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COLONEL SEBASTIAN T. RAWHIDE, HIMSELF.

You were born Milton Fenwick of Piscataway, New Jersey. Not that anyone knows this. In fact, you do everything in your power to guard this valuable secret. To the world, you are Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide, honored veteran, Southern gentleman, and owner of the most fabulous circus on the planet. Nobody must ever know that you were born to a meek little family in a meek little house. No! You are bigger than that. You are larger than life and you will stay that way!

No, nobody must know. Especially not your fiancée, Daisy Bell. Ah, pure, sweet, innocent, lovely, gracious, kind, charming, sweet – wait a minute, you said sweet already – modest, caring Daisy. You first met Daisy when the Circus was touring Georgia. Her father owns a small plantation there. You swept her away with your Southern charm. And she delighted you with her grace and style.

When it came time for the Circus to move on, you presented her with a lovely diamond engagement ring and asked for her hand in marriage. She agreed and her father agreed, although he disapproves. “You may run a freak show, but you are a true Southern gentleman, and I know that one day you will find a respectable position in life,” he said when he gave you permission to marry Daisy. By God, how can you tell her the truth now?

Daisy is the love of your life and you would do anything for her. Well, except for one thing. Daisy has been pressuring you to sell the Circus and settle down and become an accountant. Sell the Circus? The circus is your life and soul. She might well be asking you to cut off your left arm. Become an accountant? Sit behind a desk all day counting beans on your blotter? That’s the road to a slow death if you’ve ever heard one. How can you “settle down” like that? But... But... How can you refuse the love of your life? If only there was a way to change her mind about the Circus.

You love the Circus and you feel the performers are your family. You could never abandon them, even with Daisy’s urging. You care for all your acts, from the talented Credenza Brothers to the bearded Helena Ferez. You especially are proud of your “special” family, those born apart from the rest of the world, not given a chance in normal society. There are those who call them “Freaks,” but you know that they are people who have been given a gift, and your job is to help them show off their gift to the world.

The Circus started as a small wild west show, with a few wild animal acts, some stunt riders, and some

acrobats. You eventually expanded to a circus, hiring Rupert and Rudolph Townshed, the Siamese twins; and Helena. (You had Helena checked by an actual Doctor. She is female and she does have a real beard. You have a certificate to prove it now, too.) But what really got the Circus rolling was Binky the Clown.

Born Herman Binkowicz, Binky has a natural talent for physical comedy. Just being in his presence for a few minutes is all you need to start cracking up. His hilarious antics and dexterous gags made him the perfect crowd pleaser and the star of your show. People started coming in from miles around just to see Binky. The Circus flourished, you dropped the wild west show, and you were well on your way to fame and fortune. You owe Herman a great deal, and you don’t even think he knows it. He’s a humble man who just wants to make people happy.

From the boost Herman provided, you were able to set a tour for Europe. You started with England, then France, and then on to the smaller countries like Freedonia. You hired a number of new acts in Europe: Zelda the mime – she’s actually mute; The Masked Rider, the best horseback rider in all of Europe; Lydia, the Tattooed Lady; and a few others. You’ve made your way back to America now, just in time for the American debut of these new acts.

Unfortunately, the European tour wasn’t as successful as you would have liked. You didn’t really perform to “Kings and Heads of State,” although some Barons and Duchesses would occasionally drop by for a show. There were also a number of accidents toward the end of the tour. Uma the Unicyclist fell and severely twisted her ankle; she’s in a hospital in France. The box Preston the Prestidigitator used to saw a woman in half broke open revealing that she was contorted and he was sawing air. He was laughed out of the ring and you had to let him go.

The Circus is now in deep financial trouble. You need to pay the bank \$500 in cash by the end of the show, or the bank will own the Circus, and the contracts for all of your acts. However, you also owe a number of your performers back pay. You have to pay them too, or they might leave, breach of contract. And you cannot starve your friends... your family.

Worse yet, the infamous Bungling Brothers have their eyes on the Circus. The Bungling Brothers – Jack and John – are rich and devious. They are the sons of Senator Hiram Bungling, a powerful and influential man. The Bungling Brothers run a huge Circus. They get the acts and materials from buying out smaller Circuses, like yours. If your Circus defaults to the bank tonight, the Bungling brothers can buy it up for a song.

It is rumored that the Bunglings will even go so far as to sabotage a Circus when they set their sights on it. It's possible that Uma and Preston fell to their schemes, although that happened in Europe, and the Bunglings tend to stay put in America where their father can bail them out. So far, nothing too awful has happened, but you'd better let folks know to keep their eyes open. People could get hurt, and you cannot stand for that. But that annoying Jack Bungling has been hanging around your Circus, gloating. You'll have to give him a piece of your mind if he shows up again.

Your only hope of saving your Circus is to put on the best show ever tonight. You're opening to a large audience. Keep them happy and the money will roll in. Make them upset and, well, accounting is your only other option. But either way, the show must go on!

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You are ringmaster in the big top and without. You see yourself as a father figure to your acts, even the ones older than you are. Your two big loves are the Circus and Daisy Belle and you would do anything to protect them.

One note: You made up the name Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide because you liked the sound. You cannot remember what the T. stands for, and must answer with a different T name (Thomas, Terrance, Todd, etc) each time you are asked.

ITEMS

The circus cashbox. It contains the few savings that you need to... to... Wait. It was right here somewhere. No, you know you left it in your "office" wagon last night. But it's gone. What should you do?

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Daisy Belle: Your one true love. She loves you too, or at least loves who she thinks you are. Sigh. She is pestering you to sell the Circus and become an accountant. She looks down at your showmen and "freaks." If only there was some way to convince her to love the circus the way you do. She does help out in the Circus from time to time, taking on tasks that you don't have time for. You can rely on her if you need assistance. She still wears the lovely diamond engagement ring you bought for her well over a year ago.

Jack Bungling: A black-hearted scoundrel if ever there was one. You cannot kick him out of the Circus; he has a ticket. And you cannot have him arrested; he hasn't committed any crimes, not that you can prove anyway. Besides, a phone call to his father, Senator Hiram Bungling, would get him free in nothing flat. He and his brother John run a competing Circus and they want to buy you out.

The Credenza Brothers: Alexander, Bartholomew, Clifford, and Douglas. You met them while the show was touring the Midwest three years ago, and they have been a staple of your Circus ever since. These four have to be the best aerial acrobatic team you have ever seen. When they hit the high wire or the trapeze, they are in perfect synchronization. It is presumed that this is due to their pre-show ritual (performed secretly in their show wagon), but the Credenzas aren't saying.

Binky The Clown: The man who saved the Circus. His zany antics and clever jokes so enticed the public that they came by the wagonload. And still, he remains humble to this very day. You owe him \$50 of back pay.

Susan Wildes, The Strong Woman: Her strength is unnatural. She's rake thin and doesn't appear to have any real muscles at all, but she can effortlessly lift weights that would make three strong men struggle. She's a nice young lady, though.

The Lion Tamer: Franklin Winters has an almost natural affinity with animals; you can tell he's worked at his job for many years. He is one of the top in his profession. You also owe him \$50 in back pay.

Rupert and Rudolph Townshed: The Siamese twins; you constantly get their names mixed up. They have always been argumentative. Why, you remember one time, just when they were getting started, that Rupert – or was it Rudolph? – stormed into your office and demanded that he be paid the same as his brother (you were paying the one on the left \$2 more a show because he can play the fiddle). You had to give him singing lessons and a \$2 raise to calm him down. Lately it's been worse than ever. Now, you've heard a rumor that they aren't speaking to each other. That's ridiculous! It's time to put a stop to this.

Helena Ferez: A genuine bearded lady. She has been with the Circus for many years. One strange thing: on the recent trip to Europe, she took a leave of absence before you entered Fandonia, joining back up with the troupe after you left neighboring Freedonia. She's always claimed to be from Rumania, but now you wonder...

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallower: You signed this man up the minute you saw him. He's everything you want in a Circus performer: he's a flashy showman with a style that cannot be beat. Also he can eat fire.

Bobo, the Dog Faced Boy: He joined up in Europe. While he has only been with the Circus a few short weeks, he has already started to fit right in. In fact, when he first started, he barely spoke English. Now he can communicate just fine. Bobo has been working with Franklin Winters and he seems to get along well with the wild animals.

Zelda the Clown: You aren't certain if Zelda is her real name, as she is completely mute. However, her tumbling, mime, and dexterity make her a valuable addition to the Circus. Zelda also joined up in Europe.

Señora Mysterioso: She tells fortunes in the sideshow before the main acts begin in the Circus tent. During the show, she charms snakes. You've never had the nerve to ask her to tell your fortune; truth be told, she gives you the willies. She joined up just before you left for Europe.

The Masked Rider: You don't know the true identity of the Masked Rider, but – without a doubt – this person is the best bareback horse rider you have ever seen. The Masked Rider pulls off stunts and tricks you have never seen before, not even at some of those Wild West shows. In fact, the Masked Rider would make all of those old cowboys green with envy, especially since **they** aren't from Europe, unlike the Masked Rider. You owe the Masked Rider \$50 of back pay as well.

The Knife Thrower: OK, you know the old trick. The knife thrower only pretends to throw blindfolded and trick knives pop up out of the rigged target. Well, this person must not have seen the trick because your knife thrower never uses it. Sure, knives are thrown while blindfolded, but a bullseye is hit every time. Yup, the knife thrower is that good. Like the Masked Rider, this person joined the Circus in Europe. You owe the Masked Rider \$50.

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: Lydia joined the sideshow just before you left for Europe. She's a sweet, shy, woman, but you get the feeling she's hiding something. Sure, many folks join the Circus because they're running away from a secret, but you do try to have a clean show and a close family. Maybe you could get Daisy to talk to her.

Zimmie the Clown: You needed another clown to round out the act before you took it to Europe and Zimmie was available. He doesn't talk much, and he sometimes scares the kids, but he is humorous in his own way. Unfortunately, times are tough and you've decided to put Zimmie on probation. You must let him know that if he has any problems today, you will have to ask him to leave the Circus.

The Great Zamboni: He came to you this morning asking for a chance to join the Circus. Although you

don't have enough money to make ends meet, you do need another magician to replace Preston. You have given him a preliminary tryout in today's show and if he does well, you can hire him, and *then* worry about paying him.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: The adage states, "As Bungling goes, so goes the Nation." Senator Bungling is one of the most influential men in the country. It is a shame that his sons, Jack and John, are so slimy.

John Bungling: Jack's younger brother. You have met John a few times, but mostly in passing. He is a capable circus performer, but he isn't very bright.

Uma the Unicyclist: Poor Uma fell off her cycle in France and twisted her ankle badly. It may have been sprained. You know that she was close friends with Daisy, so you've tried to be comforting. Uma is currently resting in a hospital in France.

Preston the Prestidigitator: He was a fairly capable stage magician, but not very flashy. You had to let him go after a cabinet flipped open revealing that illusion during his "sawing a woman in half" act.

ABILITIES

Combat: 10 cards.

Ladies and Gentlemen: You can so enrapture a crowd with your speech that you can keep them interested in your monologue for five minutes. They must pay attention to you, and ignore all else. However, you can designate up to three people who can ignore this ability and do something in the background while you create this diversion. One use.

This is **My** Circus: You can get one person to perform a non-lethal task for you, as long as you own the Circus. This ability will not work on Jack Bungling. One use.

