

Lydia the Tattooed Lady

You have a secret, a glorious secret. You are so proud of your secret, although truth to tell, you had little to do with it. But just the same, it is your secret and yours alone. Well, yours and your brothers'. Not that you mind sharing with your brothers; they are family, and family is the most important thing in the world. At least that's what Jack says, and he's always right.

You love your brothers very much, and they care for you too, even though you're the youngest and a girl. John always said how he would stick up for you, even though you know you don't really deserve it. Jack and John are the two most wonderful brothers in the world. They are rich and powerful and they own a circus.

And your father is rich and powerful, too. He's Senator Hiram Bungling, the most powerful man in Washington DC. Because he's an important man, he rarely has time for his family, so Jack sort of had to be the man of the household. Luckily Jack's smart as a whip and he does a fine job of leadership.

Yes, you are actually Lydia Bungling, the Bungling Sister. Nobody but Jack and John know who you really are. You are Jack's "Ace in the Hole." This makes you feel really special. It is the first time Jack has actually used you in one of his clever plans and you want to make him proud of you for once.

So you cannot let anyone know who you really are. Jack wants to buy this circus and you cannot afford to mess up. John usually helps Jack with his schemes when Jack wants to buy a circus. John will disguise himself – he's a master of disguise – and sabotage the acts. But Jack wanted you to join in, and you need to make him proud.

You'll finally be part of the family now. You've always felt a bit of an outcast. Father has his politics and Jack and John have their circus and you didn't have anything. You want to fit in. You hate being alone. You're so lonely. But now Lydia Bungling can actually be a part of something. But that isn't *your* secret; Jack and John know it too.

Jack wanted you to join Colonel Rawhide's Circus and sabotage some of the acts. He said that this could be your first step to being accepted as part of the family. You don't like the idea of sabotage, but the chance to be a real Bungling is too important to pass up. You have a proud family history to live up to. You had to help, and you accepted gratefully.

The first step was to become useful to the circus. Not having any innate talents, you had to try something

different. You had your entire body covered in tattoos. This was painful but necessary. Sometimes you must suffer through pain to help the ones you love.

Once you were tattooed, you joined Colonel Rawhide's Circus, and not a moment too soon. The circus was just about to leave on a tour of Europe. You joined the circus and got to travel. It was fun and exciting and different.

The circus folk accepted you immediately, in a way your family never did. You weren't used to this acceptance and friendship. These folks think of each other as family. And they wanted you to join their family. They thought that you were good enough to be one of them, unconditionally. They didn't know you. Jack had said that they were fools and Jack is always right, but they are fools with big hearts.

You almost felt bad to have to sabotage their acts. But that is what you were there for. You had a real family, and your real family needed you. Oh how delicious that sounds; they *needed* you. It was so wonderful to feel needed for a change.

And so you performed the sabotage, although you waited until the last possible moment. It was in France, right before the circus was supposed to return to the United States, and you would return to Jack. Your first target was Uma the Unicyclist. Uma was a nice person, but she had the easiest act to sabotage. A few twists with a wrench and her six foot tall unicycle was unstable.

And during her act, she slipped and fell. But she didn't land well. You don't understand it. Uma has always known how to land. It's not like she hadn't slipped before, in practice at least. But she slipped and fell and severely twisted her ankle. It made you wince so badly; it was like it hurt you. You feel really bad about it; you didn't want to injure anyone. But Uma will be fine. She is under doctor's care in France. If you really want to check on her, you could ask Daisy Belle. The two were close friends.

Well, while you did feel bad, you had promised at least two acts of sabotage. So you went after Preston the Prestidigitator. He was a shady character and you never cared much for him. You jimmied a lock in the box that he uses when sawing a woman in half. The panel swung open to reveal the illusion. Preston was booed offstage and Colonel Rawhide had to fire him.

Again you felt that strange mix of depression and elation. You just cost a man his job, but Jack would be so proud of you. Sometimes it is difficult knowing what the right thing to do is, but you think

you made the right choice. Family is important. Family is *everything*. Your family are the only people who care about you.

Or so you thought. And that's your big secret. Not that you are the younger sister of Jack and John Bungling, not that you have been sabotaging acts, no. Your big secret is your secret admirer. Isn't it wonderful? Somebody loves you. It doesn't matter that you don't know who. Somebody *loves* you. Not even your brothers know about your secret admirer.

For some time now, you had been getting anonymous notes and gifts and flowers. Sometimes these notes would be delivered by Bobo the Dog Faced Boy or Susan Wildes, the Strong Woman. But they were sworn to secrecy. You couldn't get them to tell, no matter how hard you tried.

While you're not sure, you think your love may be one of the Townshed Brothers. They are Siamese twins and it can be difficult to tell them apart. They constantly argue which is annoying. Your brothers never argue. John always does exactly what Jack tells him to.

You remember one time, in France, when you had gone into town with the Townshed Brothers. Everyone was pointing and staring and you didn't feel at all comfortable. Finally, you ran away while the Townshed brothers were arguing.

Then there was the time that you, the Townshed brothers, Clifford Credenza, Bobo, and Franklin Winters (the lion tamer) were all talking. You were discussing Daisy Belle, Colonel Rawhide's fiancée, and how she doesn't care for the circus. That wouldn't be a problem except that she's been pestering Colonel Rawhide to sell the circus.

