferson helps Ross put her luggage into the duffle. Then they climb in. The bag looks ridiculously heavy, but Washington picks it up with ease.

He follows Lincoln, who has walked ahead, fuming.

EXT. ZOO FRONT GATE - A MINUTE LATER

Lincoln and Washington arrive. As Lincoln fishes in his jeans pocket, Washington reaches for the lock as if he will rip it off to free them. Lincoln stops him.

LINCOLN

Whoa, whoa, Mighty Joe.

Lincoln produces a key from his pocket.

LINCOLN

No destruction. See this as the first of many things on this trip we're going to do my way. Got it?

Lincoln unlocks the gate and swings it open.

WASHINGTON

Of course.

LINCOLN

Why are you coming anyway? What's in it for you?

WASHINGTON

It's personal.

LINCOLN

Great - thanks for sharing.

WASHINGTON

You're welcome.

They walk out.

EXT. STREET - MINUTES LATER

At a corner, Lincoln stands alone next to the duffle. He hails a cab. When the cab stops, Lincoln calls in.

LINCOLN
Pop the trunk?

The trunk pops open and Lincoln reaches for the enormous bag.

But in one fluid motion, Washington appears from behind a tree, grabs the bag, puts it in the trunk, climbs into the trunk himself and closes the hood.

Lincoln makes as if he did all that and gets in the backseat.

LINCOLN (O.S.)
Airport.

The cab pulls away.

EXT. AIRPORT - 20 MINUTES LATER

The cab idles far from the curbside check-in crowd. Lincoln and Washington (with the duffle) duck inside the terminal.

INT. AIRPORT- CONTINUOUS

Lincoln and Washington look around.

LINCOLN
We gotta find you some clothes. But first, gimme your ticket. I'll do all the talking.

WASHINGTON
You have my ticket.

LINCOLN
No I don't. You took it. I still have the scar.

Lincoln points to his neck.

WASHINGTON
You took it back.

LINCOLN
(panicked)
No I didn't!

WASHINGTON
Then Jefferson did.

Lincoln is already unzipping the duffle.

LINCOLN
Do you have the other ticket!?

JEFFERSON
(from within)
Nope.

Lincoln glares at Washington.

WASHINGTON
Somebody took it.

LINCOLN
Yes! You! You took it! From me! And that, not so coincidentally, is when everything started going wrong!

Jefferson pokes his head out.

JEFFERSON
Calm down. It has to be around here somewhere.

LINCOLN
No, actually, it doesn't! The truth is, it could be anywhere. Anywhere!

CUT TO:

EXT ZOO SQUARE - SIMULTANEOUS

Bouncing to his music, Franklin sweeps up after the party. He unknowingly pushes the missing ticket onto a trash heap.

JEFFERSON (V.O.)
You're exaggerating.

INT. AIRPORT - SIMULTANEOUS

Back to the gang.

LINCOLN
(fake calm)
You're right. There are a lot of places where that ticket cannot be. Unfortunately, one of those places seems to be here with us!

Ross pokes her head out of the bag.

ROSS

Ahem! Guys. I think the idea is to keep a low profile.

JEFFERSON

She's right. Let's just think of a plan. We can fix this.

WASHINGTON

(to Lincoln)

I take the ticket, and you get in the bag.

LINCOLN

No way! You've messed up enough already. I'm not having you talking to people and getting us sent... who-knows-where. If anyone's getting in that bag, it's you!

Lincoln suddenly falls into thought, glancing back and forth between the bag and Washington. Jefferson catches on.

JEFFERSON

That's imposs--

LINCOLN

-- Nothing's impossible.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT - MINUTES LATER

Now carrying the VIDEO CAMERA BAG over his shoulder, Lincoln stands by himself next to the duffle bag, which is even more stuffed. It looks as though the seams will burst.

Lincoln begins walking away, then turns back and snaps his fingers at the bag.

The bag STANDS UP, thanks to Washington's HANDS AND FEET sticking out holes cut into the bottom. He walks behind Lincoln, revealing all Ross' luggage which has been left behind to make room.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT TICKET COUNTER - MINUTES LATER

Lincoln checks the bag. The COUNTER REP looks at the scale and shows surprise. The scale shows FIFTY POUNDS.

COUNTER REP
Only fifty pounds. Looks much heavier than that.

LINCOLN
I don't like hotel pillows.

COUNTER REP
So you bring your own? What a great idea!

PULL BACK WIDE TO REVEAL

The duffle bag is on the scale, but Washington's foot is sticking out onto the floor, taking all the weight.

While the counter rep types, Washington switches feet so he can maneuver onto the conveyor belt behind the counter rep. The scale momentarily shows full weight: 950 pounds.

The counter rep stops typing and does a double-take, but the scale number suddenly returns to 50. Washington's other foot has reached the floor behind her.

The rep shakes it off and easily hoists the bag -- with Washington's help - onto the conveyor.

Lincoln watches anxiously as the oversized bag moves away.

COUNTER REP
Sir? . . . Sir?

Lincoln snaps from his trance. She hands him his boarding pass.

COUNTER REP
Your boarding pass. Gate Seven B.
Have a good trip. Sleep well!

She smiles at her cleverness, so Lincoln does too. He looks down the conveyor belt again, but the bag is gone.

CUT TO:

AIRPORT SECURITY GATE - MINUTES LATER

Lincoln approaches the gate, the camera bag on his shoulder. He watches those before him to see what this is all about.

When it's his turn, he puts the camera bag on the moving belt and watches nervously as it goes into the machine. The GUARD holds a plastic bowl out to Lincoln.

GUARD
Keys? Loose change? Cell phone?

Lincoln just shrugs and shakes his head, so the guard motions him through.

Lincoln passes through the gate without any alarm. On the other side, he gets his camera bag, then stops to notice a TODDLER being scanned with an electronic wand. Lincoln walks on and we see, waiting for their turn behind the TODDLER, are an ELDERLY MAN, a NUN and a fully decorated MILITARY OFFICER.

INT. AIRPLANE - 20 MINUTES LATER

Lincoln finds his window seat and settles in, glad that everything is back on plan. He looks out the window and is surprised to see Ross' luggage by itself out on the runway.

LINCOLN
(to himself)
Hey, isn't that --?

BOOM! The luggage suddenly EXPLODES and security forces rush in to inspect. Lincoln winces.

Then he sees a runway worker loading luggage onto his plane.

When he grabs the giant duffel, Washington's feet come out the bottom and he "walks" to the conveyor belt.

Lincoln smiles.

STACY (O.S.)
Magazine, sir?

Lincoln looks up to see STACY, a blond mannequin of a flight attendant, holding magazines.

STACY (CONT'D)
We have Global News Today, Science
Today, Gourmet Today, Investing
Today, Fashion Today and Movie Talk.

Lincoln perks up, takes Movie Talk and flips through it.

LINCOLN (V.O.)
(in his head)
Look at all this glitz and glamour.
Hollywood is definitely the life.
(MORE)

LINCOLN (V.O.) (cont'd)
 And I'm almost there. Whoa, she's
 with him? What's up with that?

He comes across a feature on the Moonsong Film Festival.

LINCOLN (V.O.)
 Huh. Moonsong. It's a sign. Let's
 see what it says...
 (reading to himself)
 Once a year, Hollywood's elite
 gathers in the mountainside town of
 Rockbluff, Colorado for a three-day
 event showcasing the year's best
 independent movies.