Binky the Clown: You find Binky so hilarious that after a few minutes of talking with 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 you were talking about (or doing), but – boy – that Binky sure is funny.

DAISY BELLE



Oh goodness, where to begin? You were born but a scant handful of years ago – a lady never reveals her true age. You are still in the blossom of youth, but you are old enough to know better. And you are old enough to be engaged. So you are.

Your father – a true Southern Gentleman if there ever were one – is the owner of a small plantation in Georgia. You are the apple of his eye and he would never allow you to come to harm. So he was naturally suspicious when the circus came to town a couple of years ago and you fell for a circus man.

Well, not just any man, Colonel Sebastian Rawhide owns the circus. And he is a fine Southern gentleman; he fought in the war. You took Sebastian home to meet father and he presented you with a gorgeous diamond ring and asked for your hand in marriage. Father was impressed with his charm and poise and you and Sebastian are engaged.

The Circus had to move on through Georgia, so you packed your bags and went “on the road” with them. Father is impatient for the two of you to marry, and so are you, but there are a few details to be worked out before you will allow yourself to wed Sebastian.

Oh you do love him, and he loves you. But you are a practical woman with down to earth ideals and goals. Sebastian runs the circus well and is respected by his... employees, but circus life isn't proper. He has all the skills needed to become an accountant and a good one. An accountant, now that's a respectable job, and your husband needs to have a respectable job.

And the people he associates with. Oh, some of them are the most lowbrow and some of them scare you. How he can call the freaks of nature he puts on display his friends you'll never understand. How can a young girl degrade herself by lifting weights for a living, or by covering herself with tattoos? Why he even has a woman act with a full beard! Dreadful.

And the men. Ugh. The Siamese twins are ill educated and rude. It gives you the shivers just to look at them. The lion tamer is a drunk. And while you enjoy the antics of the clowns, you have no intention of befriending anyone in such a low profession. You are a fine Southern lady and such things are beneath you. Yes, Sebastian must give up his vagabond circus life or he will never have your hand in marriage.

But that isn't the true sticking point. You would marry Sebastian even if he didn't become an accountant, except for one thing. He is lying to you, and he lied to your father. You work as his assistant in the circus, doing what chores and duties he doesn't have time for.

You have access to his safe and private paperwork. There is little that he can hide from you. And you know the truth.

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide's real name is Milton Fenwick. And he has never told you. You first suspected that Sebastian T. Rawhide wasn't his real name when you realized that he could never remember what the T. stood for. He would tell one person “Thomas,” and another “Ted.” But you have found documents containing his real name, so you know.

Now you understand the change in the public name. Milton Fenwick's Circus of the Spectacular doesn't have quite the right ring to it. But you cannot abide a liar, and you are upset that your love has never told you his real name. When you first found out – and this was nearly a year ago now – you wavered for days about whether to confront him. You finally decided to wait until he told you. And it has been a long wait. But you are patient and demure, and you have never let on that you know. Still, you cannot wait to see the look on his face when he tells you his real name and you say, “yes dear, I know.” That will be worth a year of waiting.

You have grown tired of waiting for the love of your life to give up the circus. It wouldn't be fair to say, “choose me or the circus,” but you are growing so tired of waiting. But there is a ray of hope. The Bungling Brothers have offered to buy the circus out. This would be the perfect time too. The circus is in a financial slump; Sebastian just needs a bit of suggestion to move on.

The circus wasn't always doing poorly. Why, this time last year the circus was doing quite well. Herman “Binky” Binkowicz is one of the most beloved clowns in the country, and his act was bringing people into the circus in droves. Sebastian was so happy.

But then the circus took a tour of Europe. The European nations were less welcoming, and though Sebastian picked up a number of new acts while you were there, the circus started losing money badly. The crowds were not impressed with the acts, even the new acts from Fandonia and Freedonia. Then, toward the last leg of the tour, things started going wrong.

When Preston the Prestidigitator's mystery box flipped open when he was sawing a woman in half, you were willing to say it was sloppiness. The box unhinged revealing that the woman he was supposed to sawing in half had been contorting and that she was unharmed. It ruined the trick. He was laughed and booed offstage. Poor Sebastian had to let him go; you had never seen your love look so unhappy.

But the real tragedy was what happened to your friend Uma. You haven't made many friends here at the

circus, and you were happy to have found a relatively normal person there. Uma rode a tall unicycle and juggled. She wasn't one of the stars, but at least she wasn't covered with tattoos or carried a disgusting snake as a pet.

You made a close friend in Uma. She was someone you could go to when you were tired or scared or bored and Sebastian was busy running the circus. Uma was kind, considerate person, who had run away from abusive, horrible, parents and was taken in by the circus. Thank the Lord she was hired by Sebastian. He runs a clean circus. You've heard horror stories about what goes on behind the big top at other circuses.

At one of the last shows in France, Uma fell off her high unicycle and twisted her ankle badly. She nearly broke her leg. You took her to a nearby doctor who said that she would be fine, but was worried about her blood loss. You were puzzled since Uma wasn't bleeding, but the Doctor said that she was very pale and lightheaded, signs of blood loss.

Uma did seem to have her head in the clouds when you talked to her, but you thought it might be the pain, or later the morphine given to her by the Doctor. She said that her cycle slipped out from under her and she was too dizzy to land properly. She did say one strange thing, though, that she had a dream about a ghostly white figure right before she started feeling dizzy. She said that someone in the circus had done this and she couldn't say who. The Doctor said that she would be fine after a few weeks, but that she should stay off her feet. Uma decided to stay in France with the Doctor until she got well. You think it may be more than that, though. The Doctor was single... and handsome.

The circus still has Uma's unicycle, and you feel that it should be examined, just in case. But you haven't pressed the issue. But with the rumors of sabotage circulating around the circus, maybe you should have someone take a look at it.

Speaking of sabotage, you are worried. When you woke up this morning, your diamond engagement ring was missing. Now you don't want to be calling anyone a thief, but it is true that circuses do sometimes attract lowlifes. You need to find your ring, but you really don't know where to start.

And you don't dare tell Sebastian. Since the circus left Europe, poor Sebastian has been downright inconsolable. You have tried your best to cheer him up, and he puts on a brave face but you can tell that he is worried. The circus is wearing on him. You have a duty to save him from a life of misery, from being a vagabond wandering the earth looking for fame. Perhaps now is the right time to do it.

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You are a demure, sweet southern Belle. You love Sebastian, but do not like the circus performers. They are beneath you, and some of them are downright scary. Of course, you always act civilly and polite to them at all times. Papa brought you up right and you will not be rude to someone simply because that person, say, carries a snake or is covered in tattoos.

ITEMS

A diamond ring. Sebastian bought it for you last year and now it is missing. Someone took it while you slept last night.

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: You do love Sebastian and you know that he loves you too. But you know that he was meant for better things than running the circus. You will not marry him, however, until he comes clean and reveals his true name to you. And you have to find that ring he gave you. Whatever has become of it?

Jack Bungling: The elder of the Bungling Brothers. Perhaps Mr. Bungling would be willing to buy the circus from Sebastian. The Bunglings are rich. Their father, Senator Hiram Bungling, is a rich and powerful man in Washington DC.

The Flying Credenza Brothers: Alexander, Bartholomew, Clifford, and Douglas. They keep to themselves. You don't know much about them, but they are very good acrobats.

Binky The Clown: Herman Binkowicz. "Binky," is one of the most loved clowns in the world. You've tried to have a serious conversation with him, but he always makes you laugh.

Susan Wildes, The Strong Woman: She is still a young girl, perhaps eighteen. How can a she take up such an undignified occupation as lifting things for a living?

Franklin Winters, The Lion Tamer: His drinking is disgusting. You try to avoid him when he's in his cups.

Rupert and Rudolph Townshed: The Siamese twins. They scare you. They are rude, argumentative, and boorish. And how they can proudly display being a freak of nature, you'll never know.

Helena Ferez: Gracious! How horrible. Her beard is a sight! You cannot bear to be near her.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallower: He seems normal enough, but how can you relate to a man who eats fire or swallows swords for a living?

Bobo, the Dog Faced Boy: The poor lad. You do feel sorry for him. He cannot be more than nine and he already sports a full face of hair. He ran away from his home in Freedonia because of the shame.

Zelda the Clown: You also feel sorry for poor Zelda, if that is her real name. She joined the circus in Europe, and has never spoken a word. The poor mute girl is also probably a runaway. You do your best to make sure that she doesn't fall ill to some moral turpitude. She is quite illiterate and you have been teaching her to read and write. She is making some good progress.

Señora Misterioso: What a horrid woman. She deals in witchcraft, telling fortunes and reading palms. And she always has that horrid snake! The only time you saw her without her snake was once in Freedonia. You had hoped that it ran away, but it came back the next day.

The Masked Rider: The Masked Rider also joined the circus in Europe. You don't know what the face behinds the mask looks like because this strange person never takes the mask off. How rude!

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus in Europe. A quite solitary individual, you know almost nothing about this one.

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: Ugh! How could a polite woman ever allow herself to get one tattoo, much less cover her entire body? You just do not understand her one bit.

Zimmie the Clown: You have never met a more unpleasant, rude individual than this man. He can be violent at times, too. You give him a very wide berth.

The Great Zamboni: He came to Sebastian this morning looking for a job. Sebastian has given him a chance to perform today as some sort of audition. He seems polite enough.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: The adage states, "As Bungling goes, so goes the Nation." Senator Bungling is one of the most influential men in the country. His two sons, Jack and John, own a circus as well. Jack has been coming to visit and perhaps may be willing to buy the circus.

John Bungling: Jack Bungling's younger brother. You have never met him.

Uma the Unicyclist: She was one of your few friends at the circus. Uma fell off her cycle and severely twisted her ankle. You suspect it may not have been an accident.

Preston the Prestidigitator: You are glad that Sebastian fired him after his mishap in France. The cad made a pass at you once. You slapped his face so hard, you left a red mark.

ABILITIES

Combat: 8 cards.

Well I Never!: You may ignore the result of a special ability played directly on you. Ones that affect a group, still affect the rest of the group as normal, but ignore you. This doesn't work on combat abilities. You can do this once.

Birthmark: You have a distinctive birthmark. See the GM before the game for a temporary tattoo.

Binky the Clown: You find Binky so hilarious that after a few minutes of talking with 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 you were talking about (or doing), but –my – that Binky is funny.

JACK BUNGLING



h yes. Money. That is what it all comes down to, yes, isn't it? Money. Money and Power. They're the same thing, really. Especially in this day and age.

Your father has a great deal of both, you know. He's a very influential Senator. It is said, "As stands Hiram Bungling, so stands the nation." And you have his ear. Almost. And that's the rub.

You have two siblings, John and Lydia. Oh, John is no threat. You are twice as clever than him, and he's happy to follow you about and follow orders. But Lydia, dear sweet Lydia, she is father's favorite. She can twist him around her little finger, and that you cannot stand for.

You have done your best, with John, to destroy Lydia's self esteem. Being a sly fellow, you've actually managed to convince her that she isn't good enough for the two of you. And so she follows you around, trying to join your circus.

Yes, it is all about the circus. You realized early on that you would never need to have a respectable job, and so you have embarked on a series of dalliances. You try your hand at something and then when you get tired, you move on to the next big thing. For now, it is the circus.

