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THE ZANY ZOO

By Martin Neill & Ruth Kenward

[During the intro, ZACK enters with clipboard, to stand Downstage Right, where he studies clipboard, makes notes etc.]

THERE'S A ZOO NOT FAR FROM YOU (☉ Track 1 / 13)

Chorus THERE'S A ZOO NOT FAR FROM YOU
THAT SHOULD OPEN SOON,
BUT THE KEEPER WHO'S IN CHARGE
WILL NOT LET US VIEW.

TELL US WHY! (*stamp, stamp*)
DON'T BE SHY! (*clap, clap*)
WE DEMAND AN EXPLANATION.
TELL US WHAT! SPILL THE LOT!
WE ARE SEETHING WITH FRUSTRATION.

IT'S A JOKE. US LOCAL FOLK
JUST LONG FOR THIS ZOO.

[ZACK moves to Centre.
The 'M' PUBLICS join the 'J' PUBLICS]

Zack THERE'S A HITCH, A LITTLE GLITCH
I'M SORRY TO SAY.
ALL MY CREATURES HAVE STRANGE FEATURES.
PLEASE GO AWAY!

Chorus COME ALONG, (*stamp, stamp*)
WHAT IS WRONG? (*clap, clap*)
WE DEMAND AN EXPLANATION.
WHAT A BLOW! YOU SHOULD KNOW
WE ARE SEETHING WITH FRUSTRATION.

Zack (*open-handed shrug*) IT'S NO JOKE. I'M NEARLY BROKE
AND FILLED WITH DISMAY.

['J' PUBLICS group to R. of ZACK, 'M' PUBLICS to L.]

Chorus LET US IN NOW, 'COS WE'D LIKE TO SEE
LIONS AND TIGERS, CHEEKY CHIMPANZEES,
PENGUINS, CHEETAHS, BOUNCY KANGAROOS:
(*open arms*) ALL THE CREATURES IN YOUR ZOO.

← The 'J' PUBLICS -
JOE, JESSIE, JOSH &
JEMMA - stride on
They confront
ZACK, using body
language to express
frustration as they sing
After singing, they turn,
moving away a little,
stand with arms folded
looking stern

← MATT, MISHA,
MARK & MADDY
confront ZACK, using
body language to
express frustration

Zack (*pointing*) THERE'S THE SIGN: THE BOTTOM LINE SAYS 'WE'RE OPEN SOON'.

Chorus THAT'S A LIE YOU CAN'T DENY:
YOU WROTE IT LAST JUNE.

OPEN UP! (*stamp, stamp*) OPEN UP! (*clap, clap*)
YOU COULD MAKE SOME CASH FOR WAGES!
OPEN UP! (*stamp, stamp*) OPEN UP! (*clap, clap*)
WE'VE BEEN QUEUEING HERE FOR AGES.

GO ON MATE, UNLOCK THE GATE
AND LET US COME IN.

GO ON MATE, UNLOCK THE GATE
AND LET US COME IN.

← PUBLICS wag fingers x 4,
← Open handed shrug.

Fling hands in air.
Rub fingers together.
Fling hands in air.
Sag, with exhaustion, look
at watches, etc.

← Hands on hips.

← Arms held out, palms up.

[PUBLICS stay in their groups, surrounding ZACK,
'J' PUBLICS to Stage R. of him, 'M' PUBLICS to Stage L.]

JOE So, Mr. Zookeeper, how come you're still closed?

ZACK (*turning to 'J' PUBLICS*) We're just not ready, that's all.

JESSIE When will you be ready?

ZACK (*exaggerated patience*) As soon as the animals have passed their Standard Animal Tests.

JOE, JESSIE, JOSH & JEMMA Standard Animal Tests?

ZACK (*carefully*) In a zoo, people expect animals to behave as expected.

MATT Like what? Give us an example.

ZACK (*turning to 'M' PUBLICS*) An example? Let me see...
(*runs finger down clipboard*) Ah yes.
(*tapping clipboard*) Here we are, zebras! It's all down here in black and white...

[Pause for groans at bad joke.]