Lincoln sighs, closes his eyes dreamily and lays his head
 back. After a moment or two of bliss . . .

His eyes POP OPEN in PANIC. He looks back down at the
 magazine, then stands up on his seat.

LINCOLN
 Rockbluff, Colorado?!

Stacy, the flight attendant swoops over to him.

STACY
 Sir, I'll have to ask you to take
 your seat and remain calm.

LINCOLN
 I'm on the wrong plane! I thought I
 was going to Hollywood.

STACY
 It's okay. There's no airport in
 Hollywood. This is a Los Angeles
 flight. You can --

LINCOLN
 -- No - I'm supposed to go to
 Rockbluff, Colorado! I gotta get
 off! Don't shut that door!

Passengers are freaking out at the strange dwarf causing a
 scene. TRACY, another plastic-perfect attendant comes by.

TRACY
 What's the trouble?

STACY
 Says he's on the wrong plane.

LINCOLN
Knows he's on the wrong plane.

STACY
 Needs to go to Rockbluff, Colorado.

TRACY
 (perks up)
 For the Moonsong Film Festival?

LINCOLN
 (sighs relief)
 Yes . . . Thank you. If you could
 just open the door.

TRACY
 Are you, like, famous?

Lincoln sees his opportunity and plays along.

LINCOLN
 Well, I guess you might say that.
 Name's Lincoln. I'm a director.

Stacy and Tracy GASP, and start jockeying for position, straightening their hair, and blinking a lot. Lincoln plays into them.

LINCOLN
 Haven't I seen you two in something?
 That movie about the genius super-
 models who save the world? That was
 you, wasn't it?

They giggle modestly.

No.	STACY	No.	TRACY
-----	-------	-----	-------

LINCOLN
 It wasn't?! Well, it shoulda been!
 Look, I just need a small favor.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPLANE DOOR - A MINUTE LATER

Stacy and Tracy escort Lincoln back out of the plane.

STACY
 Your ticket's at your new gate.

LINCOLN
Thanks. I just need my bag.

STACY
Already brought up. It's back
inside there.

LINCOLN
Thanks, Tracy.

STACY
I'm Stacy!

TRACY
I'm Tracy!

LINCOLN
And don't ever change.

Their giggling is silenced only by the plane door closing.

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL GATE - A MINUTE LATER

No one is around. Lincoln comes back in from the plane and looks around. The only bag is a large plaid suitcase with a NOTE on it.

Lincoln rushes to it and reads the note.

INSERT NOTE: Passenger Lincoln.

LINCOLN
Uh, no... wrong bag. Hello? Not
mine. Anyone?

He looks to the window just in time to see his plane take off. As it climbs, he walks toward the window in a daze. He keeps walking until -

THUD. His forehead hits the glass. It doesn't seem to phase him. He just watches the plane disappear.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPLANE - A HALF-HOUR LATER

En route to Denver, Lincoln sits between a fast-asleep rocker teen and an overweight businessman juggling files, coffee and a laptop in the cramped space.

Lincoln looks worried. Although racked with guilt, he can't help but steal glances at the romantic comedy playing silently on the plane's small movie screen.

ETHAN (O.S.)

Could this be any more ridiculous?

Lincoln PERKS UP at the familiar voice, coming from the aisle seat in the row in front of him.

So he slowly unbuckles his belt and stands on his seat, cautiously leaning forward. Peeking.

Sure enough, it's Ethan Latte, blabbing to the cute female traveler next to him. She wears headphones, trying to enjoy the movie. Ethan watches without headphones, commenting loudly. She does her best to ignore him without being rude.

ETHAN

And we're supposed to believe that?

(leaning to her)

Why buy headphones, baby? Same movie we've all seen a thousand times.

She gives up, takes off the headphones and immediately takes out a book to focus on.

ETHAN

I'm with you, baby. That romantic comedy nonsense just stinks.

(beat)

I have a film in the Moonsong Film Festival. I'm headed there now to pick up my prize.

(smirks)

Of course, there'll be other films there, too. But let's just say I like my chances.

She says nothing. Lincoln listens through the long pause which doesn't seem to bother Ethan.

ETHAN

My film's called "Zoe's Time". It's about a young girl struggling to find herself. Moonsong recognized the genius of it. Thousands of films are submitted, you know, but only the best of the best are selected. It's not like you can just show up with a videotape.

Lincoln GULPS at this new, disturbing bit of information. He slumps back in his chair, lost in thought - and guilt.

He takes up the camera bag, takes out the final-cut DV tape marked "In the Cage" and stares at it.

ETHAN (O.S.)

No way, baby. Not at Moonson. This is the big time. Amateurs and losers, stay home.

Next to the camera is the Polaroid of him and Jefferson. He takes it out and looks at it, troubled. Lincoln settles back in his seat, lost in thought.

LINCOLN (V.O.)

Okay, status update. I'm on my way to a festival I wasn't invited to. With a movie I won't be able to show anyone. And my brother will soon arrive lost in another city. Okay. Could this trip get any worse?

ETHAN (O.S.)

You know who's overrated? The German Expressionists -- I know what you're going to say, the emphasis on self through the medium - believe me, I'm all for that. But what did they really accomplish, artistically?

The sleeping teen next to Lincoln fidgets, and his headphones fall off onto his lap. Lincoln carefully unplugs them from the teen's music player, plugs them into his armrest, and puts them on, settling in to the movie.

INT. L.A. AIRPORT BAGGAGE CLAIM - HOURS LATER

The giant duffle sits alone beside the baggage carousel under an "oversized bags" sign. The zipper is pulled from the inside and gives, sliding open a little. Jefferson peeks out.

WASHINGTON (O.S.)

Where is he?

JEFFERSON

He'll be here. Just shhhh!

WASHINGTON (O.S.)

I have a cramp.

JEFFERSON

Who doesn't?

ROSS (O.S.)
I do! I'm sorry - was that one of those historical questions?

JEFFERSON
Alright the coast is clear. I'll have a look around.

Jefferson tries to get out smoothly and cautiously, but trips when his foot gets stuck. He tries to kick free.

ROSS (O.S.)
Ow. That would be me.

JEFFERSON
Sorry.

After more clumsy struggle, he frees himself, just as a buzzing ALARM SOUNDS.

Jefferson freezes, thinking he's caught, but it's just a carousel starting up. The room suddenly fills with passengers from another flight.

Jefferson freezes again at the sight of the human crowd. Washington notices.

WASHINGTON
Never mind them. Just find Lincoln.

JEFFERSON
(gulp)
Maybe you better come along.

Jefferson grabs the duffel handle. Washington sighs and sticks his hands and feet out the bottom to walk along.

Jefferson walks along the rental car counters "carrying" huge duffel, and getting perplexed stares from people he passes.

They arrive at the quarter-locker area.

JEFFERSON
Maybe we can find you some clothes and you can get out.

The bag unzips. Washington gets out. Ross sticks her head out.

WASHINGTON
I'm all for that.

Jefferson motions with his head toward the lockers.

WASHINGTON

You want me to break the doors?

JEFFERSON

Do I look like I have a key?

Washington smiles as he RIPS the door open. Inside is a suitcase containing a few items, including a huge, tent-like DRESS and matching floppy HAT.

JEFFERSON

Perfect.

WASHINGTON

I don't think so.

JEFFERSON

We're not shopping here. It fits; put it on.

Washington GRUNTS and pulls the dress over his head and puts on the hat. Jefferson motions for him to pick up the bag, but Washington just stands there.