The Bungling Brothers Circus is one of the biggest and most well known in the world. It has been built from the leftovers of many a defunct competitor's circus. You see, when you want something, you don't just sit there and wait for it. You take it. And if that means having to destroy someone else's circus to get what you want, so be it.

Your plan is as simple as it is ingenious. And it can be summed up in one word: sabotage. Not that you'd ever get your hands dirty. Oh no, nothing can be traced back to you. Especially since you have a dimwitted younger brother to do your work for you.

John Bungling may be a bit slow, but he is a master of disguise. And he has some acrobatic skills. He would make a talented circus performer. In fact he has, several times. John goes in, infiltrates the circus and they start having problems. Eventually, you come in and buy the circus out, well, what's left of it anyway. Sometimes the circus doesn't even have to go out of business. You can just hire their top acts away like rats being paid to leave a sinking ship.

And now you've set your eyes on the two sweetest plums of them all. Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide's Circus of the Spectacular has always been a nasty thorn in your side. There is something odd about this one.

Somehow the Colonel has managed to acquire the most intriguing group of performers you have ever seen, and you aren't talking about the freaks.

His star performer is Herman Binkowicz, also known as Binky the Clown. Somehow Binky has the unfailing talent to make those around him laugh. Even you aren't immune; you've tried talking to him, tried luring him to your circus, but you usually end up bursting out into peals of laughter before you can make the offer. But Binky is far from Rawhide's oddest commodity.

Certainly he has freaks aplenty, a lovely bearded woman, a dog faced boy, and a set of talented if argumentative Siamese twins. But the one you find most intriguing is his strong lady. How is it that she is able to lift heavy weights so easily, weights that five men working cannot lift? How can she do that when she is a little slip of a lady with no muscles to speak of? You must know her secret. The rubes think it is a trick, but if it is, you've never figured it out, and you, sir, are no rube. And she is only the tip of the iceberg; this circus is full of mystery.

You must have this circus. All of it. And what you cannot have will be destroyed. Something this intriguing cannot pass you by. And that is why you have called in help.

Oh, and there was a second plum mentioned earlier, wasn't there? We'll get back to her in a minute. And no, she is not the strong lady. You deserve better than a mere freak. But back to your help.

You have sent John in to infiltrate the circus. It is part of your standard operating procedure. John arrives in disguise several days before you do and starts work on sabotage. You don't know who he is and you don't know what he has done. That way, should John make a mistake – he hasn't yet, but with his lack of brainpower, you know it is an eventuality – you have plausible deniability.

But this circus is too important to leave to one bungling Bungling brother, so you have brought in your secret weapon, Lydia, the Bungling sister. Through years of teasing, denial, and neglect, you have made Lydia into a woman seething with hate and longing. She desires your respect more than anything in the world, all the while hating you for it. The irony of it all makes you laugh.

In a desperate bid for attention, Lydia had herself tattooed. She wanted to join your circus as the tattooed lady. Father doesn't know; she wears very covering dresses when she visits him. You were about to turn Lydia down when you had an epiphany. What if you were to send Lydia to join Rawhide's circus? You smiled at Lydia and told her that you would like to give

her the opportunity to be part of the family after all. She was overjoyed.

Lydia joined Rawhide's circus just before it left for Europe. While there, the circus has had a few accidents. They have already lost Uma the Unicyclist and some magician. Bah, they were second rate acts anyway. Still, you will have to compliment Lydia when you see her, tell her she is well on her way to being a real Bungling, and give her a few more tasks to do. You're certain she'll eat it up. It will make the eventual rejection when you're finished with her all the more pleasurable. And then, when her spirit is shattered, there will be nobody to stand between you and your father. More specifically, your father's power.

In the meantime, there is the circus. And Daisy.

Ah yes, Daisy Belle, your sweet, sweet plum. She is a true southern lady, a woman whose grace and loveliness can only compliment a man of your upbringing. She will be yours. Oh certainly she is currently engaged to that pompous blowhard, Colonel Rawhide, but that will change soon enough.

You have come to the circus to speak to Daisy. You have brought her a bouquet of flowers and a box of chocolates to prove your affection. And then you will ask her to marry you. She knows who you are, and — more importantly — she knows who your father is. How can she refuse?

Daisy dares not refuse you. Nobody refuses Jack Bungling. If you cannot have her by love, then you will take her by force. You will carry her off and show her the error of her ways. If she refuses your tender affections, you show her no tender mercies. Start with the velvet glove, and should she have the insanely bad judgement to turn you away, you will show her your iron fist. Yes, one way or another, beautiful Daisy Belle will be yours!

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You are the villain of every bad, "you must pay the rent" melodrama ever made. Think Snidely Whiplash and you're on the right track.

ITEMS

You have a box of chocolates and a bouquet of pretty flowers.

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: Blowhard fool. Bah. He may have the most unusual collection of oddities in the world for now. But soon his circus will be yours. Rawhide owes a bank payment of \$500 tonight. If he does not pay by the end of his show (end of the game), the bank will foreclose and you can easily buy him out.

Daisy Belle: Beautiful and demure. She will make the perfect bride. And if she rejects your affection, you will have to take her by force.

The Flying Credenza Brothers: They are, indeed, some of the most talented acrobats in the world. When they are performing, they almost seem to move as one person. You will have them for your circus.

Binky The Clown: Herman Binkowicz. "Binky" is what made Col. Rawhide's circus famous. His act is amazing, and he can leave a grown man helpless with laughter in minutes. He is the star of Rawhide's circus, but soon he will work for you.

Susan Wildes, The Strong Woman: She is a true enigma. How is it that a mere wisp of a woman can lift things that would take five men or more to move? There must be some trickery, and you will discover her secrets.

Franklin Winters, The Lion Tamer: He is of no importance to you. You have instructed John that he is to drug the animals and ruin his act.

Rupert and Rudolph Townshed: The Siamese twins. They left your circus to join Rawhide's. They *left* your circus. Nobody leaves your circus unless you fire them. You will have your revenge on them for showing you up!

Helena Ferez: A bearded lady. Bearded ladies are not that uncommon, but she has an air of mystery about her. If she does put on a good show then she would make a fine addition to your circus. However, you instructed John to shave off her beard last night. If she is a true bearded lady, she should grow it back.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallow: He is also to be sacrificed to your plans. You plan to instruct Lydia to tamper with his equipment so that it burns out of control.

Bobo, the Dog Faced Boy: Annoying child! How you hate children. You will have nothing to do with him. Perhaps you could get Lydia to tamper with him in some way.

Zelda the Clown: She seems to be attached to Binky in some way. Perhaps they are a package deal. Maybe you can use her as leverage to get Binky. You should get Lydia to speak to her as well.

Señora Mysterioso: A fortune teller and a snake charmer, eh? Well, you can test her abilities by going in for a reading, or better yet having Lydia go in for one. That may blow her cover, so you'll have to think carefully about this decision.

The Masked Rider: The Masked Rider joined the circus in Europe. You know little about this person. Perhaps you should find out more.

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus in Europe. A quite solitary individual, you know almost nothing about this one.

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: Your ace in the hole, your darling younger sister Lydia. Through years of abuse and neglect, you have made her starve for your approval. You had her join the circus before it left for Europe. She has managed to sabotage the acts of Uma the Unicyclist and Preston the Prestidigitator. You will have to compliment her and then give her more orders.

Zimmie the Clown: His evil leering grin frightens the children. You do not want him at *your* circus.

The Great Zamboni: A newcomer, he seems very mysterious. But you have figured him out. He just arrived today asking for a job. It can be none other than your younger brother, John. John has done an excellent job with disguising himself; he looks like an entirely different person.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: Father. He is a rich and powerful man. Someday, however, you will be even more rich and powerful.

John Bungling: Your younger brother. He isn't too smart, but he is a master of disguise. You gave him instructions to infiltrate the circus. He has arrived this morning as The Great Zamboni.

Uma the Unicyclist: Her act was sabotaged by Lydia and she had to be fired. You don't know the details.

Preston the Prestidigitator: Lydia also managed to sabotage his act. You don't know the details.

ABILITIES

Combat: 9 cards.

My Father Is Hiram Bungling: You have the ear of 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, Lydia and John can also advise him. Lydia is Father's favorite and will get her way on her most important issue. But if you and John work together, you can influence Father's mind on the second and third issues.

Great Escape: You may play this card if you lose a combat. You escape and do not have to deal with the results of the combat. See a Roustabout after the first time you use this, as it will start to have repercussions.

Resources: You have money and resources. You can leave for a while and get things and come back. You can also use this as a one use "get out of jail free" card if you are arrested.

Binky the Clown: You find Binky so hilarious that after a few minutes of talking with 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 you were talking about (or doing), but –boy – that Binky is funny.

And now, The Man of a Thousand Faces...

DOUGLAS CREDENZA

Also Known as John Bungling



K, look, first off, you aren't really Douglas Credenza. The real Douglas Credenza is tied to a tree a few miles away. You feel kinda bad about that, but you needed to fit into the circus and you needed to fit in right away. You are a pretty good acrobat and even your older brother, Jack, is impressed by your ability in disguise.

It was never easy growing up in Jack's shadow. Jack was always smarter than you. And while you eventually grew stronger and quicker than him, he could always outthink you. At least the two of you weren't vying for your father's attention. Father always made it clear that Jack was his favorite and you were second best. And when your father is the powerful and influential Senator Hiram Bungling, well that can really sting.

It all changed, though, when Lydia was born. Father loved Lydia right from the start and she quickly replaced Jack as Father's favorite. Jack needed an ally against Lydia, and he took you on and from then on the Bungling Brothers were unstoppable.

Jack grew bored of waiting for Father to die so he could inherit the wealth and power, so he starting his diversions. His latest diversion is the Bungling Brothers Circus.

You wouldn't say that it is the best circus in the world, but it is large and impressive. The two of you have gotten acts from all over the world, mostly from defunct circuses. Most circuses live on the edge of bankruptcy – the owners aren't necessarily the best businessmen – but you and Jack are rich and Jack is smart as a whip.

Of course, circuses don't go out of business every day. That's where you come in. Through the years, you've been learning and mastering the twin arts of disguise and sabotage. You've actually gotten very good at them. Jack would be proud, except he doesn't know.

Oh, he knows that you go in to a circus disguised as someone; that's the plan. But he doesn't know who you are or what you do, and you aren't allowed to tell him. You aren't exactly sure why, but Jack says that it's important that he isn't connected in any way with your sabotage.

So you go from circus to circus, disguising yourself and trying to fit in. Then accidents start happening. You would never seem to be the cause, but sooner or later the circus would have to shut down. Sometimes people stopped coming. Sometimes the owners ran

out of money. And sometimes the frightened performers would flee. But in every case, the Bungling Brothers Circus got the acts it wanted.

And now Jack has set his sights on Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide's Circus of the Spectacular. There are a number of really talented acts here, both in the center ring and the sideshow. The problem is that they are a very close knit and very successful circus. Some of the acts defy rational explanation, even from jaded carnies. Simple sabotage won't be enough.

So Jack decided to call on assistance. Through years of verbal abuse and neglect, Lydia had grown up with a craving for attention. Recently, she had gotten her entire body tattooed to try to fit in with the circus, to be one of the Bunglings. Jack called upon her and asked her to help with the family business. With the chance for family approval in the making, Lydia could hardly refuse. When Rawhide's Circus left for a tour of Europe several months ago, Lydia the Tattooed Lady was on board.