Stripey, stands on all fours, eats grass, runs away from predators.

MATT Well, obviously. No-one expects a zebra to do anything else.

ZACK (*impressed, nodding*) Exactly my point, young man! Well done!

MISHA (*giggling*) Yeah, 'cos zebras don't swing through trees eating bananas, do they?

ZACK (*pointing at her, delighted*) You are so right!
Now let's think about who would swing through trees eating bananas, eh? That'd be... (*makes encouraging hand movement*)

JOSH, JEMMA, MARK & MADDY Monkeys?

ZACK *(turning to 'J' PUBLICS)* Exactly. Or chimpanzees.
(wagging finger) But not the chimps in my zoo. Guess what my chimps get up to?
(turning to 'M' PUBLICS) Can you guess? Hmm?

MATT *(shrugging)* Tell us!

ZACK *(to MATT)* They're obsessed - and I mean obsessed - with housework!

'M' PUBLICS *(with disbelief)* Housework?

[As ZACK replies, he goes to put clipboard on table.]

ZACK *(nodding)* With feather dusters. Not standard behaviour for chimps.
[ZACK turns back to shoo away the PUBLICS.]
 Now you see the problem, perhaps you'll stop pestering us.
(shooing hand motion) Time to go home.

[MATT & MISHA speak as ZACK tries to shoo them away.]

MATT *(smiling broadly)* I'd like to see chimps doing housework - it'd be funny!

MISHA They could come and tidy my room!

ZACK Don't be ridiculous. I'm far too busy for this.
(waves them away) Off you go! Shoo!

[As 'M' PUBLICS return to base positions via Stage L., JOE resists being pushed away. ZACK grabs his collar.]

(calling over shoulder) Zoë? Zeb? Come and help me get rid of this lot!

[ZOË & ZEB step forward as JOE pulls out voucher.]

JOE *(waving voucher)* Wait! I've got a discount voucher! It expires at the end of the month!

ZACK Oh no! *(lets JOE go, huffs and tuts)* I'd forgotten about those vouchers...

JOE *(waving voucher)* So when will the animals be ready?

ZACK When I say so! *(waves them away)* Now let me get on with it!

JOSH & JEMMA We'll be back!

['J' PUBLICS return to base positions.]

ZACK *(turning to ZOË & ZEB)* Well, surely you can see my point?

ZOË Quite right. With you all the way!

ZEB But we've got a problem with the chimpanzees I'm afraid...

ZACK *(sagging)* Oh no... another? What now?

ZOË They've escaped again... and this time they've put air fresheners in the skunk enclosure!

ZEB The skunks are not happy. You'd better come and see.

ZACK *(sighs)* We'll never get the zoo open at this rate...

[ZEB & ZOË lead ZACK off to Stage R. CHIMPANZEES scamper to Downstage Centre with cleaning equipment.]

CHIMPANZEES *(ad lib)* Oo-oo-oo, ee-ee-ee! Oo-oo-oo, ee-ee-ee!

CHIMP 1 Have they gone?

CHIMPANZEES *(nodding)* Oo-oo-oo!

CHIMP 2 All clear!

CHIMP 3 *(picking up litter)* More mess...

CHIMP 1 That's why we're here! Let's get to work.

[CHIMPANZEES put down cleaning equipment in order to move freely as they sing.]

OO-OO-OOVERING THE JUNGLE (☉ Track 2 / 14)