JEFFERSON

C'mon.

WASHINGTON

I - can't.

JEFFERSON

Look, I don't care if you're embarrassed. Now swallow your pride and let's go.

WASHINGTON

I . . . can't.

JEFFERSON

Why not?!

WASHINGTON

I need you to zip me up.

Jefferson suppresses a laugh and stands on the duffle to zip Washington's dress. He comes down and inspects the outfit.

JEFFERSON

It's so last year. Are you okay with that?

Ross laughs.

WASHINGTON

You know what I think is funny? All this joking around after being abandoned.

JEFFERSON

What? Lincoln did not abandon us.

WASHINGTON

You have a better explanation?

JEFFERSON

He's obviously in trouble. Do you know what they do to anyone doing anything out of the ordinary on airplanes and airports these days?!

ROSS

It's a total violation of civil rights.

JEFFERSON

He could be captured. Those people could be, at this very moment, torturing him with tiny, sharp objects!

CUT TO:

INT. MOONSONG FILM FESTIVAL RECEPTION - EVENING

CLOSE ON: a human hand holding a toothpick. The hands THRUSTS down and we follow as the toothpick lands . . .

. . . in a Swedish meatball on a houer d'ovre tray full of meatballs. The human picks up the meatball and eats it.

As the waiter moves along, we see Lincoln outside a window, peeking in at the party.

EXT. MOONSONG RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS

Lincoln at the window. He peeks around the building's corner at the entrance. Everyone going into the party wears a festival credential badge A security guard checks badges and greets guests warmly.

Without a badge, Lincoln is stumped -- until he sees Ethan Latte coming OUT of the party dialing his cell phone. Ethan walks a comfortable distance from the building.

Lincoln climbs up a tree and over above Ethan, listening.

ETHAN
 (into phone)
 It's a lock. Nothing but hacks
 here. That prize is as good as
 mine. Call me when you get this
 message. Ciao!

Behind him, Lincoln jumps down - right in Ethan's path - just before Ethan turns back.

Ethan is startled by this short, odd-looking man.

LINCOLN
 Ethan Latte?

ETHAN
 Yes, and you are?

LINCOLN
 Max Linkletter. Bigshot
 Productions. Got a sneak peek of
 your film. Don't ask how. The thing
 is, you made it. I love it. We want
 it. And we'll pay big.

ETHAN
 I'm sure there will be many offers.

LINCOLN
 Not like ours, kid. Six picture
 deal. Nobody gets in your way.
 Ever. Walk with me. We'll talk

Lincoln heads away from the front door, around the building.

ETHAN
 Why not just talk inside?

LINCOLN
 Too many Hollywood phonies, know
 what I'm saying?

ETHAN
 I sure do.

Ethan follows him.

EXT. MOONSONG RECEPTION - MINUTES LATER

Lincoln has led Ethan to a side service/kitchen delivery entrance. Large crates and boxes are stacked around. A delivery truck with its back open idles nearby.

No one is around.

ETHAN

So you have a deal for me?

LINCOLN

All in good time. But first --

Lincoln jumps onto a stack of crates, making him about as tall as Ethan. He puts his arm around Ethan's shoulder.

LINCOLN

-- I want you to picture something with me. . . Your name, in lights -

Lincoln directs Ethan's gaze into the night sky. While Lincoln speaks and Ethan dreams, Lincoln uses his tail to swipe Ethan's Festival Credentials, cell phone and hotel key.

LINCOLN

- as tall as a building! Everyone knowing what they're coming to see. The name of the movie -- er, I mean the film, doesn't even matter. As long as it was made by Ethan Latte.

ETHAN

I like the way you think.

Suddenly Ethan's cell phone - in LINCOLN'S pocket - rings. Ethan is perplexed, can't find his phone, then notices his badge and room key are gone, too.

LINCOLN

Hey! What's going on here? who are you?!?

Lincoln climbs up higher, out of reach.

LINCOLN

I told you. Rex Litelinker.

ETHAN

You said your name was Max Linkletter.

LINCOLN

(busted)

Well, you can never have too many names in Hollywood.

Ethan climbs after him, but Lincoln easily gets down. Lincoln runs along the delivery dock and Ethan chases, fuming, when suddenly the service entrance door swings open and SMACKS him dead in the face.

An oblivious DELIVERY GUY walks past to his truck. The door swings closed, revealing a dizzy Ethan, who angrily stumbles on toward a seemingly cornered Lincoln.

Ethan lunges to TACKLE Lincoln, but the chimp deftly climbs the crates, leaving Ethan to CRASH into them.

Now even more groggy, Ethan looks around for Lincoln.

ETHAN

Where are you, you little freak?

LINCOLN (O.S.)

Over here, you pretentious amateur.

Ethan spies Lincoln standing on the edge of the loading dock, with truck right behind him.

Enraged at the insult, a bruised and battered Ethan races for him. At the last second Lincoln unlatches the truck's back door, and holds the strap. As the door rolls up and open, Lincoln is lifted out of harm's way.

Lincoln's tail, hanging down, holds a BOARD which SMACKS the rushing Ethan right in the face.

Lincoln jumps back to the dock. Practically unconscious, Ethan stands teetering on the edge of the small loading dock.

As the delivery truck revs into gear, Lincoln swings his tail around so the board BONKS Ethan on the butt, knocking him into the back of the truck. The impact of Ethan landing and the truck pulling away causes the door to tumble down shut.

Lincoln tosses the board, which LOCKS the truck door, just as the truck pulls away.

Satisfied, Lincoln nods and turns away.

EXT. MOONSONG RECEPTION FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Lincoln enters showing Ethan's credentials. He's fixed his own picture and name to the badge.

INT. MOONSONG RECEPTION - SIMULTANEOUS

Lincoln soaks up the scene, but only gets odd stares from the beautiful, wealthy Hollywood crowd. He takes out Ethan's cell phone and PRETENDS to talk on it - just loud enough so those around him can hear.

LINCOLN

I'm telling you, they got my film title wrong. I spent all this time and money making "Zooping Time" and it shows up in the program as "Zoey's Time."

A RECEPTION MAN and WOMAN nearby lean in, listening.

LINCOLN

I couldn't believe it.... I'm not kidding. Some festival this turned out to be. I kept telling them: "It's not Zoey's Time. It's "Zooping Time..."

He looks around to ensure he's being listened to.

LINCOLN

... It's not "Zoey's Time". It's Zooping Time." I don't know how much clearer I can be.

RECEPTION MAN

(whispers)
Zooping Time?

The woman raises her eyebrows in interest then whispers in the ear of another woman nearby. That woman takes out her program and together they look and point.

LINCOLN

As far as I'm concerned this festival's reputation is at stake.

MONTAGE of guests whispering and pointing as the news spreads throughout the party.

Lincoln looks around triumphantly.

INT. LOS ANGELES AIRPORT COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Jefferson and Washington (in his dress and hat, carrying a large purse) stand with coffees at the cream and sugar counter.

Ross pokes her head out of Washington's purse.

ROSS

That smells good. Did you get me one?

By way of answer, Washington pushes her head back in.

They watch another patron, COFFEE GUY approach, dump coffee into the trash and pour cream in. Shrugging to each other, Jefferson and Washington do the same.

JEFFERSON

Excuse me, we're trying to get to the Moonsong Film Festival.

COFFEE GUY

First thing is get back on a plane.

JEFFERSON

Pardon?

COFFEE GUY

Festival's in Colorado.