Lydia did very well, too. By the time the circus left Europe, they had lost two acts to sabotage. Nobody was hurt... Well, nobody was killed. Uma the Unicyclist severely sprained her ankle when she fell, but she's with a doctor in France and is doing well. Unfortunately, the circus gained a number of new acts while in Europe, so it balanced out.

So, Jack has sent you in. You snuck up on Douglas Credenza, one of the world-famous Flying Credenza Brothers, and bopped him on the back of the head. You tied him to a tree a few miles away and came back disguised as Douglas.

Normally, you disguise yourself as a menial laborer and keep a low profile, but time is of the essence. If Colonel Rawhide doesn't make his \$500 bank payment today, the bank will foreclose and Jack can buy out the circus for a song. Besides, you are a fair acrobat and have studied the Credenza's trapeze act. You don't expect any problems.

You have already managed to perform one act of sabotage. You managed to shave the bearded lady's beard off while she was sleeping. Now that is one neat trick. Shaving someone in their sleep, especially a woman, takes talent. You only have a few more things to do.

Jack gave you a packet of drugs for the wild animals. You have nothing against Franklin Winters, but you need his lion taming act to fail. You'll have to wait for a distraction and then slip the drugs in their food quickly. Maybe you can offer to help feed the animals. You'll work something out.

Another easy act of sabotage would be to steal Señora Mysterioso's snake. You could release it into the wild or something. You wouldn't want to hurt it, or – worse – kill it. You're very proud that nobody has gotten seriously hurt or killed by your sabotage.

That's what makes your last plan so difficult. As one of the Credenza Brothers, you have the perfect opportunity to cause their act to fail. But, they perform a trapeze act, dozens of feet in the air, without a net. How do you damage the act without damaging the Credenza Brothers, or yourself? You're fairly certain that you cannot simply refuse to perform with them. For one thing, they could probably do the act without you. For another, you'd probably be found out. You don't have the costuming or makeup to be another performer, and Jack would get mad at you.

You're actually worried about being found out for another reasons. Oh, you did your homework. You studied the circus as best you could. But you can never substitute for being there. Your plan is to say that you are sick if you make a horrible mistake. The thing that worries you most is the Credenza Brother's ritual. They always disappear into their circus wagon just before they go on. Nobody knows what they do there. If anything will mess you up, that will. Maybe you should try to go back to their circus wagon and look around for some clues.

Well, if things get really bad, you can call upon Jack or Lydia for help. You have to be subtle though; you wouldn't want to get caught. By tomorrow, it won't matter though. Rawhide's circus will be no more and the Bungling Brothers will reign supreme! Yay!

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You are a true henchman, not too bright, but very capable. You are a decent sort, and while you want your circus to succeed, you don't want to hurt anyone too badly in the process.

ITEMS

You have a packet of drugs for the animals.

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: It seem a shame that you have to destroy his circus so that yours will succeed, but he has too many popular acts and your circus needs them.

Daisy Belle: Colonel Rawhide's fiancée. She seems to be a nice person, but you haven't talked to her much.

Jack Bungling: Your older brother. You take orders from him. He doesn't know that you're Douglas Credenza.

The Flying Credenza Brothers: They are, perhaps, the most talented trapeze artists in the world. They tend not toward flashiness, so they aren't noticed by the general public, but the true enthusiast knows their timing and grace are absolutely perfect. You are masquerading as Douglas. The other three brothers are Alexander, Bartholomew, and Clifford. The Credenzas own their own circus car and perform a secret ritual there before they go on for every show.

Binky The Clown: Herman Binkowicz. You love watching Binky's clown act. It always makes you laugh no matter how many times you've seen it. You look forward to actually talking to him in person. You cannot let on that you're a fan though.

Susan Wildes, The Strong Woman: Your research into her doesn't make sense. Apparently she gained great strength in her youth. One day she was normal, the next she was freakishly strong. You wonder what happened.

Franklin Winters, The Lion Tamer: Rumors abound that he is a drunk, but you aren't so sure. You have drugs for the animals to sabotage his act, but maybe you can also tempt him with a bottle of alcohol, if you can find one.

Rupert and Rudolph Townshed: They had an argument recently. Maybe you can fan the flames somehow and with a few innocent remarks cause them to fight again.

Helena Ferez: You shaved off her beard while she slept last night. She didn't even wake up.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallower: He seems like a nice enough guy. He has a very flashy act, though. You weren't able to find out much about him in your research.

Bobo, the Dog Faced Boy: He joined the circus in Europe. He helps Franklin Winters with the animals.

Zelda the Clown: You haven't been able to find out anything about her except that she doesn't speak. Ever.

Señora Mysterioso: She's creepy. You want to steal her snake and release it into the woods, but she probably can read your mind, so you'll have to be careful.

The Masked Rider: The Masked Rider joined the circus in Europe. You don't even know the Masked Rider's real name, so you couldn't do any research.

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus in Europe. You think that the Knife Thrower is travelling under an alias, but you aren't sure.

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: Your younger sister. Jack is jealous of how close she is to your father, so he treats her poorly. You follow Jack, of course, but

don't dislike Lydia that much. You're glad that Jack is letter help out with the family business. You hear Lydia was very effective in Europe.

Zimmie the Clown: His evil leering grin frightens you.

The Great Zamboni: He arrived today asking for a job. Colonel Rawhide, having recently lost his magic act in Europe, has decided to give him a try today. Magic acts are easy to sabotage, so perhaps you should just nip him in the bud.

Well Known Characters Not In Game:

Senator Hiram Bungling: Father doesn't care much for you. And with Jack and Lydia courting his favor, you don't worry about it too much.

Uma the Unicyclist: Her act was sabotaged by Lydia and she had to be fired. You don't know the details.

Preston the Prestidigitator: Lydia also managed to sabotage his act while in Europe. You don't know the details.

ABILITIES

Combat: 12 cards.

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

and Jack can also advise him. Both Lydia and Jack have more influence over Father than you do.

Master of Disguise: If you can get hold of a makeup kit and costuming, you can disguise yourself as anyone, male or female, human or animal. Doing this completely uses up the makeup kit.

Binky the Clown: You find Binky so hilarious that after a few minutes of talking with 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 you were talking about (or doing), but – boy – that Binky is funny.

Easily Influenced: The first time someone uses an influence ability on you (it will have a picture of a Ringmaster on the card), it does not count as one of their uses. Just show them this card. Future uses count as normal.

Creative Ignorance: You can reinterpret any influence abilities used upon you. You must still perform them to their letter, but you can determine the spirit of the influence as you see fit. Influence abilities will have a picture of a Ringmaster on the card.

Sabotage: You know the circus well and you know how to sabotage an act so that nobody gets hurt, unless you want them to.

PRESENTING: ALEXANDER CREDENZA

You are Alexander Credenza, eldest brother of the Flying Credenza Brothers, the greatest acrobatic troupe in the world. You, and your three brothers, Bartholomew, Clifford, and Douglas, were born in Italy to parents who had performed for the circus their entire lives. You grew up 50 feet above the ground and learned to walk on a high wire by the age of five. The four brothers are all that's left of the once proud Credenza family and you don't like to talk about your parents. You left home, joined a circus, and have never looked back.

At least that's your cover story anyway.

You are Galactic Patrol Officer #19328-00345A: Alet CR\$DZH*. Your three hive brothers, Bitu, Ceto, and Delt all have separate bodies, but you share a single mind. That is not technically true. You all have independent thought processors, brains, but you are intuitively mentally linked, so that all four of you know and sense and feel everything together. This allows you to work with incredible coordination.

Approximately three of this planet's years ago, your hive pod crash-landed on this world while in pursuit of a galactic criminal. You had to fashion a disguise. Earth has been declared a Stage Two world, off limits to Galactic Personnel until it has developed a strong moral culture with the technology to travel to other worlds. This could be centuries away. Luckily, none of your hive pod were hurt in the crash.

You were chasing the infamous intergalactic criminal, ■■■■■. ■■■■■ is wanted for many crimes, including robbery and murder. It feeds on the life force of sentients, and is clever and slippery and difficult to catch. ■■■■■ has escaped from the Galactic Patrol on over seven different occasions. It is one of the most wanted criminals in the spheres.

The chase lasted for several time spans when ■■■■■ banked a close turn around Sol, attempting to use its gravity well as a boost to escape. It miscalculated, and you watched horrified as its ship exploded in the third planet's atmosphere. What a terrible way to go. Your horror was short lived as an urgent beeping from your control panel turned your attention to more pressing matters.

Your ship was low on fuel. Desperately low on fuel. Your ship gets its power from the matrix lattices inherent in carbonic crystals. You were far away from any fuel source. You did a quick scan of the system and discovered that there were many unrefined carbonic crystals on the third planet, the prohibited planet. Also, the third planet was the only one with the right

conditions to support your bodies. You had no choice; you made a controlled crash landing on the planet.

Your ship is damaged and is running on auxiliary, solar, power. It does not have enough power to leave the atmosphere, but it does have enough to move about, to keep intruders out, to run the computer banks, and for disguise capability. Yes, your ship can disguise itself to look like a native house or transportation device. Currently, it looks like a circus wagon, a circus wagon that only your hive pod can enter. Luckily, your individual bodies look like earth humans, so you did not need to disguise yourselves.

You did as much research on the culture as you could and went out to meet the world. Your ship had landed in a country called The United States, a land recently recovered from a messy and barbaric civil war. You had landed outside of a small town in a state called Kansas. The occupants were naturally curious about you. To cover up your lack of knowledge about the local customs and language, you claimed to be from a foreign country. The rest of your cover identity was made up piecemeal as it was needed. You didn't have to worry about your individual bodies making a mistake as each immediately knew what the other had said.

One of the local residents asked if you were with the circus. Apparently a circus is a show made up of oddities and outcasts, a perfect cover. You had also quickly realized that carbonic crystals were either incredibly rare, or the locals did not know their use as nobody knew what you were talking about when you asked for them. The local fuel seems to be burning wood or an inferior version of carbon, known as coal.

You went to visit the circus and met with its owner Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide. You later learned that Colonel is a title, not part of his name. It was fairly simple for the four of your bodies to put on an impressive display of acrobatics. Besides being able to move as one, your four bodies had years of null-gravity experience. You were hired on as acrobats, working on the trapeze.

Life in the circus is fine, if intellectually unstimulating. You have sent numerous distress calls from your ship, now disguised as a circus wagon, and have begun waiting for humans to develop a power source for you to return home. It is highly unlikely that this will happen in your lifetime, however. You still hold out hope. You know there are carbonic crystals on this world; you simply have to find them and you can use them to power your ship and return home.

In the meantime, you have been acclimating yourself to this world. It is nice enough, albeit primitive. As of this writing, you have lived here for three years. You

have learned the language well enough, and though you still make some errors, they are few and far between. At least your cover story of being from Italy has been accepted. You can always fall back on that when you find yourself caught in an embarrassing situation.

While on earth, you have done your best to catalogue the various flora and fauna. This information will prove quite useful back home. You have done some preliminary research on the various types of creatures at the circus. You are aware that some of the animals are quite dangerous, even deadly, but you need information for your catalogue. You also want to interview several of the humans – discretely of course – as many of them are atypical for their species. Details follow your history narrative.