Open hands Let arms fall	→ HAVE YOU NOTICED RECENTLY THE JUNGLE'S IN A STATE? → THE ANIMALS HAVE LET IT GO. → ONCE UPON A TIME THE CREATURES KEPT IT LOOKING GREAT.	CHIMPS pick up cleaning equipment and clean ad lib.
Fold arms Unfold one arm palm upwards Arm sweep	→ NOW THEY JUST DON'T WANT TO KNOW. → THERE ONCE WAS NO-ONE CLEANER THAN A LEOPARD OR HYENA. → NOW THERE'S EMPTY PACKETS EVERYWHERE. → THEY ALL SEEM TO HAVE DECIDED NOT TO USE THE BINS PROVIDED.	
Point to chests	→ WE ARE THE ONLY ANIMALS WHO CARE. → SO WE ARE...	
Hands under armpits, to Left then to Right Low sweeping to L. Wipe palms together High dusting to L. Middle polishing to R. Low sweeping to L. Wipe palms together	→ OO-OO-OOVERING THE JUNGLE, → OO-OO-OOVERING THE TREES. → OO-OO-OOVERING THE JUNGLE, → WE'RE THE SPICK AND SPAN CHIMPANZEES. → DUST, DUST, DUSTING ALL THE COBWEBS, → SHINE, SHINE, SHINING ALL THE LEAVES. → OO, OO, OOVERING THE JUNGLE, → WE'RE THE SPICK AND SPAN CHIMPANZEES.	

[Put down cleaning equipment again.]

Mime shedding whole body skin	→ MUCH AS WE ARE FOND OF ANACONDAS AS A RULE, → THEY SHED THEIR SKIN AND OFF THEY SLIDE.
Mime ironing	→ HAVE YOU SEEN A LION TRY TO IRON? WHAT A FOOL!
Shrug	→ HOW CAN THEY BE CALLED A PRIDE?

Arm sweep
Pull disgusted faces

IT SEEMS THAT EVERY CRITTER
IN THE JUNGLE DROPS THEIR LITTER.
HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A FILTHIER PLACE?
AN INSPECTION OF THIS JUNGLE
SHOWS INFECTIONS THAT ARE FUNGAL.
WE HAVE TO PUT AN END TO THIS DISGRACE,
SO WE ARE...

*[CHIMPANZEES pick up cleaning equipment and clean during
the next section. One or two might 'clean' members of the audience.]*

CHORUS actions
as before

OO-OO-OOVERING THE JUNGLE... (etc.)

CHIMPS wag fingers,
move to D/Stage Centre
in time for the last line

YOU'D BETTER BELIEVE IT,
SPICK AND SPAN___ CHIMPANZEES!

Chimpanzees HAVE A BANANA! OO, OO, OO!

[ZACK, ZEB & ZOË return to surround CHIMPANZEES.]

ZEB (pointing) There they are!

ZACK Get back to your enclosure, you silly chimps!

CHIMP 2 But we're only trying to be helpful!

ZACK The Standard Animal Test for chimps does not include cleaning.

ZOË Besides, our insurance doesn't cover non-human cleaners.

CHIMP 1 So you're covered for us to swing through trees holding bananas...

CHIMP 2 ...but not to do a spot of dusting.

CHIMP 1 & 2 That's health and safety gone mad.

ZACK (infuriated) a) it's not your job to clean and b) this is a zoo, not a jungle. Get back to your enclosure.

Cue
VEGGIE ALLIGATOR
to enter shortly

*[CHIMPANZEES go to base positions, taking off cleaning
equipment and complaining ad lib, e.g. 'The cheek of it!'
'Ungrateful humans!' 'Don't know when they're well off...' etc.]*

Right. I mean business. Anyone who doesn't pass the test is heading for the circus.

ZEB Fair enough.

ZACK Who's got the bell?

ZOË Me! And Zeb's got the buzzer.

ZACK Excellent.

[ZACK, ZOË & ZEB go and sit at their table.]

Let's take it from the top. The alligator!

ZOË (calling KIERAN & KAYE) Kieran? Kaye?

[KIERAN & KAYE step forward.]

KIERAN & KAYE (leaning in) Yes?

ZOË & ZEB Bring on the alligator!

ALL Bring on the alligator!

[KIERAN & KAYE go to fetch VEGGIE ALLIGATOR and props.]

VEGGIE ALLIGATOR

(☉ Track 3 / 15)

'Swim' with arms on 'swimming' & 'swamp'
Open hands
Cup ear with hand
After 'chosen you', extend arms and make alligator 'snap'

→ IF YOU'RE SWIMMING IN A SWAMP,
→ SOONER OR LATER
→ YOU'LL HEAR AN AWFUL CHOMP!
→ AN ALLIGATOR HAS CHOSEN YOU
→ FOR A BIT OF A SNACK.