(thinks)

Or you could take a bus. A lot cheaper. Good luck!

The Coffee Guy walks away, sipping carefully.

EXT. AIRPORT SIDEWALK - MINUTES LATER

Jefferson and Washington come out into the bustle of honking cars and waiting cabs. Soliciting CABBIES noticeably avoid the freakish guy and huge, hairy lady.

JEFFERSON

We need a place to lay low. Maybe we stay here.

WASHINGTON

I don't exactly feel welcome.

Ross pokes her head out.

ROSS

Hey, look!

She points to a cab with an LA ZOO poster ad on top. Jefferson looks to Washington, who shrugs in agreement.

INT. CAB FRONT SEAT - A MOMENT LATER

The DRIVER sleeps at the wheel. Jefferson knocks on the half-open window, startling him awake.

CAB DRIVER

What?! I can wait here. Huh? Who are you?

JEFFERSON

Can you take us to the zoo?

CAB DRIVER

I'm on break. Any cab can take you
to the zoo!

Suddenly Washington leans into frame, looking menacing. The driver reacts with fear.

CAB DRIVER

Okay-okay. Yeah, sure. Get in.

EXT. LOS ANGELES ZOO PARKING LOT - EVENING

Washington and Ross are just inside a wooded area, at the far, secluded end of the lot. They are keeping hidden, peeking toward the zoo's front gate, where they see the last employee car drive away, leaving the place dark.

ROSS

How long have we been here?

WASHINGTON

Too long.

Suddenly Jefferson jumps down from a tree BEHIND them.

JEFFERSON

Hey.

They turn, startled.

ROSS

What? -- We thought you were in
there.

JEFFERSON

I was. The coast is clear. C'mon.

ROSS

You got us room and board?

JEFFERSON

Even better. I got a job.

ROSS

(excited)
What?!?

JEFFERSON

We'll have money for bus tickets by
morning.

Washington still stares at the zoo entrance, lost in thought.

WASHINGTON
Maybe this was a mistake.

JEFFERSON
What are you talking about? Good
night's sleep. Big breakfast . . .

WASHINGTON
(snaps out of it)
Huh? What? What did you say?

JEFFERSON
C'mon. We got a zoo to clean.

They head to the gate. Washington hesitates, then follows.

EXT. LA ZOO GROUNDS - NIGHT

No people. Jefferson leads a TEAM of chimps cleaning up the grounds. They all work quickly and efficiently, making the whole place spotless.

Ross approaches Jefferson.

ROSS
I'm impressed.

JEFFERSON
Lincoln's not the only charming,
influential one in the family.

ROSS
That's true... What do you think
happened to him?

JEFFERSON
Some kind of mix up. I don't know.
Where's Washington?

ROSS
Turned in early. He's been acting
weird since we got here.

INT. LA ZOO GORILLA CAGE - NIGHT

Washington walks around receiving stares from the other gorillas. He too, looks them over, but in a different way. He is looking for someone.

Someone he doesn't find, so he sits off in a corner by himself and lets go a sigh as heavy as he is.

PATTY (O.S.)
Of all the gorilla cages in all the
zoos in this crazy world . . .

Washington perks up at the sound of her familiar, gentle, yet worldly voice. He speaks without turning around as we see PATTY, a female gorilla emerge from the shadows behind him.

WASHINGTON
I knew you'd be here.

PATTY
And I knew you'd come back one day.
Aren't we the smart ones? We
shoulda been chimps.

Washington smiles.

WASHINGTON
How have you been, Patty?

PATTY
Good. . . I guess.

She comes to him and they sit face to face, looking for what was once there but is now distant, if not altogether lost.

WASHINGTON
They treat you well here?

PATTY
Of course. You?

WASHINGTON
It's been a struggle.

PATTY
Why does that not surprise me?

WASHINGTON
What do you mean?

PATTY
You always made everything harder
than it was. Work. Us. From the day
we met to the day you left.

Washington is surprised to hear it phrased that way.

WASHINGTON

The day I left? You act like I had a choice.

PATTY

I guess not.

WASHINGTON

(angering a bit)

You guess? Being put in a cage is one thing. But when they put your cage on a truck and drive out of town, it's not like ...

PATTY

Ever wonder why you were put on that truck?

WASHINGTON

(angered)

Because I wasn't needed anymore--

PATTY

-- Because you were difficult!

Washington GRUNTS. He doesn't want to hear that.

WASHINGTON

It was a difficult time.

PATTY

It was almost two days before I even knew you were gone. Do you know how hard that was?

WASHINGTON

Yes! Actually, I know exactly how hard that was! It was just as hard as finding a way back to you. But I did it! Now it seems I came all the way back so we could argue.

PATTY

I don't know why you came back.

WASHINGTON

(defeated)

To see you. I just wanted to see you.

PATTY

What for?

WASHINGTON

Because I was tired of not seeing you.

They turn to each other. She puts her head on his shoulder.

PATTY

I know it wasn't your fault.

WASHINGTON

It's good . . . to see you.

INT. MOONSONG THEATER LOBBY - NIGHT

A quaint but modern theater. Lincoln stands by a sign that reads "Tonight's Screening: ~~Zoey's~~ Zooing Time". Lincoln greets excited guests as they file in.

LINCOLN

Good to see you . . . Good to see
you . . . Thanks for coming . . .
Welcome . . . Good to see you. . .

INT. MOONSONG THEATER - TEN MINUTES LATER

Packed house waits in anticipation as Zooing Time begins. Lincoln stands in the back, anxious.

Onscreen is the series of close-ups of cage bars and locks.

JEFFERSON (V.O.)

It looks harmless enough from the
outside, but don't be fooled. Life
in a zoo is no different than life
in prison. Except for one thing.
Those in prison, it can be assumed,
have committed some crime.

The shot switches to the ostrich, looking helpless and hopeless.

OSTRICH

I never did anything wrong.

The Moonsong audience BURSTS OUT LAUGHING.

Lincoln freezes in shock as the movie continues.

JEFFERSON (O.S.)

(from the movie)

So why is it that we are forced to
live in these cages, unable to roam
free as we are meant to.

DISSOLVING MONTAGE of the audience cracking up, and Lincoln's rising panic. We hear snippets of animals talking from the screen; each line spoken gets a roaring laugh.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1

How do they do that?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2

The animals are chewing gum. Then they dub in the actors' voices. Brilliant, isn't it?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1

Hilarious!

More laughter as we see Lincoln, trying desperately to see the bright side. At least they like it.

CUT TO:

INT. MOONSONG THEATER LOBBY - AN HOUR LATER

Lincoln is MOBBED by congratulatory festival-goers. Lost brother aside, he can't help but be swept up in the attention. Press microphones are thrust at him.

REPORTER (O.S.)

What's next for you, Lincoln?

LINCOLN

I'd just like to finish the festival, see where we are and go from there.

REPORTER 2 (O.S.)

You think Hollywood's ready for you?

LINCOLN

We'll soon find out, won't we?

Crowd laughter.

REPORTER 3 (O.S.)

Hey, Lincoln! Where'd you get the idea for your movie?

Lincoln gulps, suddenly brought back to reality.

LINCOLN

Uh, well. Actually my brother had a lot to do with it.

REPORTER 2

He must be one funny guy!

The crowd laughs in agreement.

LINCOLN

No, he's not. I mean, he is, but
it's just that --

REPORTER 2 (O.S.)

Where is that wacky brother of
yours, anyway?

