

ANDY SERKIS VOICES A SUFFERING, LONELY CHIMPANZEE FOR NEW PETA US VIDEO

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Actor Joins Call for Release of Endangered Ape From Zoo

London – It's not *Rise of the Planet of the Apes* or *King Kong*: it's a new [PETA US video](#), narrated by Andy Serkis, that shares the story of Louie, a chimpanzee who has apparently lived in isolation from his species at a roadside zoo in the US state of Michigan for six years – nearly all his life.

"Male chimpanzees like me usually stay with their families their entire lives, but I never even got to know mine", says Serkis, as Louie, in the video. "Share my story, and tell the DeYoung Family Zoo to release me to an accredited sanctuary where I'll finally be able to meet other chimpanzees and live the way I was meant to live. And please don't support businesses that keep animals like me behind bars. "

In an [exclusive interview](#) with PETA US, Serkis also reveals what made him take on the role of Louie: "I've obviously over the years become very connected to stories and the lives of the great apes in our world, and this story really blew my mind", he says. "The fact [is] that here we have a chimpanzee shipped to a small family zoo, where he's now kept in a cage, completely isolated, unable to socialize, living a very lonely and miserable existence, and it just broke my heart. It's the same as treating a human being the same way – it really is."

Earlier this month, PETA US sent an official notice to the DeYoung Family Zoo – where Louie and a second chimpanzee, Tommy, are apparently being kept in isolation – warning the facility of its intent to sue under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), which requires plaintiffs to inform potential defendants at least 60 days prior to legal action. In its letter, the group contends that denying highly social primates the opportunity to lead active, stimulating lives and engage in species-specific behaviour – as well as allowing visitors to yell and gawk at Louie – all constitute violations of the ESA, which makes it unlawful for chimpanzees to be harmed or harassed.

PETA US – whose motto reads, in part, that "animals are not ours to use for entertainment" – has offered to arrange for the transfer of both chimpanzees to an accredited sanctuary at no cost to the DeYoung Family Zoo.

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