[KIERAN & KAYE take VEGGIE ALLIGATOR to Downstage Centre, staying with him to help with props.]

Point at VEGGIE 'Swim'
After 'cauliflower' extend arms and make alligator 'snap'

BUT TODAY'S YOUR LUCKY DAY:
→ THIS ALLIGATOR
→ WILL SWIM THE OTHER WAY.
→ HE LIKES POTATOES AND CAULIFLOWER
→ FOR A BIT OF A SNACK.

VEGGIE ALLIGATOR gives KIERAN & KAY thumbs up, then sits on floor to unpack his shopping

Build up fists as in one potato, two potato
Extend arms towards VEGGIE, with palms upwards

'COS HE'S A VEGGIE ALLIGATOR, A REAL MEAT HATER.
YOU'D BETTER GO AND TELL THE WAITER:
→ "STOCK UP ON THE SWEETCORN,
→ ORDER IN THE OLIVES,
→ TONS OF TINNED TOMATER.
→ 'COS HE'S A VEGGIE ALLIGATOR."

VEGGIE ALLIGATOR hands items to KIERAN & KAY as he looks for a carrot (or similar) at the bottom of his bag, which he then proceeds to chew with relish

Point at VEGGIE ALLIGATOR

SO WHEN VISITING THE ZOO,
→ HERE IS A CREATURE
→ WHO WON'T BE EATING YOU
→ OR YOUR HEAD TEACHER 'COS IT'S A FACT:
→ HE'S A VEGETABLE FAN.
→ YOU CAN DIP YOUR TOES RIGHT IN,
→ 'COS HE WON'T NIBBLE. THE SMELL OF HUMAN SKIN
→ WON'T MAKE HIM DRIBBLE OR SALIVATE,
→ HE WOULD RATHER EAT BRAN.

KIERAN & KAY try to tempt VEGGIE to eat their arms and legs, but he acts as if repulsed

As before...
...finishing with finger to corner of mouth, indicating suspicion

'COS HE'S A VEGGIE ALLIGATOR... (etc.)
→ ...YES HE'S A VEGGIE ALLIGATOR.
→ YES HE'S A VEGGIE ALLIGATOR.
(spoken) Or so he says!

Cue FISH & FISHY NO-SWIM to enter shortly

[ZACK stands with clipboard.
KIERAN & KAYE help VEGGIE ALLIGATOR to stand.]

ZACK Here we go. Standard Animal Test for alligators.
(*tapping clipboard*) Lives in water...
[VEGGIE ALLIGATOR nods, with swimming arm movements.]

ZOË Check. ZOË rings bell

ZACK Has sharp teeth...
[VEGGIE ALLIGATOR nods, grinning widely pointing to teeth.]

ZOË Check. ZOË rings bell

ZACK Looks much like a crocodile.

ZOË Check. ZOË rings bell

VEGGIE ALLIGATOR (*hands on hips*) How dare you! I look like the alligator I am!

ZOË & ZACK You all look the same to us.

VEGGIE ALLIGATOR (*folding arms*) Hmph.

ZACK Back to the test. Eats: fish, turtles, deer... (*is interrupted*)

VEGGIE ALLIGATOR (*disgusted, shaking head*) No-no-no. I never eat meat. ZEB hits buzzer

ALL (*'fail' sound, thumbs down*) Wah, waaaaaah!

ZACK (*with a sigh*) Oh dear. Not a proper alligator.
*[VEGGIE ALLIGATOR sags, as if hurt and disappointed.
KIERAN & KAYE escort him back to his base position, KAYE taking props, then they go to Downstage L.]*
Never mind. Moving on... (*passes clipboard to ZEB*)

ZEB (*runs finger down clipboard*) Ok. Now it's the fish.

ZOË & ZACK (*calling*) Bring on the fish!

ALL (*calling*) Bring on the fish!

*[KIERAN & KAYE beckon FISH, who 'swim' - as if synchronised swimmers - to Centre. FISHY NO-SWIM enters behind them but goes to sit D/Stage Left; KIERAN & KAYE stand behind him.
FISH continue to swim as a synchronised group during the music.]*

Incid. AQUARIUM (from Carnival Of The Animals)

(☉ Track 4 / 16)

[FISH finish Centre.]