Recently, the circus traveled to a different continent called Europe. This world has seven distinct continents, most separated by large bodies of water (oceans). You were pleased to learn that the tour did not include travels to Italy as that would have given away your ruse. Apparently, Europeans are not well traveled as those in the countries you did visit, (England, Spain, Freedonia, Fandonia, France, and others) easily believed that you were from Italy.

However, not long after your trip began, two sensors lit up on your ship. The first sensor was very exciting. You detected a power source, an advanced power source. It seems to be a battery of some sort, but it shows that there is some advanced technology on this world, other than yours of course. The second alert was much more disturbing.

■●● was here. ■●● had survived and is on Earth. And is nearby. In fact, ■●● probably is responsible for the advanced power source. Most likely, ■●●'s ship was destroyed, but ■●● was able to jettison to safety. You attempted to determine ■●●'s whereabouts, but were able to pinpoint them exactly. But, by the time the circus reached the end of its tour, in France, it was clear that ■●● was part of the circus, as was the advanced technology. Interesting. Perhaps it is hiding within the freaks.

However, that is not your main concern now. Yes, you must stop ■●● as it will certainly kill here on Earth, if it hasn't already. But, you have a more pressing problem. You have become ill. You have the Floo.

The Floo is a devastating disease for your kind. You require certain nutrients and atmospheric conditions that do not exist on Earth. Without them, your hive-pod will gradually disintegrate into four autonomous beings. Being alone: it is, perhaps, one of your kind's greatest fears.

It has already started to affect you. Douglas – Delt – is perhaps lost forever. Ceto is soon to go next. You can feel the mind of Ceto slipping away. You have lost all but the most tentative of mental contact. Bitá is next.

You cannot communicate normally with Bitá at all, but you still can send an emergency message every once in a while. Your hive-pod is deteriorating fast. If you do not get home soon, the Floo will overtake you and the invariable madness that results will make you wish you were dead.

You still have access to a method for temporarily overturning the Floo. You have a device in your ship which will allow your four individual brains to sync for approximately a half hour of time. During that time, it is as if you did not have the Floo at all. It even works with Delt. However, it cannot be used more often than once per twenty hours or so, so you use it to synchronize your brains before your act. Much to-do has been made about the Credenza's secret pre-performance ritual, but it will be a secret that the Brothers will never tell.

You are worried about Douglas – Delt. He has begun to exhibit symptoms of advanced stages of the Floo: memory loss, irritability, and erratic behavior. You have never dealt with any being in such an advanced stage, and you do not know what to do. Clifford – Ceto – will soon be there, too. Bitá has tried the distraction of cataloging the Earth creatures. You are falling apart, literally. If you do not find carbonic crystals soon, it may be too late for you.

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You are a decent – if alien – sort. You do have a duty to perform, and you do want to return home, and you are very worried about your disease and what it is doing to your pod-brothers. You were, and still are, an Officer of the Galactic Patrol, although Earth is technically beyond your jurisdiction. Your body is outwardly human in all respects, although you may not react to some drugs or illnesses as normal humans do. You can eat Earth food and easily breathe the atmosphere. You have lived on Earth for three years, so your gaffes are few and far between.

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: He was one of the first humans that you met. He is a good representative of his race and a fine leader.

Daisy Belle: You believe that Miss Bell and Colonel Rawhide are engaged in a prolonged mating ritual. You understand that their religious and moral beliefs are tied in this. Miss Bell, while otherwise a very pleasant individual, does not care for circus performers. You are unsure why.

Jack Bungling: The older of the two Bungling Brothers, who are trying to buy out this circus. You have heard stories about the Bungling Brothers, stories about how things tend to go awry for people who oppose the Bungling Brothers. They have their eyes set

on this circus and there were some problems in Europe. You should keep your eyes, all four sets of them, open.

The Flying Credenza Brothers: Your pod-brothers Bit, Ceto, and Delt are really just bodily extensions of your hive mind. You have had to disguise yourself as separate individuals and have named your bodies Bartholomew, Clifford, and Douglas. Recently, you have been suffering from the Floo, making it seem like you are, indeed, different people.

Binky The Clown: Herman Binkowicz. You do find Binky's antic amusing, and he has a good act onstage. What you do not understand is why the other humans laugh at everything he says. It is obviously an Earth custom that you do not understand. You once inquired about it, and were rebuffed, so discussion must be an Earth taboo of some sort. Regardless, you make sure to laugh when talking to Binky, about three to five minutes into the conversation.

Susan Wildes, The Strong Woman: She is a scientific impossibility. Her frame and musculature make her far too frail to lift such heavy weights. Perhaps she is also an alien in disguise. She bears looking into.

Franklin Winters, The Lion Tamer: He enjoys the drinking of fermented beverages. Alcohol affects you in the same way as it does humans, except that only the brain of the body drinking actually becomes intoxicated. It is very much like having a localized case of the Floo.

Rupert and Rudolph Townshed: They are the exact opposite of you. You are one mind in four bodies. They share a body, but have two minds. They argue a great deal. Life must be difficult for them.

Helena Ferez: She is also a genetic anomaly. Female humans do not develop facial hair. You aren't sure why not; it looks rather fetching on her.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallower: He does his tricks by slight of hand as humans have no natural resistance to fire.

Bobo, the Dog Faced Boy: It is unusual for a child his age to have facial hair, and he has more facial hair than most adult humans. His mature attitudes are also unusual for one his age.

Zelda the Clown: You have been unable to ascertain if she chooses not to speak or if she is unable to speak.

Señora Mysterioso: You do not believe in true clairvoyance; her prognostications must be assisted with some device.

The Masked Rider: The Masked Rider joined the circus in Europe. You are unsure about this one; The Masker Rider is very solitary and is always seen wearing a mask.

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus in Europe. You are cautious around the Knife Thrower as Italy is in Europe.

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: She joined the circus just before it left for the European Continent. She has decorated her body with all manner of garish images.

Zimmie the Clown: He has an air of malevolence about him, but he is a fellow performer so you treat him amicably.

The Great Zamboni: He arrived today asking for a job. Again, you do not believe in true magic; he uses slight of hand in his act.

■**NO**: One of the above named characters must be ■**NO**, your nemesis. ■**NO** is a merciless killer that has crash-landed on Earth. It has probably already killed several times, and is now also part of the circus. You have never seen it, but you know that it is nonhuman, so you are on the lookout for those who are different.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: He is very important in Earth politics, but more relevantly, he is the father of the Bungling Brothers who are trying to buy out the circus.

John Bungling: The younger of the Bungling Brothers. Jack is the public persona and John runs things behind the scenes.

Uma the Unicyclist: Uma used to ride a large one-wheeled contraption while juggling or across a high wire. However, while in France, she fell and severely twisted her ankle. She has stayed on in France in the care of a Doctor.

Preston the Prestidigitator: His act also was ruined while in France. While he was sawing a woman in half, a panel swung open revealing the illusion. He was booed out of the tent and Colonel Rawhide had to fire him.

ABILITIES

Combat: 10 cards.

Hive Mind: You may send a one-sentence telepathic message to Bartholomew or Clifford Credenza. You may do this five times for Bartholomew and twice for Clifford. This should become much more powerful after you perform your "pre-show ritual."

Coordinated Attack: If you are fighting alongside Bartholomew, the two of you may discuss which MENKS cards to play, and may trade unused cards freely.

Native Language: You may speak your native language which only your brothers understand.

PRESENTING: BARTHOLOMEW CREDENZA

You are Bartholomew Credenza, second oldest brother of the Flying Credenza Brothers, the greatest acrobatic troupe in the world. You, and your three brothers, Alexander, Clifford, and Douglas, were born in Italy to parents who had performed for the circus their entire lives. You grew up 50 feet above the ground and learned to walk on a high wire by the age of five. The four brothers are all that's left of the once proud Credenza family and you don't like to talk about your parents. You left home, joined a circus, and have never looked back.

At least that's your cover story anyway.

You are Galactic Patrol Officer #19328-00345B: Bita CR\$DZH*. Your three hive brothers, Alet, Ceto, and Delt all have separate bodies, but you share a single mind. That is not technically true. You all have independent thought processors, brains, but you are intuitively mentally linked, so that all four of you know and sense and feel everything together. This allows you to work with incredible coordination.

Approximately three of this planet's years ago, your hive pod crash-landed on this world while in pursuit of a galactic criminal. You had to fashion a disguise. Earth has been declared a Stage Two world, off limits to Galactic Personnel until it has developed a strong moral culture with the technology to travel to other worlds. This could be centuries away. Luckily, none of your hive pod was hurt in the crash.

You were chasing the infamous intergalactic criminal, ■■■■■. ■■■■■ is wanted for many crimes, including robbery and murder. It feeds on the life force of sentients, and is clever and slippery and difficult to catch. ■■■■■ has escaped from the Galactic Patrol on over seven different occasions. It is one of the most wanted criminals in the spheres.

The chase lasted for several time spans when ■■■■■ banked a close turn around Sol, attempting to use its gravity well as a boost to escape. It miscalculated, and you watched horrified as its ship exploded in the third planet's atmosphere. What a terrible way to go. Your horror was short lived as an urgent beeping from your control panel turned your attention to more pressing matters.

Your ship was low on fuel. Desperately low on fuel. Your ship gets its power from the matrix lattices inherent in carbonic crystals. You were far away from any fuel source. You did a quick scan of the system and discovered that there were many unrefined carbonic crystals on the third planet, the prohibited planet. Also, the third planet was the only

one with the right conditions to support your bodies. You had no choice; you made a controlled crash landing on the planet.

Your ship is damaged and is running on auxiliary, solar, power. It does not have enough power to leave the atmosphere, but it does have enough to move about, to keep intruders out, to run the computer banks, and for disguise capability. Yes, your ship can disguise itself to look like a native house or transportation device. Currently, it looks like a circus wagon, a circus wagon that only your hive pod can enter. Luckily, your individual bodies look like earth humans, so you did not need to disguise yourselves.

You did as much research on the culture as you could – there is a regrettable lack of information about Stage Two words – and went out to meet the people. Your ship had landed in a country called The United States, a land recently recovered from a messy and barbaric civil war. You had landed outside of a small town in a state called Kansas. The occupants were naturally curious about you. To cover up your lack of knowledge about the local customs and language, you claimed to be from a foreign country. The rest of your cover identity was made up piecemeal as it was needed. You didn't have to worry about your individual bodies making a mistake as each immediately knew what the other had said.

One of the local residents asked if you were with the circus. Apparently a circus is a show made up of oddities and outcasts, a perfect cover. You had also quickly realized that carbonic crystals were either incredibly rare, or the locals did not know their use as nobody knew what you were talking about when you asked for them. The local fuel seems to be burning wood or an inferior version of carbon, known as coal.

You went to visit the circus and met with its owner Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide. You later learned that Colonel is a title, not part of his name. It was fairly simple for the four of your bodies to put on an impressive display of acrobatics. Besides being able to move as one, your four bodies had years of null-gravity experience. You were hired on as acrobats, working on the trapeze.

Life in the circus is fine, if intellectually unstimulating. You have sent numerous distress calls from your ship, now disguised as a circus wagon, and have begun waiting for humans to develop a power source for you to return home. It is highly unlikely that this will happen in your lifetime, however. You still hold out hope. You know there are carbonic crystals on this world; you simply have to find them

and you can use them to power your ship and return home.