LINCOLN

I don't... I mean I'm not sure,
exactly . . .

On Lincoln's saddened face we...

DISSOLVE TO:

LA ZOO GROUNDS - NIGHT

Jefferson walking along, ELATED. He climbs up a bench and
jumps over the back as he heads past an arrow sign that
reads: GORILLAS.

At the gorilla cage, Jefferson looks in and sees Washington
in an intimate cuddle with Patty. His eyes widen in surprise.

JEFFERSON

A-hem.

Washington and Patty look up.

JEFFERSON

I have some great news.

PATTY

(sees shaved Jefferson)
Goodness! What happened to you?

WASHINGTON

(to Patty)
It's a long story.
(to Jefferson)
What is it?

JEFFERSON

Sorry to -ahem - interrupt. I
already made enough money for one
bus ticket. If I go in the bag, we
can leave tonight.

PATTY
A bus ticket?!

JEFFERSON
You two . . . know each other?

PATTY
So I guess I wasn't the purpose of this trip.

WASHINGTON
You were the purpose of my trip. Jefferson has his own reasons for being here.

PATTY
What reasons?

JEFFERSON
(confused)
It's about a movie we made.

Patty looks surprised. Washington winces.

PATTY
(to Washington)
You made another movie?

Now it's Jefferson who is surprised.

JEFFERSON
Another movie?

Patty laughs.

PATTY
(to Washington)
He doesn't know? I should have guessed. Mr. Secret.
(to Jefferson)
Your friend here was a movie star.

WASHINGTON
Patty, don't.

JEFFERSON
A what?!?!?

PATTY
It was years ago, but he was the most sought-after gorilla in the business. You made - what? - five pictures?

Washington sighs. He's not going to avoid this talk, as much as he'd like to.

WASHINGTON

Six.

PATTY

(to Jefferson)

Let's see, there was Jungle Escape,
Return to the Jungle, Jungle
Hunters, Jungle Dawn, Night of the
Living Jungle . . .

WASHINGTON

Let's not forget my comedy...

Washington leaves them.

PATTY

Oh yeah. Jungle Bungle. Ever heard
of those?

Jefferson nods enthusiastically, but after only a second,
shifts to shaking his head no.

JEFFERSON

But my brother would know them!
He's the movie expert. He's at the
Moonsong Film Festival right now,
with our documentary...

PATTY

Moonsong . . . impressive.

Jefferson looks in the direction Washington went. Patty feels
sorry to have brought it up that way.

JEFFERSON

I better . . .

PATTY

Yeah.

EXT LA ZOO GRASSY HILL - NIGHT

Washington sits by himself, stargazing. He sighs.

Jefferson appears at the bottom of the hill.

JEFFERSON

Mind if I come up?

WASHINGTON

I guess not.

Jefferson ascends and sits down next to the big gorilla.

JEFFERSON

Doesn't seem like anything to be ashamed of. Being in movies, I mean.

WASHINGTON

I'm not ashamed. I loved that work.

(pause)

And I admire your passion. I once had passion like you do. For the movies. For Patty.

JEFFERSON

What happened?

WASHINGTON

I woke up one morning and instead of being taken to work, I was taken to the Chicago zoo.

JEFFERSON

Wow. I'm sorry.

(thinks)

That's the story we should have told in the movie.

No response. Jefferson lets out a nervous laugh.

JEFFERSON

Next time.

They sit quietly for a few moments.

WASHINGTON

Next time.

Jefferson smiles.

JEFFERSON

I take it you won't be coming to Colorado with us.

Washington just shakes his head.

JEFFERSON

You take care of yourself. And your friend, too. She must be pretty special.

WASHINGTON

She is. . . Same for you and Ross.

JEFFERSON

Huh? Me? Ross? We're not - together.

WASHINGTON

Whatever you say.

Jefferson stands.

JEFFERSON

So I guess I'll see you around?

WASHINGTON

I can't imagine how.

Jefferson shrugs agreement, and Washington holds out his massive hand to shake. Jefferson shakes it.

WASHINGTON

I'll see you around.

INT. BUS - LATE NIGHT

A tired Jefferson sits by the window looking out and the sparse highway traffic. A large BACKPACK sits in the empty seat next to him.

INT. MOONSONG HOTEL HALLWAY - SIMULTANEOUS

CLOSE ON elevator door as it opens, revealing Lincoln. As he steps out a BELLHOP who was waiting gets on.

BELLHOP

You're the man!

Lincoln smiles and as the elevator door closes and Lincoln walks away toward his room ...

LINCOLN

(to himself)

Yes, that was the whole shaving,
tricky plan part of it . . .

INT. MOONSONG HOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Expensive room. Lincoln comes in and is surprised to find gifts of all kinds: flowers, champagne, fruit, everything set up all around the room.

He spots the phone blinking and pushes the message button.

PHONE VOICE
You have thirty-one messages.

Lincoln picks up the phone, then stops himself.

LINCOLN
Nah. Let 'em wait. I'm the man.

He hangs up and goes into the bathroom. A moment later we hear Ethan's electric razor turn on.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BUS - DAWN

Jefferson sleeps uncomfortably in his seat, his head pressed against the window. Ross' head now sticks out of the backpack and she sleeps leaning on his arm.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LINCOLN'S HOTEL ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Lincoln sleeps blissfully in his 5-Star bed, wearing silk pajamas and a hotel eye shade.

A KNOCK at the door wakes him up. He listens. Another KNOCK.

ETHAN (O.S.)
(from hallway)
Room Service. Breakfast.

LINCOLN
(groggy)
I didn't order anything.

ETHAN (O.S.)
(from hallway)
Compliments of one of the studios,
Mr. Lincoln.

Lincoln smiles, gets up and opens the door, revealing the BACK of Ethan, dressed as room service waiter.

LINCOLN
Thanks. Just bring it on in.

Lincoln moves aside as Ethan BACKS in pulling the breakfast cart, keeping his face hidden. Lincoln closes the door and turns to see --

ETHAN! Back for revenge.

ETHAN

Gotcha!

Lincoln jumps for the door, but Ethan DIVES across the breakfast cart, blocking him.

Lincoln runs to the bed. Ethan follows in chase and dives again, but Lincoln evades and Ethan crashes into the nightstand.

Lincoln heads into the bathroom, but before he can shut the door, Ethan shoves his foot in. Ethan crashes in and slams the door.

We HEAR the crashing fight in the bathroom for a few moments and then it suddenly STOPS.

ETHAN (O.S.)

(disgusted)

What did you do to my razor?!?!

The crashing fight continues, ending with the ringing THUMP of Ethan falling (presumably headfirst) into the tub. A moment later the shower turns on.

Lincoln rushes out into the room, wedges a chair under the bathroom doorknob, and quickly half-dresses. Grabbing the rest of his clothes - and the video camera - he runs out.

INT. HOTEL ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

Lincoln, now fully dressed, stands alone, the camera pointed at himself.

POV CAMERA VIEWFINDER.

Lincoln's close-up, slightly off-center face.

LINCOLN

I've got good news and bad news. The good news is: Everyone loved the movie. It's called Zooing Time now. I'll explain later. The awards are tonight. I think we could actually win! Now for the bad news: First, I'm being chased by a guy who pretty much wants to kill me. Again, I'll explain later. More importantly, though, everyone thinks our movie is a comedy.

(MORE)

LINCOLN (cont'd)
No one took it seriously - But we
still might win!

