

A flourish of tin trumpets. Etc.

THEATER MANAGER

Some *how!* Some *where!* Some *when!* In a tolerable little town, in a common little cottage, in a fairish little family: there once lived a perfectly normal, awfully ordinary, adequately acceptable little boy - named "James."

Morning. A cottage folds open, revealing a family waking up: JAMES - a little boy - and his MUM and DAD.

**SONG: (HOW COULD TOMORROW EVER BE) AS PERFECT AS TODAY**

JAMES

I'M JUST A STANDARD BOY,  
QUITE YOUR STANDARD LAD,  
I LIVE IN A STANDARD HOUSE  
WITH A STANDARD MUM AND A STANDARD DAD.

DAD

I'M THE STANDARD DAD.

MUM

AND I'M THE STANDARD MUM.

MUM AND DAD

(kissing)

(M'WAH)  
STATISTICALLY ABOUT AS STANDARD  
AS A PAIR OF PARENTS COME.

JAMES, MUM AND DAD

BUT TOGETHER WE ARE MORE THAN STANDARD;  
WE'RE A HAPPY FAMILY.  
"ONE PLUS ONE PLUS ONE" ADDS UP TO MUCH MORE THAN THREE.

AND THIS HAS BEEN OUR LUCKY LUCKY LOT:  
THAT EACH DAY IS THE BEST ONE THAT WE'VE GOT.

DAD

I ASK YOU...  
HOW COULD TOMORROW EVER BE AS PERFECT AS TODAY?  
LOOK AT THAT SUN:  
IT'S ONE IN A MILLION-AND-ONE  
AND CLIMBING.  
IF IT GETS ANY BRIGHTER, THEN MY HEART MIGHT BURST!  
BUT I WOULD POSE THIS QUESTION TO YOU FIRST:  
OH, HOW CAN THIS POOR RELATION CALLED "TOMORROW" EVER RATE?  
IT'S NOT EVEN NOON, BUT STILL I SAY:  
HOW COULD TOMORROW EVER BE  
(AT LEAST WITHIN THIS CENTURY)  
HOW COULD IT BE AS PERFECT AS TODAY?

MUM

Rise and shine, James! This could be the best day of your life - you wouldn't want to miss that, would you?

JAMES

HOW COULD ANOTHER MORNING BE SO STUFFED WITH HOPE AND CHEER?  
I NEED A PINCH;  
SO PINCH ME OR ELSE IT'S A CINCH  
I'M DREAMING.

MUM

NOTHING CAN EVER UPSET YOU ON A DAY THIS SWEET.  
NOW EAT YOUR BREAKFAST...

JAMES

I'M MUCH TOO HAPPY TO EAT!

DAD

WE PROBABLY DON'T DESERVE A DAY SO CLEARLY AT THE PEAK  
OF JUST WHAT TWENTY-FOUR HOURS CAN DO.

MUM

WHO CAN IMPROVE A PERFECT SCORE?

JAMES

HOW CAN A DAY DO ANY MORE

JAMES, MUM AND DAD

ESPECIALLY WHEN I GET TO SPEND THAT DAY WITH YOU!

DAD

Woah! Hold the phone and shut the barn door!  
The circus is in town!

JAMES

The *circus*!

MUM

I'll get my purse.

DAD

Look! They've got clowns...

JAMES

With bulbous red noses?

DAD

Hm! And a Bearded Lady...

JAMES

Ew-Yuck!

MUM

She probably has a skin condition...

DAD

Hah! And a Gigantic White Rhinoceros!

JAMES

Did you say...?

MUM

A Gigantic White Rhinoceros! Oh dear!

DAD

Huh - don't worry; I'm sure they keep it locked safely in a cage.

JAMES

Mum... Dad... I want to see a Gigantic White Rhinoceros more than anything in the whole world!

MUM

Who are we to stand in the way of James's utter happiness?

DAD

Ho, ho - we've got to get going; The circus starts this afternoon!

JAMES and FAMILY head for the circus.

JAMES

Gosh! Are *all these people* going to the circus?

DAD

That's where the fun is!

MAILMAN

HOW COULD TOMORROW EVER MAKE ME SMILE AS MUCH AS THIS?

TRAFFIC COP

I DON'T KNOW HOW,  
'CAUSE WOW - IT'S A WONDERFUL "NOW"  
[I'M FEELING.]

COLLIER

[I'M FEELING...] CHIRPIER THAN A BIRDIE  
AND IT DON'T SEEM FAIR.

MAYOR

IS IT SOMETHING THEY PUT IN THE WATER?

GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR

OR JUST SOMETHING IN THE AIR?

ALL

OH, HOW COULD TOMORROW EVER BE AS PERFECT AS TODAY?  
WE HAVEN'T SEEN IT YET, BUT STILL:  
THE ANSWER IS TOMORROW NEVER STOOD A CHANCE OF MEASURING UP:  
IT COULDN'T, IT CAN'T AND PROBABLY NEVER WILL.

JAMES

I KNOW THAT LIFE ISN'T ALWAYS KITES AND SAILBOATS.

ENSEMBLE

(KITES AND SAILBOATS)

JAMES

SOME DAYS YOUR LUCK RUNS OUT.

ENSEMBLE

DOODLE-A DOODLE-A DOODLE-A DOODLE-A DOODLE-A DOO

JAMES

BUT UNTIL SOMEONE LETS ME KNOW IT'S OVER...  
OH LOOK!

MUM

WHAT'S THAT?

JAMES

A FOUR-LEAF CLOVER!

DAD

*Another four-leaf clover! James, that's three  
this week - and it's only Tuesday!*

JAMES

Look! *There's* the gigantic white rhinoceros!

MUM

You'd think they'd make the cage a bit  
sturdier. Looking-wise, I mean.

JAMES

Boy, that rhino looks *mad!*

DAD

Ho, ho - I'll bet that horn could do some  
damage, eh, boy?

MUM

Popcorn... Popcorn, anyone?

JAMES

Oh, Mum! You're always worrying about nothing!

DAD

Quiet son! Here it comes!

ALL

OH, HOW COULD TOMORROW EVER BE AS PERFECT AS TODAY?  
WHAT CAN GO WRONG  
AS LONG AS YOUR LIFE IS A SONG  
YOU'RE SINGING?  
HOW DID WE CHANCE TO COME UPON A DAY THIS SWELL?  
PERHAPS SOME MAGICAL WIZARD CAST A PERFECTLY MAGIC SPELL...  
WELL, TIME AND AGAIN YOU'VE HEARD IT SAID:  
"THE BEST IS YET TO COME."  
BUT HOW CAN YOU TRUST AN OLD CLICHÉ?

MEN

COUNT YOUR CHICKENS... ("DONT," I'VE LEARNED.)  
A PENNY SAVED, A PENNY EARNED...

WOMEN

HOW COULD TOMORROW EVER BEST  
A BETTER-ER DAY THAN ALL THE REST?

MEN

HOW COULD TOMORROW EMULATE  
SUPERLATIVES AS GRAND AND GREAT?

JAMES, MUM AND DAD

HOW COULD TOMORROW EVER TOP  
A DAY THAT YOU WISH WOULD NEVER STOP?

ALL

HOW COULD TOMORROW EVER BE  
AS PICTURE-PERFECT AS TODAY!

The Gigantic White Rhinoceros  
breaks out of his cage. The rhino  
roars and attacks. The CROWD  
screams and retreats. Silence.

JAMES

Mum...? Dad...?

Button.