ZEB So, fish! Will you pass your S.A.T.s? (*tapping clipboard*) Cold-blooded...
[FISH nod, rubbing arms to 'keep warm'.]

ZOË Check. ZOË rings bell

ZEB Live underwater?
[FISH nod eagerly, hold noses, puff cheeks, mime going underwater.]

ZOË Check. ZOË rings bell

KIERAN & KAYE Excuse me...

ZEB *(not hearing KIERAN & KAYE)* Swimmers?
[FISH nod, grinning widely, making swimming arm movements.]

ZOË Check. ZOË rings bell

KIERAN & KAYE *(louder, pointing at FISHY NO-SWIM)* Excuse me!

ZACK What's the matter?

KIERAN & KAYE This one can't swim! ZEB hits buzzer

ALL *(‘fail’ sound, thumbs down)* Wah, waaaaaah!

ZOË Oh no! And we were doing so well!

ZEB Who ever heard of a fish that can't swim?

ZOË He must be able to swim.

[FISH all shrug sadly as they prepare to ‘swim’.]

LITTLE FISHY NO-SWIM

(☉ **Track 5 / 17**)

LITTLE FISHY, LITTLE FISHY NO-SWIM.
 LITTLE FISHY, LITTLE FISHY NO-SWIM.

FISH swim synchronised swimming style, changing direction at end of each line.

Point at FISHY N-S
 Open-handed shrug
 Let arms fall

→ THERE HE SITS ALL DAY,
 WATCHING HIS FRIENDS PLAY.
 → WHAT IS WRONG WITH HIM?
 → MAYBE HE CAN'T SWIM.

LITTLE FISHY, LITTLE FISHY NO-SWIM.
 LITTLE FISHY, LITTLE FISHY NO-SWIM.

FISH as before

HEY FISHY NO-SWIM,
 YOU GOTTA GO SWIM!

FISH beckon FISHY N-S,
 who goes to join them.

Diving arms on ‘under’
 Swimming motion, arms out, palms together.
 Open arms out slowly

→ TAKE A DEEP BREATH, UNDER YOU GO!
 → SWIM THROUGH THE WATER, JUST GO WITH THE FLOW!
 JOIN ALL YOUR FRIENDS AND THEY WILL SEE
 → YOU CAN BE ALL THAT YOU'VE WANTED TO BE!

[FISHY NO-SWIM begins to swim with the others, with increasing confidence.]

LITTLE FISHY, LITTLE FISHY GO-SWIM.
 LITTLE FISHY, LITTLE FISHY GO-SWIM.

FISHY NO-SWIM swims with the other fish.

NOW HE SWIMS ALL DAY
IN HIS FISHY WAY.
WATCH HIM OUT AT SEA,
HAPPY AS CAN BE!

Long, slow Left to
Right arm sweep

SWIMMING IS LIKE POETRY IN MOTION,
AND THE WORLD IS YOUR OCEAN!

[All FISH finish at Centre.]

ZOË *(happily)* I guess now all our fish can swim, they've passed their S.A.T.s!

ZACK Well I never! A round of applause for... the fish!

[ZEB makes a note on the list, while all applaud FISH as they swim to base positions. KIERAN & KAYE escort FISHY NO-SWIM to base position, then return to Stage L.]

Who's next?

ZEB Er... *(consults clipboard)* ...the tigers, I guess.

[JESSIE stands to call PUBLICS, who pick up placards.]

JESSIE This way! Come on.

['M' PUBLICS follow 'J' PUBLICS on, marching and chanting until all in place to Left of Centre, marching on the spot. Meanwhile, ZACK gets up, goes to stand D/Stage R., glaring, hands on hips. ZOË & ZEB stand behind their table, muttering to each other, arms folded.]

JOE *(inciting the chant)* What do we want?

PUBLICS An open zoo!

JOE When do we want it?

PUBLICS Now!

JOE What do we want?