The elevator opens in the lobby and Lincoln rushes out.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY CONCIERGE DESK - A MOMENT LATER

Lincoln nearly crashes into the desk. He puts the camera and his room key card down.

LINCOLN
Hi!

CONCIERGE
Ah, good morning Mr. Lincoln. What
can I do --?

LINCOLN
-- If you see my brother. My, uh,
twin brother. Give him this camera
and my room key. Got it?

CONCIERGE
But of course. Happy to --

The elevator DINGS and opens. A soaking wet Ethan emerges.

LINCOLN
-- Gotta go.

Lincoln runs out the front door. Ethan follows, slipping on his wet shoes and causing a ruckus as he passes.

EXT. HOTEL - A MOMENT LATER

Lincoln looks frantically for help, but there is none. Then he sees a cab pulling up and beckons it to hurry.

LINCOLN
C'mon! C'mon!

But it suddenly stops far down the curb.

LINCOLN
No!

INT. CAB - SIMULTANEOUS

Jefferson sits in the back seat. Ross pokes her head out of the backpack.

JEFFERSON

Maybe we should just get out here.
I don't want to cause a scene at
the front door.

ROSS

Are you sure?

JEFFERSON

Just until we know what's going on.
I mean, you probably need some sort
of ID badge or something to even
get in.

ROSS

Well I guess so.

EXT. HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Fed up, Lincoln starts to run toward the cab, when suddenly he is SNATCHED UP by Ethan and thrown into the back of a black SUV. Ethan jumps into the driver seat and speeds off - nearly hitting Jefferson as he gets out of the cab.

JEFFERSON

Whoa - maniac!

Jefferson shakes his head and puts the backpack on.

On his way to the front door, he is surprised by all the people smiling and waving to him. The doorman rushes to get the door for him.

DOORMAN

Good morning, Mr. Lincoln.

JEFFERSON

Oh, I'm not --

Ross' hand shoots out of the backpack and BONKS Jefferson on the back of the head.

JEFFERSON

Good morning.

He hurries inside.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Jefferson is awestruck by the opulence.

JEFFERSON

Holy wow.

Ross pokes her head out.

ROSS

You mean holy c --
 (notices)
 -- wow!!!

They stare wide-eyed, Jefferson slowly turns, giving them a 360-view of the ornate, lavish room.

He finishes the turn and stands face to face with the concierge. Ross and Franklin duck down.

CONCIERGE

You must be Mr. Lincoln's brother.

JEFFERSON

Yes! How did you know?

CONCIERGE

Lucky guess. He asked me to give these to you.

The concierge hands Jefferson the camera and room key card and leaves him. Jefferson hands the camera over his shoulder. Ross takes it and immediately begins filming the room.

JEFFERSON

The guys back home are never gonna believe this.

ROSS (O.S.)

I think they will.

He looks back and sees she's filming.

JEFFERSON

Ah. Good idea. -
 (points)
 Get that thing over there!

She turns the camera where he points. After a moment he looks down at the room key card.

ROOM 402.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

CLOSE ON the door for room 402.

Jefferson puts the key card in and is rewarded with a little green light and BEEP. As Ross looks over his shoulders, he opens the door to find ...

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room is RANSACKED from the recent struggle. Jefferson puts the backpack down and Ross climbs out.

ROSS

This is not good.

JEFFERSON

Hang on. We don't know exactly what happened here. Let's focus on what we do know. We do know that whatever happened here . . .

ROSS

...Wasn't good.

JEFFERSON

Lincoln would have left a message.

ROSS

Doesn't look like he had time.

JEFFERSON

He would have found a way. I know it. Look around.

They look through the mess for any sign. Jefferson absent-mindedly picks up the camera and taps it to his temple.

JEFFERSON

Think, think, think. If you were Lincoln, how would you try to contact us?

ROSS

Stage a scene and film it.

JEFFERSON

(laughs)

Yeah, right.

(eureka!)

Yeah! Right! Of course!

He frantically rewinds the tape inside and pushes play. They huddle around the viewfinder and are relieved to see the close-up of Lincoln in the elevator.

LINCOLN

(from camera)

I've got good news and bad news. The good news is: Everyone loved the movie. It's called Zooing Time now. I'll explain later. The awards are tonight. I think we could actually win! Now for the bad news: First, I'm being chased by a guy who pretty much wants to kill me. Again, I'll explain later. More importantly, though, everyone thinks our movie is ---

Suddenly the screen cuts to the hotel lobby, the footage Ross just shot downstairs.

Jefferson and Ross look at each other in a panic.

ROSS

Too much bad news is never good.

JEFFERSON

(from camera)

The guys back home are never gonna believe we were here.

ROSS

(from camera)

I think they will.

JEFFERSON

(from camera)

Ah. Good idea. Get that over there!

Jefferson shuts it off.

JEFFERSON

What are we gonna do --??

Suddenly there is a rattle and the KEY BEEP at the door. The two of them dive under the bed just as Ethan returns.

They can only see his trendy ORANGE TIP shoes, and have no idea who he is - only that he can lead them to Lincoln.

Ethan sits on the bed and dials the bedside table phone.

ETHAN

Hey, it's me. That little freak who railroaded me and stole my screening spot? Let's just say he won't be bothering me any more.

Jefferson and Ross suppress a gasp.

ETHAN

What? No, I didn't throw him in a river with cement shoes! I'm at a film festival! I'm not in a film!

Jefferson and Ross sigh relief.

ETHAN

I'm going to the awards show tonight and I'm gonna fix this mess! I'll talk to you later.

Ethan hangs up, quickly stands and leaves. The two monkeys try to get a look at his face, but can't.

JEFFERSON

Follow him!

They run for the door and as Jefferson reaches for the doorknob, it BEEPS again and TURNS from the outside.

Ross quickly stands on Jefferson's shoulders behind the opening door.

Ethan barges back in. The door CRUNCHES against Jefferson and Ross. Ethan heads toward his sunglasses, which he left on the bedside table. As he walks over to them, the door swings closed revealing the monkeys to Ethan's back.

Jefferson's arms are full holding Ross, so at the last second, he uses his tail to grab the doorknob - just before it closes - and quickly pull it back open to cover them - just as Ethan turns back around.

Ethan walks quickly out, grabbing the doorknob and slamming it shut behind him.

Unfortunately, Jefferson's tail is still wrapped around the knob on the inside, so Ethan's tug pulls Jefferson down, toppling both of them.

Ross lands on her head and is knocked out cold.

Jefferson sneaks out after Ethan.

A moment later he returns, having noticed Ross wasn't with him.

JEFFERSON

Ross? Ross! Are you okay?

He gently shakes her and she comes to.

ROSS

Huh? Where is he? Did you get a look at him?

JEFFERSON

No, he got on the elevator.

ROSS

He said he's going to the awards show. We'll catch him there.

JEFFERSON

How will we know who he is? How will we get in?

ROSS

(thinks)

You go - as Lincoln.

JEFFERSON

No, I can't. The crowd - What if we win? I'll have to give a speech.

ROSS

That'll be perfect! Everyone will be cheering - except our guy. Take that stage and you can I-D him!

JEFFERSON

Can't we just sneak in and look for orange-tip shoes?

Ross just looks at him, letting him realize on his own how dumb an idea that is.

ROSS

It could be our only chance to find Lincoln. Plus, if you do win, do you realize what that means?

JEFFERSON

That I'll have to speak in front of hundreds of people.

ROSS

It means your movie was accepted by
humans. Everything you've been
working for . . . the cause . . .
It's all a success. You did it.

