

# THE LORE (The Curse of the Animals) -- EXCERPT

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Written with Brooklyn Children's Theatre

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## PART 2, AZ (After Zoo)

*Prospect Park morphs into the zoo, and bars and cages replace the lake and lush greens. We see the Zoo Animals lounging; Jaguar is reading a newspaper, Kangaroo is polishing her heirloom necklace, Ferret is eating, Wolf is grooming themselves, The Horse is tanning, Opossum is lounging, and The Cub is exercising.*

CUB: ...and a-one, and a-two, and a-three—

HORSE: (getting some sun) Must you do your juvenile workouts right there? You're blocking my light.

FERRET: (Constantly eating) They're getting big and strong, and I think it's time well spent! Maybe you could do something other than lay around and tan all day...

HORSE: I work very hard carrying humans on my back, thank you very much! I'm entitled to a little "me" time.

OPOSSUM: (to Kangaroo, noticing that she is cleaning her necklace) You're really scrubbing that thing, huh?

KANGAROO: It's good to take care of the things that matter most to you.

HORSE: ...like a necklace? (Scoffs.)

CUB: It sure is shiny!

KANGAROO: Not just any necklace! This was passed down to me from my great great great...

WOLF: 2 minutes later...

KANGAROO: .... great great great...

HORSE: 2 hours later...

KANGAROO: ...great grandmother.

CUB: That's a long time!

KANGAROO: It is! And, my mom, who got it from her great great great -- (*Everybody groans*)

KANGAROO: Well, you get the point. Anyway, my mom says that the necklace has water from the Magical Lake before it dried up. As the legend goes:

*“Make sure to keep this necklace near,  
Protect it in your pocket,  
And if there's danger strewn about,  
Just open like a locket.”*

CUB: Wow!!

HORSE: You mean like in the lore? That's not real.

KANGAROO: Stop being such a naysayer. (*HORSE neighs in retort.*) I believe it!

FERRET: I hate to break it to you, but Raven is right. That story is made up. Can any of you pass the carrot souffle?

*One of the animals passes food to Ferret.*

JAGUAR: (referring to the newspaper) Oh wow...

OPOSSUM: Whatcha reading?

JAGUAR: The humans turned the last remaining free home for animals into... you guessed it.. a zoo.

WOLF: Last remaining free home? What does that mean?

JAGUAR: You don't know? Our families were forced to live in these cages, that's why we're here. Our ancestors lived on free land, and now all the animals in the world live in cages like us.

OPOSSUM: Hey hey hey! You make that sound like it's a bad thing. (Plays dead) Just so you know, I'm playing dead.

CUB: (now doing jumping jacks): Yeah! We have plenty of space to play and move our bodies!

*(The Horse groans.)*

FERRET: (devouring the carrot souffle) And we get all the food we want!

WOLF: Plenty of water to drink and wash my fur, too. Besides, that's all just a folk lore. We don't know if that's even true or not..

JAGUAR: Sure, we have all those things, but what about freedom? We can't leave. Don't you ever wonder what it's like beyond these bars? (To Kangaroo) And as for the lore, I believe it.

HORSE: (alarmed) Do I hear you trying to plan... a revolt?!?!?!?

*(All the animals put on their biggest smiles, reassuring the Horse that Jag meant no harm.)*

KANGAROO: Jag meant nothing by that statement, I assure you!

WOLF: Nothing at all!

FERRET: (quietly, to Jag) You better shush or you're gonna get us all in trouble!

*(They all smile and pose for the horse, the horse rolls its eyes and walks away)*