PUBLICS An open zoo!

JOE When do we want it?

PUBLICS Now!

[When all in place, ZACK strides towards JOE & JESSIE.]

ZACK Can't you read? The sign says 'closed'!

JOE & JESSIE We've come to protest.

ZACK, ZOË & ZEB *(sarcastically)* We'd never have guessed!

ZACK Anyway, you're trespassing!

ALL PUBLICS *(waving vouchers)* But what about our vouchers?

JESSIE *(angrily, tapping voucher)* According to the terms and conditions, we'll lose out if you're still closed at end of the month.

JOSH Our parents paid good money for these vouchers!

JOSH & JEMMA It's a rip-off!

'M' PUBLICS *(nodding)* Yeah! It's a rip-off!

ZACK *(folding arms)* I can't be held responsible for the terms and conditions. The voucher was only a template we got off the internet!

Cue TIGERS & SID SPANGLE to enter shortly

[PUBLICS protest ad lib, e.g. 'That's not fair!' 'A template?' 'Off the internet?' 'Of course you're responsible!' 'This is ridiculous!' etc.]

JESSIE And another thing. What about all this animal testing you're doing?

JOSH Yeah - there's laws against cruelty to animals.

ZACK It's not that sort of testing.

'J' PUBLICS What sort is it then?

ZACK I simply check that the animals' behaviour meets the requirements set out here. *(taps clipboard)*

JOE Then you won't have a problem with us watching?

ZACK *(sighing heavily)* Oh all right. Anything for a quiet life.
[PUBLICS spread out to watch. ZACK returns to table, sits.]
(wearily) Where were we?

ZEB & ZOË The tigers.

ZACK *(very wearily)* The tigers. *(to PUBLICS)* Go on then, you lot: describe a standard tiger.

MATT Stripey!

MISHA Sleek!

MARK Fierce!

MADDY Powerful!

ZACK *(nodding)* Yep, all that stuff. Let's have the tigers.

ZEB & ZOË *(calling to KIERAN & KAYE)* Bring on the tigers!

ALL Bring on the tigers!

KIERAN & KAYE They're bringing themselves!

[TIGERS run on promptly to D/Stage C., shaking pompoms.]

TIGERS *(calling excitedly)* Sid Spangle is on his way!

'M' PUBLICS Cheerleader tigers? Excellent!

ZACK *(using hands for emphasis)* No, no, **no, no, NO!**
It's not normal! A zoo is a place for animals to behave naturally!
If you want off-the-wall stuff, *(flinging hands up)* go to a circus!

TIGERS *(high pitched, shaking pompoms)* 2, 4, 6, 8, who do we appreciate?
Si-i-i-i-id Spangle!

[SID SPANGLE strides on theatrically to join TIGERS.]

SID SPANGLE *(acknowledging TIGERS)* Thank you... thank you...
(to ZACK) I can't be long. I'm auditioning the meerkats in half an hour. *(checks watch)*

ZOË Auditioning meerkats? What for?

SID SPANGLE My show, of course! My show!

ZACK *(behind hand, to ZEB & ZOË)* Just smile and nod.

ZEB & ZOË *(with artificial smiles)* Your show! That's nice!

ZACK Sad case. He's pining for his show in New York.

SID SPANGLE *(sadly, hand to heart)* It's true. I am pining.
(tragically, reaching up to imagined lights) Pining for the bright lights...

ZACK There was a change in the law about performing animals.

SID SPANGLE *(nodding)* We all lost our jobs. Just like that.

ALL Ahhh...

SID SPANGLE *(tragically)* Sold off for a pittance...

ALL Ahhh...

ZEB & ZOË Ah, that is sad.

SID SPANGLE *(very dramatically)* Sad? It was tragic! So much talent gone to waste... *(to TIGERS)* But we're gonna put things right, yeah?

TIGERS *(high pitched)* Sure are, Sid! *(shaking pompoms)* It's showtime!

[SID SPANGLE to Downstage Centre; TIGERS grouped around him to raise and shake pompoms at the end of the intro.
Choreograph TIGERS as cheerleaders throughout.]