JEFFERSON

(thinks)
I don't know...

Suddenly Ross KISSES him. He's shocked, but he likes it.

ROSS

You can do this. I believe in you.

Dazed, Jefferson goes into the bathroom and shuts the door. A
moment later, we hear Ethan's razor.

CUT TO:

INT. MOONSONG THEATER LOBBY - NIGHT

The large room is empty except for Jefferson - NOW BALD and
in a TUX -- paces nervously by the concession counter. We
hear the DIN of applause in the theater. The awards show is
underway.

JEFFERSON

You can do this. You can do this.

INT. THEATER - SIMULTANEOUS

High above the stage, hidden in the lighting fixtures, sits
Ross. She searches the audience.

ROSS

I hope he can do this.

Onstage, a PRESENTER stands at the podium.

PRESENTER

And the Audience Selection Award
for the Best Picture goes to . . .
Zoing Time by Lincoln!

The crowd erupts in applause, then looks around. The
presenter is left on stage holding the award.

Above, Ross looks around, disappointed.

PRESENTER (O.S.)

Uh, I guess Lincoln couldn't make it tonight.

PRESENTER

- I'd like to accept this award on his behalf, and --

JEFFERSON (O.S.)

-- Wait! I'm here!

Jefferson stands back of the theater. The crowd erupts again in applause as they turn to see him.

Jefferson walks all the way to the stage, to rapturous applause. Strangers reach out to shake his hand. As nervous as he is, he can't help feeling proud. Maybe Ross was right.

Maybe the cause has succeeded.

FROM THE RAFTERS Ross watches him, beaming with pride.

Onstage, Jefferson takes the award, and stares at the microphone. The applause die down and Jefferson moves no closer to the podium.

The presenter lowers the mic for Jefferson, then moves aside and holds out his hand, coaxing Jefferson to speak.

Jefferson slinks up to the podium and arrives just in time to have his nervous GULP amplified throughout the theater.

Everyone laughs.

JEFFERSON

I'm . . . I'm not very good at this. Speaking in front of people, I'm afraid. Thank you, so much for this honor. I'm glad you liked In the Cage -- uh, I mean, Zooing Time.

The audience laughs and claps.

JEFFERSON

It's a serious issue we address in the movie, and I hope that now that you've seen the other side, we can begin to work toward real change.

The audience is SILENT. Then one person's laughter incites a cheering, clapping laugh riot. It seems only the cheers and applause register with Jefferson.

JEFFERSON

We can live together in peace! We
can! We can! We can!

RIOTOUS LAUGHTER. Some audience members even take up the "We Can!" chant - just for laughs.

Jefferson raises the award in his fist triumphantly and receives another CHEER.

IN THE RAFTERS: Suddenly Ross sees Ethan, motionless with a look of angry bewilderment on his face.

Jefferson bounds off the stage toward the wings, but can't help turning back for one more victory stance - this time both hands raised high.

The crowd goes berserk.

Ross watches Ethan push toward the aisle and walk quickly out the back of the theater. Ross climbs along the ceiling fixtures, directly over him.

His orange-tip shoes are clearly visible.

EXT. MOONSONG THEATER - NIGHT

Several ACTIVISTS from the group HAHA (HUMAN AGAINST HURTING ANIMALS) stand in protest, carrying signs that read STOP ANIMAL EXPLOITATION!; CAGES ARE NOT FUNNY!; and a circled, red-slashed words ZOOING TIME.

Jefferson comes out, hounded by reporters. Ethan approaches, but can't get near him through the crowd.

Ross stays hidden, trying to get Jefferson's attention.

Jefferson sees the protest group and go right to them.

JEFFERSON

Thank you. Thank you so much for
coming!

People are cracking up at what they see as "Lincoln's" audacity. The activists BOO Jefferson.

ACTIVIST 1

How could you?!?

ACTIVIST 2

You should be ashamed of yourself!

Jefferson stops and looks behind himself, confused.

JEFFERSON

What are you talking about?

ACTIVIST 1

Making fun of poor, helpless zoo animals. You're not funny!

JEFFERSON

Making fun -- huh?

ACTIVIST 2

Yeah, you're the animal.

JEFFERSON

(surprised)

How did you --? Look, that has nothing to do with it.

Suddenly, Jefferson sees Ross in a tree above the protestors. She frantically points to Ethan heading toward his car.

JEFFERSON

Look, I gotta go. You got it all wrong. I'm on your side.

More BOOS from the activists as Jefferson rushes off.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADWAY - NIGHT

A helmeted, goggled Jefferson does his best to steer a VESPA. Ahead of them are the taillights of Ethan's black SUV.

Jefferson keeps a safe distance as Ethan pulls into the dirt parking lot of THE SILVER SCREEN ROADSIDE MOTEL.

INT. ROADSIDE MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Lincoln is tied to a chair in the middle of the sparse, dumpy room. One lamp is lit.

He doesn't seem phased as he watches a classic black-and-white movie on the meager TV.

When he hears Ethan's car pull up outside and the car door open and close, he quickly uses his tail on the remote to turn off the TV.

As Ethan unlocks the room door and rushes in, Lincoln adopts a much more anguished look on his face.

Ethan is SHOCKED to see Lincoln still there.

ETHAN
How?!?!? How did you do it?!

LINCOLN
(thinks)
The remote was right there on the bed.

ETHAN
Don't play games with me! How did you get to that ceremony?! And how did you get back here and tie yourself up?!?!?

LINCOLN
What?

Ethan starts frantically searching the room.

ETHAN
Where is it?! Where did you hide the Award?!? It's mine!

LINCOLN
What awar-- ? We won?

ETHAN
You didn't win! You stole that award! From me! I was supposed to win!

LINCOLN
(to himself)
We won.

ETHAN
Where is it?!?!?

Ethan lunges for the defenseless Lincoln, but there is a KNOCK at the door. Ethan stops and answers it.

No one is there. As he leans out and checks left and right, Jefferson slides the window open, climbs into the room and tiptoes to the door, PUSHING it shut and PUSHING Ethan out.

Jefferson runs to Lincoln, untying him.

JEFFERSON
Are you alright?

LINCOLN
We won?

JEFFERSON

They thought it was a joke.

LINCOLN

I know. Sorry about that. Didn't you get my message?

JEFFERSON

Uh.... yeah. Most of it.

LINCOLN

But we won?

JEFFERSON

Yeah. We won. Now how do we get out of here?

LINCOLN

I have a plan.

As Lincoln is freed, the door is unlocked and opened. Ethan comes back in and is dumbstruck by Lincoln's double.

ETHAN

You... It can't be ... Two of you?

Just then, a crash by the window as Ross climbs in.

ROSS

I don't see him.

Ethan is stunned silent at the sight of the talking monkey. She SEES Ethan and realizes she just spoke in front of him.

ROSS

(monkey sounds)
Ooh-oo-ahh-ahh.

ETHAN

This isn't happening. This can't be happening!

LINCOLN

Get him!

The three monkeys CHARGE at Ethan.

CUT TO:

INT. ROADSIDE MOTEL ROOM - A MINUTE LATER

Lincoln, Jefferson and Ross are now ALL tied to chairs. Ethan paces back and forth, scheming.

JEFFERSON

Get him? That was your big plan?

LINCOLN

It could've worked.

JEFFERSON

This isn't a movie. This is real life.

ETHAN

Quiet, you two. Okay, here's the thing. You will give me my award. I will send the Moonsong officials - and the police - here and you will explain to them what you did to me.