In the meantime, you have been acclimating yourself to this world. It is nice enough, albeit primitive. As of this writing, you have lived here for three years. You have learned the language well enough, and though you still make some errors, they are few and far between. At least your cover story of being from Italy has been accepted. You can always fall back on that when you find yourself caught in an embarrassing situation.

While on earth, you have done your best to catalogue the various flora and fauna. This information will prove quite useful back home. You have done some preliminary research on the various types of creatures at the circus. You are aware that some of the animals are quite dangerous, even deadly, but you need information for your catalogue. You also want to interview several of the humans – discretely of course – as many of them are atypical for their species. Details follow your history narrative.

Recently, the circus traveled to a different continent called Europe. This world has seven distinct continents, most separated by large bodies of water (oceans). You were pleased to learn that the tour did not include travels to Italy as that would have given away your ruse. Apparently, Europeans are not well traveled as those in the countries you did visit, (England, Spain, Freedonia, Fandonia, France, and others) easily believed that you were from Italy.

However, not long after your trip began, two sensors lit up on your ship. The first sensor was very exciting. You detected a power source, an advanced power source. It seems to be a battery of some sort, but it shows that there is some advanced technology on this world, other than yours of course. The second alert was much more disturbing.

■●● was here. ■●● had survived and is on Earth. And is nearby. In fact, ■●● probably is responsible for the advanced power source. Most likely, ■●●'s ship was destroyed, but ■●● was able to jettison to safety. You attempted to determine ■●●'s whereabouts, but were able to pinpoint them exactly. But, by the time the circus reached the end of its tour, in France, it was clear that ■●● was part of the circus, as was the advanced technology. Interesting. Perhaps it is hiding within the freaks.

However, that is not your main concern now. Yes, you must stop ■●● as it will certainly kill here on Earth, if it hasn't already. But, you have a more pressing problem. You have become ill. You have the Floo.

The Floo is a devastating disease for your kind. You require certain nutrients and atmospheric conditions that do not exist on Earth. Without them, your hive-

pod will gradually disintegrate into four autonomous beings. Being alone: it is, perhaps, one of your kind's greatest fears.

It has already started to affect you. Douglas – Delt – is perhaps lost forever. Ceto is soon to go next. You can feel the mind of Ceto slipping away. You have lost all but the most tentative of mental contact. And then you are next. You cannot communicate normally with Alet at all, but you still can send an emergency message every once in a while. Your hive-pod is deteriorating fast. If you do not get home soon, the Floo will overtake you and the invariable madness that results will make you wish you were dead.

You still have access to a method for temporarily overturning the Floo. You have a device in your ship which will allow your four individual brains to sync for approximately a half hour of time. During that time, it is as if you did not have the Floo at all. It even works with Delt. However, it cannot be used more often than once per twenty hours or so, so you use it to synchronize your brains before your act. Much to-do has been made about the Credenza's secret pre-performance ritual, but it will be a secret that the Brothers will never tell.

You have tried to keep your mind off the disease. Although it was a shock when you realized that "your mind" referred to Bito's brain and not your shared mental link. You have tried to throw your efforts into cataloging the various Earth creatures, especially the oddities attached to the circus. You have started a catalogue, and have gotten to know them and get them to trust you, especially the you that is Bartholomew, but the time has come to perform in-depth questions and try to get sample.

You have a small portable lab for taking samples, so you do not need to violate the security of your ship. However, getting the performers to provide blood and tissue samples may not be easy. Still, the results may prove very interesting indeed.

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You are a decent – if alien – sort. You do have a duty to perform, and you do want to return home, and you are very worried about your disease and what it is doing to your pod-brothers. You were, and still are, an Officer of the Galactic Patrol, although Earth is technically beyond your jurisdiction. Your body is outwardly human in all respects, although you may not react to some drugs or illnesses as normal humans do. You can eat Earth food and easily breathe the atmosphere. You have lived on Earth for three years, so your gaffes are few and far between.

ITEMS

A medical scanner. It is a portable doctor's laboratory, although you will have to go back to your ship for results. Note that it is conspicuous and you will have to be careful to use it. It requires tissue samples for analysis; it does not scan from a distance.

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: He was one of the first humans that you met. He is a good representative of his race and a fine leader. He is, as near as you can tell, a typical human.

Daisy Belle: You believe that Miss Belle and Colonel Rawhide are engaged in a prolonged mating ritual. You understand that their religious and moral beliefs are tied in this. Miss Belle, while otherwise a very pleasant individual, does not care for circus performers. You have been unable to procure a detailed analysis due to this rejection.

Jack Bungling: The older of the two Bungling Brothers, who are trying to buy out this circus. You have heard stories about the Bungling Brothers, stories about how things tend to go awry for people who oppose the Bungling Brothers. They have their eyes set on this circus and there were some problems in Europe. You do not believe that he is anything other than a normal human, however.

The Flying Credenza Brothers: Your pod-brothers Alet, Ceto, and Delt are really just bodily extensions of your hive mind. You have had to disguise yourself as separate individuals and have named your bodies Alexander, Clifford, and Douglas. Recently, you have been suffering from the Floo, making it seem like you are, indeed, different people.

Binky The Clown: Herman Binkowicz. You do find Binky's antic amusing, and he has a good act onstage. What you do not understand is why the other humans laugh at everything he says. It is obviously an Earth custom that you do not understand. You once inquired about it, and were rebuffed, so discussion must be an Earth taboo of some sort. Regardless, you make sure to laugh when talking to Binky, about three to five minutes into the conversation. Binky may be a scientific anomaly; however. Is it possible that he somehow causes this laughter? You will have to examine further.

Susan Wildes, The Strong Woman: She is a scientific impossibility. Her frame and musculature make her far too frail to lift such heavy weights. You need to examine her. You need to test her strength limits and find out if there are others like her where she comes from.

Franklin Winters, The Lion Tamer: He enjoys the drinking of fermented beverages. Alcohol affects you in the same way as it does humans, except that

only the brain of the body drinking actually becomes intoxicated. It is very much like having a localized case of the Floo. He seems to recover from these bouts quickly. You have, as Bartholomew, had many drinking matches with Franklin to test his endurance and fortitude. He does recover from them at an amazing rate.

Rupert and Rudolph Townshed: They are the exact opposite of you. You are one mind in four bodies. They share a body, but have two minds. They argue a great deal. Life must be difficult for them. Conjoined twins are a rarity among humans, and you wonder if they have special genetics because of it.

Helena Ferez: She is also a genetic anomaly. Female humans do not develop facial hair. You need to collect some of her DNA and compare it to that of a normal human male and female.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallower: Humans have no natural resistance to fire, although he has absolutely no fear of flame. You suspect that he is a normal human, but should probably test to make sure.

Bobo, the Dog Faced Boy: It is unusual for a child his age to have facial hair, and he has more facial hair than most adult humans. His mature attitudes are also unusual for a prepubescent human. You have tried to gain his trust as you wish to experiment on his reflexes and perhaps gain a gauge of his true age.

Zelda the Clown: You have been unable to ascertain if she chooses not to speak or if she is unable to speak. You could try for an x-ray recording of her vocal apparatus, perhaps while she is attempting to speak.

Señora Mysterioso: She is, as far as you can tell, a normal human. However, a brain scan would not be out of the question.

The Masked Rider: The Masked Rider joined the circus in Europe. You are unsure about this one; The Masker Rider is very solitary and is always seen wearing a mask. You suspect that the Masked Rider is human.

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus in Europe. The Knife Thrower is almost certainly human.

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: She joined the circus just before it left for the European Continent. She has decorated her body with all manner of garish images. You are unfamiliar with the practice of tattooing and would like some skin samples.

Zimmie the Clown: He has an air of malevolence about him, but he is a fellow performer so you treat him amicably. He seems to be human.

The Great Zamboni: He arrived today asking for a job. You do not believe in true magic; he uses slight of hand in his act. You were able to get a brain scan of the former magician, Preston the Prestidigitator, and detected no anomalies from earth human.

■**SVN** : One of the above named characters must be ■**SVN**, your nemesis. ■**SVN** is a merciless killer that has crash-landed on Earth. It has probably already killed several times, and is now also part of the circus. You have never seen it, but you know that it is nonhuman, so you are on the lookout for those who are different. Your scientific testing will aid with that.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: He is very important in Earth politics, but more relevantly, he is the father of the Bungling Brothers who are trying to buy out the circus.

John Bungling: The younger of the Bungling Brothers. Jack is the public persona and John runs things behind the scenes.

Uma the Unicyclist: Uma used to ride a large one-wheeled contraption while juggling or across a high

wire. However, while in France, she fell and severely twisted her ankle. She has stayed on in France in the care of a Doctor. She was, as near as you could tell, a normal human.

Preston the Prestidigitator: His act also was ruined while in France. While he was sawing a woman in half, a panel swung open revealing the illusion. He was booed out of the tent and Colonel Rawhide had to fire him. You have a brain scan of Preston, showing no abnormalities.

ABILITIES

Combat: 10 cards.

Hive Mind: You may send a one-sentence telepathic message to Alexander or Clifford Credenza. You may do this five times for Alexander and twice for Clifford. This will become much more powerful after you perform your “pre-show ritual.”

Coordinated Attack: If you are fighting alongside Alexander, the two of you may discuss which MENKS cards to play, and may trade unused cards freely.

Native Language: You may speak your native language which only your brothers understand.

PRESENTING: CLIFFORD CREDENZA

You are Clifford Credenza, second youngest brother of the Flying Credenza Brothers, the greatest acrobatic troupe in the world. You, and your three brothers, Alexander, Bartholomew, and Douglas, were born in the small town of Rome, Italy to parents who had performed for the circus their entire lives. Ah, how you loved the sunny shores of Rome.

Your parents traveled as part of the Florenzo Circus. Oh, how well you remember your father and mother. Heinrich and Svetlana Credenza. How they could fly through the air. You grew up 50 feet above the ground and learned to walk on a high wire by the age of five.

Unfortunately, your parents died in a bizarre tractor accident. Your mother was home, tending to one of the many fields of rice that grew around your village. Your father, unaware that she was in the field, decided to use the tractor to plow it under. He saw her at the last minute and tried to turn the tractor, but it struck her and overturned and they both died instantly.

The four brothers are all that's left of the once proud Credenza family. You left home, joined a circus, and have never looked back. You spent the first few years touring Europe and the rest of Italy. You practically grew up in the circus. It's in your blood.

Three years ago, your family was lost in Kansas. You had arrived in the United States from Italy via atomic dirigible, on a tour of the United States, China, and Sweden. You had arrived in Kansas and somehow became separated from the circus. You tried to talk to the locals, but they did not understand Latin (the language of Rome).

Eventually, they directed you to Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide's Circus of the Spectacular. What a fabulous place. You had never seen a circus, quite like this one before, all the lights, colors, and the fantastic array of people. The diversity reminded you of home, for some reason.

You quickly befriended the fine folks of this new circus. For some reason, the rest of your family doesn't like to talk about the many previous circuses you used to work for, or about your family, or about the fine rolling hills and beautiful fjords of the small peasant village of Rome. You have no such compunctions and love talking about your family, your history, and your homelife.

Actually, you have been worried about your brothers lately. Douglas seems well enough off, but your older brothers, Alexander and Bartholomew have

gone completely insane. They are claiming mad things, so mad that it makes you worry.