Well, a plan was formed where one of the group would don a mask and try to kidnap Daisy and the rest of the circus folk would rescue her and let the kidnapper go. You don't remember who the person who was the kidnapper is supposed to be, but you think it might be you. You know that the Townshed brothers are supposed to be bait.

But wait, you're supposed to be trying to get Colonel Rawhide to sell the circus. But you want to help your friends. Oh, you aren't sure what to do. But, anyway, the whole point of the story is that the brothers started arguing about something again, and now they are really mad and you are at your wits' end. You want so much to be loved. Why do they have to keep fighting like that?

It's even been affecting your dreams. While on the steamboat back to America, you had a horrible dream about a ghastly white figure haunting you, like a clown or a ghost, or something. You woke up feeling dizzy and tired and you were faint for most of the

day. You haven't had any bad dreams since, but you were worried.

But not any more. You are home and brother Jack will be coming to visit. You need to meet with him, secretly, to find out what you need to do next. You cannot wait for his praise, to truly be part of the family.

Although you will not tell him that you are loved. That's *your* secret.

ITEMS

Tattoos: You are covered in tattoos. We can provide some temporary tattoos, but you should bring your own, too. While in Europe, you had the royal crests of most of the countries you visited tattooed on your body as a sort of souvenir. We will have one in particular for you, that you must wear.

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You are a mess. You have little to no self-esteem. You desperately want approval from your brothers and you want to be loved by someone. You will have to choose which is more important to you: family, or "doing the right thing," and just what *is* the right thing anyway?

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: The owner of the circus. He is a good man, and he treats his employees well. You feel sorry, sometimes, that you have to sabotage his circus, but then you think of Jack's approval and you feel a little better.

Daisy Belle: Colonel Rawhide's fiancée. She doesn't like the circus. She wants Colonel Rawhide to retire. See, you are doing Colonel Rawhide a *favor* by sabotaging the circus. Once he sells it to Jack, he can retire in peace with the woman he loves.

Jack Bungling: Your eldest brother. Jack is a good man and he's very smart. He's always right. You finally have a chance to be accepted by Jack and be part of the Bungling family. You don't want to lose this golden opportunity.

The Flying Credenza Brothers: They keep to themselves a great deal. They have their own private wagon, and they don't let anyone else in.

Herman Binkowicz, "Binky" the Clown: Binky was one of the original performers. He is a very funny man and always makes you laugh.

Susan Wildes, The Strong Lady: She is one of the two who bring you notes from your secret admirer. You've tried getting her to tell you who it is but she's sworn to silence.

Franklin Winters, The Lion Tamer: He is a nice guy, although he does drink a lot. You almost feel sorry for him.

The Townshed Brothers: You think that one of them is your secret admirer, but you aren't sure which. They argue a great deal, which is a bit offputting as your family has always been happy and close. Well, Jack and John have been close, but now you have a chance to be close to your family, too.

Helena Ferez, the Bearded Lady: She has a real beard. You can't imagine what it must have been like growing up with a real beard.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallower: He has a very flashy act. You suspect that you'll be asked to sabotage it though. The flashier the act, the easier it is for things to go wrong.

Bobo the Dog Faced Boy: He joined the circus in Europe. He also has been bringing you notes and also won't talk about who he brings them from. They aren't from him, though. He's only eight years old.

Zelda the Clown: She is a mute who joined the circus in Europe. You've often wondered if she was a true mute or simply didn't talk.

Señora Mysterioso: An older gypsy woman who tells fortunes and is also a snake charmer. You're curious if she can tell you who your secret admirer is.

The Masked Rider: The Masked Rider joined the circus in Europe. The Masked Rider likes privacy, but is very talented.

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus while it was in Europe. The Knife Thrower is very talented and reminds you of Jack for some reason.

Zimmie the Clown: He also likes his privacy. Zimmie is fairly rude and routinely scares small children. He even scares you sometimes.

The Great Zamboni: He arrived today asking for a job. Colonel Rawhide decided to give him a chance. You know nothing about him. Hey! He's probably John. Your brother, John, is a master of disguise, but – truth be told – he isn't too bright. He must be

disguised as "The Great Zamboni." Oh, this will be fun to watch.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: Your father. He will probably throw a fit when he sees your tattoos, but since you **do** have him wrapped around your little finger, it will all be fine in the end.

John Bungling: The younger of your older Brothers. He is a master of disguise and today he is "The Great Zamboni."

Uma the Unicyclist: You sabotaged her unicycle causing her to fall and twist her ankle. She had to stay on in a doctor's care in France. You know she was close friends with Daisy, so Daisy might know how she is doing.

Preston the Prestidigitator: You also sabotaged his act. Colonel Rawhide had to fire him. He was somewhat of a jerk, so you don't feel too bad.

ABILITIES

Combat: 9 cards.

Sabotage: You know this circus well and you know how to sabotage an act.

My Father Is Hiram Bungling: You have the ear of your daddy, Hiram Bungling, one of the most influential men in Washington. You can advise him on three issues and will be given a special card to do so. However, Jack and John can also advise him.

Flutter your Eyelashes: You can have one person perform one task for you. That task must be doable and not against that person's basic interests (not suicidal, not something that is wholly against character, and so forth). You can only do this once.

Binky the Clown: You find Binky so hilarious that after a few minutes of listening to him (or interacting with him in any way), you must burst into laughter, no matter what the topic of conversation is. You cannot stop laughing until he leaves, and afterwards, you cannot clearly recall what he was talking about (or doing), but – my – that Binky sure is funny.