Suddenly there is a knock at the door.

ETHAN

Go away! I'm busy!

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

(from outside)

Room Service!

Ethan looks confused. Lincoln lights up a bit.

LINCOLN

I was hungry.

ETHAN

(fuming)

You called -- ?

Ethan angrily opens the door. As soon as he does --

-- a GIANT GORILLA ARM thrusts in and grabs him by the throat, lifting him off of the ground, causing his shoes to fall off.

Washington enters, looking meaner than King Kong.

WASHINGTON

Is there a problem here?

Ethan turns even WHITER with fear. He gasps for breath.

ETHAN

You're . . . talking! How?
Please...please I'll do
anything....just don't hurt me...

Washington lifts him higher, then ROARS at the top of his lungs, causing Ethan to FAINT from fear.

He tosses Ethan on the bed and unties his friends.

EXT. ROADSIDE MOTEL - NIGHT

Lincoln, Jefferson, Ross and Washington get in Ethan's SUV. Washington is in the driver's seat.

JEFFERSON

You sure you can drive this thing?

WASHINGTON

I take it you never saw Night of the Living Jungle.

Lincoln suddenly realizes.

LINCOLN

Wait. That was you?

Washington looks back toward the motel.

WASHINGTON

You coming?

Patty comes out of the room.

PATTY

Just tidying up a bit. Quite a mess in there.

As she joins them, Lincoln looks confused.

PATTY

I'm Patty. Nice to meet you.

LINCOLN

Likewise.

They pile into the car and drive off.

EXT. CHICAGO ZOO SQUARE - NIGHT

The old gang is back again, this time listening to Washington and Patty telling stories of their old Hollywood days. Most enraptured is Lincoln, who sits front and center.

Ross and Jefferson, clearly a couple, holding hands, also look on. Franklin approaches them.

ROSS

Hey, Franklin. Did you miss me?

FRANKLIN

Did you go somewhere?

ROSS

Very funny. What have you been up to?

FEMALE SPIDER MONKEYS (O.S.)

Franklin! C'mon!

Jefferson and Ross look to see two cute, teeny-bopper spider monkeys sitting in the low branches of a tree. They look back to Franklin.

FRANKLIN

Nothin' much. Catch you later.

He leaves. Ross and Jefferson laugh and shake their heads. They turn their attention back to the crowd - but not before Jefferson sneaks a couple of glances back at the girls.

PATTY

Tell them about the time the star got stuck in his trailer.

WASHINGTON

Oh, they don't want to hear that again....

The crowd BEGS him.

WASHINGTON

I have a better idea. Why don't we hear from Lincoln, who had a real Hollywood adventure. Danger, action, intrigue...
(to Lincoln)
Whaddya say?

The crowd encourages him, so Lincoln takes center stage.

LINCOLN

There I was . . . tied to a chair with no way out. My captor on his way back...

Ross and Jefferson laugh and shake their heads.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CHICAGO ZOO SQUARE - NIGHT

It's winter now, but the same crowd has gathered again to hear the latest version of the story from Lincoln.

LINCOLN

All I had to do was get to that
lamp, break it open and use the
electrical current to burn through
the ropes . . .

Jefferson's eyes go wide at this latest embellishment. He motions to Ross that maybe they should take a walk.

EXT. ZOO GROUNDS - MINUTES LATER

Ross and Jefferson walk arm in arm, enjoying the silence and, of course, each other's company.

CHEETAH (O.S.)

Psssst!

They stop walking and are surprised to see a strange CHEETAH outside the zoo fence.

JEFFERSON

Can I help you?

CHEETAH

Are you Lincoln?

JEFFERSON

No, Lincoln is my brother.

CHEETAH

He made Zooing Time?

ROSS

Actually, Jefferson here is the
mastermind behind Zooing Time.

CHEETAH

Oh, I guess I came to meet you,
then.

JEFFERSON

That's very nice -- huh? Wait a
minute. Where are you from?

CHEETAH

San Diego.

JEFFERSON

How did you see Zooing Time?

CHEETAH

Are you kidding? Everyone's seen it.

JEFFERSON

Everyone?

CHEETAH

Sure. There are bootleg copies in every zoo in the country. Probably the world by now.

JEFFERSON

Are you serious?

CHEETAH

Yeah. Everyone wants to meet you. I'm just the fastest.

JEFFERSON

Yes, cheetahs are fast - and proud of it. We know.

CHEETAH

No, I mean. I just ran ahead.

The cheetah motions behind him with his head. Jefferson and Ross look.

At first they see only the dark night, but as their eyes adjust to the hillside, they see a PILGRIMAGE of zoo animals making their way toward the fence. There are hundreds, maybe thousands of silhouettes getting closer and closer.

Jefferson is choked up almost to tears.

ROSS

Looks like the cause is alive and well.

Jefferson nods.

ROSS

You gonna be able to talk to all of them?

JEFFERSON

I think so. Yeah.

END

OVER END CREDITS

The film geek security guard watches the end credits of yet another DVD. He hits a button on the remote and the DVD shuts off, switching the screen to regular TV.

Onscreen is a cheesy entertainment "reporter". Emblazoned in the lower right corner of the screen is a logo for BIZ BUZZ.

BIZ BUZZ GUY

I'm here following up on another Lincoln sighting. No, not the sixteenth President of the United States, we're talking about the missing filmmaker. You may recall last year Biz Buzz brought you the exclusive story about the guy who came out of nowhere, took the top prize at the Moonsong Film Festival, and then vanished. Just like that. Since then the rumors have been flying, and people are coming from all over the world, claiming to have seen the cinematic genius. Like the folks here in this small California town, who say Lincoln himself came into their diner just two nights ago. I talked to them earlier.

An old man - short order cook.

OLD MAN

I don't read those celebrity movie magazines. Wife does, but I don't. He had the turkey club. That much I know.

An old woman - cashier.

OLD WOMAN

It was him alright. I recognized him from the pictures on TV, but I didn't want to let him know that I knew what I knew . . . about him being him, I mean.

A middle-aged man - diner patron.

DINER PATRON

He was hinting that he worked for the government.

(MORE)

DINER PATRON (cont'd)

I figured that's why he had to drop out of the movie scene. Can't be covert and famous, right? . . . Too bad, too. Real funny movie that guy made.

A waiter we see from the back brings the man his food.

BIZ BUZZ GUY (O.S.)

How about you, sir, did you see him.

Biz Buzz camera keeps the waiter in frame as he turns around. It's ETHAN LATTE, looking like a defeated mess.

ETHAN

See who? What are you talking about?

BIZ BUZZ GUY (O.S.)

Lincoln, the missing genius filmmaker.

Ethan FREAKS OUT and runs into the kitchen, breaking things along the way.

Biz Buzz shot goes back to Biz Buzz guy outside the diner.

BIZ BUZZ GUY

As you can see, it's a very emotional story. Seems like every time we dig for answers, all we uncover is more questions. Now allegations that Lincoln is actually a government agent. Did he disappear so suddenly to protect his identity? Was he called on a top secret mission? Or was it something else? Was his disappearance by choice at all? We talked to a former government agent who declined to be shown on camera.

Close-up of shadowy figure.

GOVT AGENT

If he is an agent, and I'm not at liberty to say if he is or not - and he made a movie, came into the spotlight like that, there'd be trouble. That I can tell you.

The film geek zoo security guard shuts off the TV.

END