They say that you are sick, that you have influenza. Nonsense. You have never felt better in your life. They say that Douglas has a much worse case. Douglas, happy, healthy Douglas ill? You cannot believe it. Influenza is deadly. You think you'd know if you had a deadly disease.

But worst of all, they say that you are not even human. Alexander and Bartholomew think they are from another world, Mars perhaps. This is so embarrassing. Luckily, they believe that this is a secret to be kept from the rest of the world, but that they can trust you. You have considered playing into their delusions to find out more about their fantasy world, but you would rather try to cure them. You just aren't certain how. And it is plain embarrassing to say that your older brothers believe that they are from another world.

You aren't sure who to talk to about this. You've made a number of close friends in the circus over the past few years, but none of them have problems like this. The main problem seems to be Colonel Rawhide's fiancée, Daisy Belle. Colonel Rawhide is a fine man; he fought in the American Civil War on the side of the West (you think...), and has never been less than honest and friendly.

Daisy, on the other hand, is a woman of strong opinions. And one of her opinions is that circus folk are "ne'er-do-wells who spend their days lounging around instead of trying to find 'decent' work." She isn't hateful or mean spirited, just prejudiced.

Well a group of folks were getting together last week and came up with a plan to get Daisy to like circus folk. You were talking with the Townshed brothers, Bobo, Lydia, and Franklin Winters about how sad it was that Daisy didn't like circus folk and that she might drive a wedge between Colonel Rawhide and the circus.

None of you wanted that to happen. This circus is the best one you've ever been part of. It's clean. It pays well. And the performers are almost an extended family. The six of you decided to do something to get Daisy to like the circus.

Your plan is simple. Using the keen disguise power of the circus folk, you will don a mask (you'll have to get one from the Masked Rider) and attempt to kidnap Daisy. You will be foiled by one of the others in the plot and be allowed to escape. Daisy will be so happy that a circus performer saved her that she will forget her ill will toward the circus. It's brilliant.

You aren't certain if you are supposed to be a kidnapper or rescuer, so you have a mask just in case. The plan is to take place when everyone is free, after the main show ends. Everyone else wanted it to happen before the main show, but you'll be busy.

The Flying Credenza Brothers have a preshow ritual. It helps you get in sync and makes you the spectacular flying troupe you are today. You don't exactly remember what goes on during the ritual, but it is very, very, *very* important that it happens. You are looking forward to the ritual; perhaps it will even help with Alexander and Bartholomew's madness.

ROLEPLAYING HINT

OK, it should be obvious, as a player, that everything your character believes about Italy and your life before the circus is whacked. Feel free to make up more unusual details about your family and Italy. You don't have to go overboard, just enough to make folks curious. Obviously, your worldview is skewed, but your character has no idea and you probably should get very upset if someone tries to correct you.

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: He is a good man. His love for the circus is clear in his every move. You are proud and happy to be working for such a good man.

Daisy Belle: Colonel Rawhide's fiancée. She does not care for the circus very much, but you and some others are working to change her mind.

Jack Bungling: The older of the two Bungling Brothers, who are trying to buy out this circus. You have heard stories about the Bungling Brothers, stories about how things tend to go awry for people who oppose the Bungling Brothers. They have their eyes set on this circus and there were some problems in Europe. Now he is hanging around here. Maybe you should talk to your friends and family and see if there is something you need to do about this.

The Flying Credenza Brothers: You care deeply for your family, but your older brothers, Alexander and Bartholomew, have gone completely mad. They have confided in you that they believe they are from another world and that you and Douglas are sick. Douglas seems well and you feel fine, yourself, so you are at your wits end about what to do with them.

Binky The Clown: Herman Binkowicz. Binky is hilarious. You have never met a more talented performer. You notice that no matter what he says, people laugh, even in the middle of a serious conversation. You aren't sure why, but you go along with it.

Susan Wildes, The Strong Woman: There is something odd about her, something in the back of your mind, but you cannot quite put your finger on it.

Franklin Winters, The Lion Tamer: He's one of your closer friends. Oh the many nights the two of you have gone off drinking; he does like his alcohol. He would go to bars and challenge the local to drinking contests and could drink all of them under the table. He's also quite capable with animals and cares greatly for them. You have never seen him abuse an animal, the way some trainers do in other circuses. He is in with the plan to make Daisy like circus folk.

Rupert and Rudolph Townshed: Many of the circus folk are worried about the Siamese twins. They had a big fight last night and now they aren't speaking to each other. Maybe you can find a way to reconcile them. They are also part of the plot to kidnap Daisy.

Helena Ferez: The bearded lady. She seems like a nice person, but you sense that she's hiding something.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallow: He can juggle fire and swallow swords, all without getting hurt. He puts a lot of flash in his acts.

Bobo, the Dog Faced Boy: He's a good kid, even if he does have more facial hair than anyone else in the circus. Bobo helps Franklin with the animals and they are good friends. He's also going to help with the plan to make Daisy like the circus.

Zelda the Clown: Poor girl, she cannot speak a word. Her tumbling and tricks are first rate, though.

Señora Mysterioso: Apparently she can see into people's minds and see the future as well. Maybe you can talk to her about your family problems.

The Masked Rider: The Masked Rider is a very solitary individual, staying aloof since joining up in Europe. You've tried to strike up a friendship, but all your advances have been rebuffed.

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus in Europe. The Knife Thrower also isn't a very forthcoming individual.

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: Lydia is a nice woman, but you get the feeling that she's torn about some important issue. She's also helping with the plan to convince Daisy that circus people are ok.

Zimmie the Clown: He isn't the nicest fellow, but you try to be friendly. He does, however, scare small children.

The Great Zamboni: He arrived today asking for a job. Colonel Rawhide decided to give him a chance. You hope he fares better than Preston.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: He is the father of the Bungling Brothers who are trying to buy out the circus. He is a powerful and influential man in Washington DC.

John Bungling: The younger of the Bungling Brothers. Jack is the public persona and John runs things behind the scenes.

Uma the Unicyclist: Uma used to ride a large unicycle while juggling or across a high wire. However, while in France, she fell and severely twisted her ankle. She has stayed on in France in the care of a Doctor. She was a very nice person and you are sorry to see her go.

Preston the Prestidigitator: His act also was ruined while in France. While he was sawing a woman in half, a panel swung open revealing the illusion. He was booed out of the tent and Colonel Rawhide had to fire him. You haven't seen him since.

ABILITIES

Combat: 12 cards.

I am **not** insane: You may resist any attempt to convince you that you are anything other than what you believe or that your history of Italy is anything other than what you believe.

Speak Latin: You may speak your native language which only your brothers understand.

HERMAN BINKOWICZ, BETTER KNOWN AS "BINKY THE CLOWN!!!!"

You make people laugh. It's what you do. You go to the center ring, and start to do your act and people start laughing. And they laugh and they laugh and they laugh. And they never stop!

The laughter haunts you, mocks you. You try to talk to people and they laugh. No matter what you say. No matter what you do. They laugh. The laughter never stops. It never ends. Oh, you are so sick of laughter!

It wasn't always this way. You had a very happy childhood. Your parents had just moved to the United States from Europe. Your mother worked as a seamstress and your father worked in a restaurant. You were well liked by the other kids – you were, ironically, the class clown. You didn't do very well in school. You hadn't been raised speaking English and you just didn't understand math. But you had friends and were loved and you were happy.

And then it all changed, one fateful day. You were, perhaps, thirteen. You woke up feeling strange, a bit sick, a bit dizzy, but just different. You weren't sure how. You still aren't. You went downstairs to greet your mother and father, but after a few minutes they started laughing at you. And they would not stop! You were puzzled and worried; you couldn't figure out what was so funny. Your friends, too, they laughed at you. Your teachers in school, strangers on the street. Everyone just laughed and laughed and laughed. In tears, you ran away from home.

You ran for a few years, never staying in one place too long. People would just laugh at you no matter where you went. It was a lonely life. You had nobody to talk to, nobody at all. You tried expressing yourself without talking, like charades or writing, but you just weren't that good at English, and it seemed that people would laugh just being near you even if you weren't speaking.

You were good at charades, though, and soon you had developed as sort of "act" that was part physical comedy and part your curse and people would laugh, but they would also throw money. This let you live. You were alone, but you were still alive, good trade off, right? Right?

You first thought about joining the circus after seeing a poster for the Bungling Brothers show a few years back. They had already left town, but there was a small circus, just starting up, that had moved into town. Its name? Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide's Circus of the Spectacular.

It wasn't very spectacular at the time. They had a few animal acts, some acrobats, even a small "freak show" featuring a bearded lady and a set of Siamese twins. You talked with Colonel Rawhide, and sure enough, after a few minutes he was laughing hard enough to burst. He offered you a job as he lead clown. You took it and your life has never been the same since.

For a while, you were happy. You had a nice-paying job and a new family of sorts. But it was really all the same; no matter what you said, no matter what you did, people laughed at you. You began to hear rumors – rumors travel faster than the speed of laughter – that you were competitive and always "on," trying to be the best and not trying to work with everyone else. It wasn't true, but you couldn't explain – they'd just laugh.

And then the real pain started. You were no stranger to emotional pain when you first joined the circus, but this pain was new and real and very physical. You were able to get a doctor to stop laughing long enough to check on you. Kidney stones. Painful, agonizing, kidney stones. The first one was the worst, but you've passed about twenty of them since you've joined the circus. You didn't know what to do with them, so you've kept them. The last one was about a month ago, so you aren't due for another for a few more months. You hope.

Between the kidney stones and the fact that you cannot seem to connect with another single human being, your life has been a complete living hell. You go to the center ring; you don't have to do anything, really, and the crowd roars with laughter. You are Colonel Rawhide's favorite act. You have made so much money for the circus, that he took it on a tour of Europe.

Europe was interesting. The circus gained a number of new acts and you became even more miserable. While you made the audiences laugh in Europe, they didn't seem to appreciate you as much. Reviews were mixed at best. Working, the one joy in your life, was turning sour. You didn't know what to do.

Colonel Rawhide was starting to lose money. He had hired on a number of new acts while in Europe – he has a big heart and sometimes cannot bear to say "no" – and he was starting to find it difficult to pay performers. You were still making people laugh, of course, but now you weren't getting a steady paycheck.

You had been sending a few dollars a month home to your parents. You had forgiven them for laughing at you, but you still couldn't bring yourself to see them

again knowing the laughter would still be there. But your money is running out. You don't need money for food or lodging; the circus provides that. But you need money to make better props and accessories. You need money if you want to do anything outside of the circus. You need money to send home...

And then there have been the accidents. You were never close to Uma the Unicyclist or Preston the Prestidigitator, but you weren't happy to seem them lose their jobs in France. Uma fell off her high unicycle and nearly broke her leg. Preston was let go when a trap door fell open during his act, breaking the illusion. You hope that this isn't a trend.

The circus has recently returned to America, but the joy of performing has left you. What good is performing? What good is talent? What good is anything if you cannot have a single friend? If you cannot get close to anyone? The laughter drives them away. You hate it. You hate laughter and you hate the pain your life has become. You wish you could talk to someone, anyone. You wish someone would understand.

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You are extraordinarily depressed. You are not in great physical pain at the moment, though. Despite your depression, the GMs suggest that you plow through, trying to find someone to talk to.

