

Clever Monkeys
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INT: MONKEY RESEARCH CENTRE - DAY

A ZOOLOGIST (40) in a white suit is with a VISITOR named JAMES (20) in casual clothing. They are in a featureless corridor, sounded by several separate cages with lone MONKEES and computers in them. The sound of chomping on bananas, screeching and tapping on PC monitors is quite overpowering.

ZOOLOGIST

Nice meeting you, James. It's refreshing to see someone as interested in these amazing creatures as I am.

The ZOOLOGIST shakes JAMES'S hand.

JAMES

I'm not sure I'd call them amazing...

ZOOLOGIST

Why are you studying them, then?

JAMES

Because they're funny. Not skilled.

ZOOLOGIST

Haha good one, but they are skilled. Have a look at this.

The ZOOLOGIST unlocks one of the cages and the two MEN enter. The former shuts the gate. MONKEY 1 (10) continues his tapping on the glass.

JAMES

What is he doing?

ZOOLOGIST

He's playing memory games. He's quite outstanding at them.

JAMES observes the MONKEY looking at his screen. 10 numbers flash up in a second on it then disappear. Now on the screen are the same 10 numbers shown in a random order.

ZOOLOGIST

Look... In a mere second he's memorised all the digits. Now he will tap all of the new ones that are showing in the order he first saw them.

The MONKEY does so.

JAMES

Fluke.

ZOOLOGIST
The probability of that being a fluke
is 1 in 3,628,800.

JAMES
Wow...

ZOOLOGIST
I know...

JAMES
Do you play the lottery? Get him to
write down the numbers.

ZOOLOGIST
It was no fluke, James! Look, he'll do
it again...

The MONKEY does so.

JAMES
What are the odds in that?

ZOOLOGIST
If that was by chance, this animal
would have had the most astonishing
luck of all time. Quite literally.
Would you like to have a go at the
memory game.

JAMES
Na.

There is a pause. JAMES wipes a tear, then does an on the spot
backflip. The ZOOLOGIST is shocked by JAMES'S apparent
desperation and hurt pride.

ZOOLOGIST
... Got that out of your system?

JAMES
Can the monkey do that?

The MONKEY does the same somersault.

ZOOLOGIST
Yes. He knows the word and move well.

JAMES rips a harmonica from his pocket and plays an amazing,
extended blues solo. When finished he hands it to the ANIMAL
as the ZOOLOGIST looks on, speechless.

JAMES
(to the monkey)
Top that, dickhead.

The MONKEY blows into the instrument like JAMES did, but just produces random notes.

JAMES
Not so clever now, is he?

ZOOLOGIST
What?

JAMES
(with an exaggerated
German accent)
Er ist nicht sehr klug.

The MONKEY looks thoughtful and scratches his head.

ZOOLOGIST
Come again?

JAMES
(with an exaggerated
French accent)
Il n'est pas très intelligent.

The MONKEY scratches harder.

ZOOLOGIST
Well done James, you can speak
multiple languages.

JAMES
And monkeys can't.

ZOOLOGIST
Did you come here to study these
animals, or did you genuinely just
come here for a laugh? If so, how the
hell was your application accepted?

JAMES
(with an exaggerated
Romanian accent)
Nu-mi place atitudinea ta.

The MONKEY steeples his hands and nods in thought.

ZOOLOGIST
You don't like my attitude?

JAMES
You speak Romanian?

ZOOLOGIST
Clearly.

JAMES

You're not trying to teach the monkeys
Romanian are you?

ZOOLOGIST

No. But so what if I am?

JAMES

It wouldn't be right. What if they get
too clever and take over the world,
all pissed off about being tested on?
They'll get you, first.

The MONKEY nods in clear agreement.

JAMES

See that? He's evil!

The ZOOLOGIST looks concerned and is the one who scratches his
head this time.

ZOOLOGIST

... Oh my God... I think you may be
right.

JAMES

See?

ZOOLOGIST

James, I should come clean. You know
that tune the monkey played? It wasn't
random. It was an avant-garde
minimalist piece.

JAMES

I'm... Scared...

ZOOLOGIST

Me too. We have to get out of here.

All MONKEYS in their various cages go silent and mime slitting
their throats, menacingly.

ZOOLOGIST

Oh God!

The ZOOLOGIST and JAMES run out of the cage, lock it, then
sprint out of the building, screaming.