ITEMS

A greasepaint kit. Can be used to disguise yourself or someone else.

A small bag of kidney stones.

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: Your boss. He is a nice guy and he was the one who really brought you into the show business. But even he cannot listen to you for more than a few minutes without laughing at you. He also owes you \$50 in back pay.

Daisy Belle: Colonel Rawhide's fiancée. She seems like sweet person, but she does not care for the circus very much. You aren't sure why.

Jack Bungling: The older of the two Bungling Brothers. You've never met them, but you know them by reputation. They have a large circus which they built by buying out smaller circuses. There is a pretty solid rumor that they are trying to buy out this circus.

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.

Susan Wildes, The Strong Woman: You can't understand how a frail looking woman like her can

lift such tremendous weights. She can sometimes be a bit clumsy, so you tend to keep your distance.

Franklin Winters, The Lion Tamer: He is quite the drinker, although you have never seen him drunk during his act. He keeps good care of the animals and gets along well with them.

Rupert and Rudolph Townshed: They have been with the circus since the very beginning, but lately they've become argumentative and aren't even speaking to each other. This has really hurt their act since they are Siamese twins.

Helena Ferez: The bearded lady. She also was one of the originals of the circus. She's the real thing, too. Colonel Rawhide has a "certificate of authenticity" signed by a real doctor.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallower: He's a nice enough guy, but he avoids you for some reason. He doesn't seem to like to laugh.

Bobo, the Dog Faced Boy: Bobo helps Franklin with the animals and they are good friends. You'd figure him to be no older than 8 or 9, younger than you were when you ran away from home.

Zelda the Clown: Zelda joined the circus in Europe. She seems to be trying to tell you something, but since she cannot speak and you aren't that good at reading or writing, you've had difficulty communicating. Zelda also can't read or write, but Daisy has been teaching her. Many people wonder if she is really mute or just pretending, but you know the truth. She doesn't actually laugh out loud when she's near you, but she convulses as if laughing. She cannot make a sound, but she still laughs at you, silently. She is an excellent tumbler and gymnast, though, and a fine clown. You might like her more if you could get to know her. Sigh.

Señora Mysterioso: An older woman who reads fortunes and charms snakes. She keeps to herself, though.

The Masked Rider: The Masked Rider is a very solitary individual, staying aloof since joining up in Europe.

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus in Europe. The Knife Thrower also isn't a very forthcoming individual.

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: Lydia joined the circus just before you all left for Europe. She seems very nice.

Zimmie the Clown: Zimmie is odd. He gives you the creeps a little. He's very dexterous and has a fairly good act, but his makeup scares children. He isn't very friendly, either. Not that you could talk to him anyway, but still...

The Great Zamboni: He arrived today asking for a job. Colonel Rawhide decided to give him a chance. You hope he fares better than Preston.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: He is the father of the Bungling Brothers who are trying to buy out the circus. He is a powerful and influential man in Washington DC.

John Bungling: The younger of the Bungling Brothers. Jack is the public persona and John runs things behind the scenes.

Uma the Unicyclist: Uma used to ride a large unicycle while juggling or across a high wire.

However, while in France, she fell and severely twisted her ankle. She has stayed on in France in the care of a Doctor. She was a very nice person and you are sorry to see her go.

Preston the Prestidigitator: His act also was ruined while in France. While he was sawing a woman in half, a panel swung open revealing the illusion. He was booed out of the tent and Colonel Rawhide had to fire him. You haven't seen him since.

ABILITIES

Combat: 10 cards.

Almost Illiterate: You cannot read or write any words more than four letters long.

SUSAN WILDES, THE STRONG LADY

Your story really starts when you were twelve years old. Before that, you were a normal child, growing up in Bangor, Maine. Your father worked in a sawmill and your mother stayed home raising you and your younger brother.

Your life was perfectly normal until that fateful summer night. You had just turned twelve. Your parents had left home for the evening and your brother was out playing with friends. You were home alone. There was a full moon out that night and you were a little spooked.

For some reason you could not quite place, you found yourself working your way upstairs. You stopped in the middle of the hallway and looked up. There was a string, way above your head. A trapdoor? In the ceiling? Why hadn't you noticed it before?

Curious, you pulled over a chair and climbed up and tugged on the string. You practically had to hang on the string to open it, this was before you got your strength after all. But you got the trap door open and a bunch of stairs, nearly a ladder, fell down. Your house had an attic? How could you miss that?

You climbed the stairs and took a look around. Gee, it was dusty! And there were cobwebs everywhere. But it was quiet, and the full moon was shining in the window providing ample light. You took a careful step forward, arms covered in goosebumps. Nobody had been in this room for years.

You crept carefully forward, looking around carefully. There were some closed boxes and crates, a few trunks, and some scattered papers. Mostly, they weren't that interesting, but there was an old, old chest in the corner. It looked like it used to be locked, but the lock had broken from years of decay. You opened the old chest carefully, the hinges screaming like they had seen a ghost.

Inside was an old, worn book. It looked hand bound and printed by hand as well. You couldn't read a word of it; it was in some sort of eerie foreign language you had never seen before. Under the book were some glass vials, three or four of them. All of them were empty except for one. You held it up to examine in the pale moonlight.

The vial contained some sort of red liquid. It was thick and sort of clung to the glass. You still aren't certain to this day what possessed you to remove the cork from the vial. Even pure curiosity has its limits. The fluid had no smell, odd for something that was probably hundreds of years old. Time slowed for you; it felt like you were in a dream. A shadow

passed in front of the moon, dimming the whole room.

Before you knew what was happening, you had drunk the whole thing.

You have no clear memories of the rest of that night. You must have left the attic at some time. You awoke the next morning in your bed, none the worse for wear. You got up and looked at the ceiling at the top of the stairs. The door in the ceiling was **still there**, but it was closed, and the inviting cord was completely gone.

Puzzled, you washed up and came downstairs from breakfast. You must have still been groggy, because you tripped over the last stair. You flailed out and grabbed onto the banister to steady yourself. You were fine, but your parents, sitting in the dining room already, were looking at you strangely.

You followed their gaze to your right hand, still clutching the banister. Only you seemed to have damaged it, crushed it somehow. You had, with one hand, nearly crushed through a solid piece of wood. You did what any normal twelve year old would do in your situation. You fainted.

You awoke in your mother arms. She was crying and nearly hysterical. Your father did his best to calm her down, and through the two of them you got the garbled remnants of the rest of the story.

Your father's grandmother (great-grandmother? Some ancestor) was hanged as a witch in Salem. Unlike most of the other witches, however, she actually did practice the craft and that trunk was removed from her house when her son and daughter (also accused) escaped from the jail.

The trunk had been passed down, unopened, from father to son for generations and it finally came to rest in your attic. And it remained unopened until last night. Your parent came home and found you passed out in the attic next to the open trunk. Praying that you didn't drink anything, they took you downstairs and put you to bed.

You explained tearfully that you did drink the red liquid in the vial. You felt fine, but you weren't sure about the banister. Your hand didn't hurt, even after nearly breaking the railing. Your mother looking into your eyes and said that everything would be just fine, then she threw her arms around you and gave you a big hug, and you hugged her back.

And broke her arm.

You left home two years later. You still hadn't managed to get your amazing strength under control.

Your parents had searched through the chest for a cure, but to no avail. There were a few broken vials and the book... Neither of your parents could read it either. They went to school teachers, even to professors at the local college, but they couldn't read it either.

You were sad to have to leave, but it was necessary. The house was a mess and you kept hurting people. You were tremendously strong, but so clumsy. You never got used to being so strong. Taking the book, you left to find a cure. You ended up at the circus.

You've been working in circuses four about four years now. You weren't very happy with the first circus; the owner was cruel and many of the other showpeople were drunk and abusive. And you were a young woman, just out of being a child. If it wasn't for your strength... You don't want to think what might have happened.

You joined Colonel Rawhide's circus about three years ago, just after Binky the Clown joined. You like Binky, he always makes you laugh and you forget how lonely this life can be. Sure, the circus is like a surrogate family, and you've been training to better understand your strength so you don't hurt people as much. But to the outside world, you're a freak, a small eighteen year old girl who can lift thousand pound weights.

You've made a few friends here, but since you are so strong, and sometimes clumsy, even they keep their distance. One of your closer friends is the older gypsy fortuneteller, Señora Mysterioso. (She says that her real name is Jane Doe, but you don't believe that).

Señora Mysterioso can see into the future. She says that there will be a time in the future when women will be equal to men. She says that the world is just about to undergo an "industrial revolution," and machines will be commonplace, with electrical candles shining in the dark, and horseless carriages driving everyone around, like trains without tracks.

She has said that your own personal future was cloudy, but she did know that you came from Bangor. She seems to be on the up and up. She *knows* things. And with your own unusual background, how can you really doubt that magic exists? You did try to show her your book, and while she showed some interest, she couldn't read it, either.

But the thing that most interests you is the idea that women will be equal to men. You're stronger than any of the men here at the circus, but you cannot even vote because you are a woman. You find that ridiculous. Señora Mysterioso has proclaimed herself to be something called a "suffragette." You have joined in the cause and become a suffragette, too.

Señora Mysterioso says that there is one man in Washington DC that you have to convince: Senator Hiram Bungling. As moves Bungling, so moves the country. She says that if Bungling isn't convinced to give women the right to vote, the cause will be pushed back thirty years or more.

You're not sure what you can do to help, but Señora Mysterioso has a plan. The best way for a pair of circus performers to get to the most influential man in Washington DC, is by his sons. Senator Bungling's sons, Jack and John, own the Bungling Brothers Circus. Of late, the Bungling Brothers have been trying to buy Colonel Rawhide's Circus.

Señora Mysterioso believes that between the two of you, you can convince John to convince his father to vote for votes for women. If only Jack is available, things might be a bit tougher. Jack is a hard sell, but even he can be convinced in time.

Señora Mysterioso also wants to get the other women in the circus in on this plan. You think this is a good idea, but you aren't sure who would support you. You know, for example, that Colonel Rawhide's fiancée, Daisy Belle, is a traditional woman and even if she supports votes for women, she may not wish to work with circus folk. You don't know quite why she doesn't like you, but she just doesn't.

Some of the other females might be more amenable. You think Lydia the tattooed lady might be persuaded to join your cause. Lydia is nice. Occasionally, Rudolph Townshed, one of the Siamese Twins, will give you notes to pass to her, only he made you promise not to tell her where they came from. You think that he might be in love with her, but is too shy to tell her so. How sweet.

You aren't so certain if those who joined the circus while in the most recent European tour, such as Zelda the Clown, would be interested in getting the vote for women; they might not even be American citizens. You can ask, but you don't have much hope.

The European tour was a disaster. Colonel Rawhide was doing so well in the United States that he decided to take the circus to Europe. You started in England, toured across the continent and ended in France. Along the way, you picked up some new acts, such as the Masked Rider, and the Knife Thrower.

However, while in France, strange accidents started happening. First Uma the Unicyclist fell off her high unicycle and nearly broke her leg. She had to stay in France, under a doctor's care. This is a shame, not only because she was a friend, but also because she was interested in the cause of woman's rights. Uma had just joined in Señora Mysterioso's plan when she had her accident.

Of course there are those who say that it wasn't an accident at all, but sabotage. Could it be someone who was trying to frighten off the suffragettes? Might you be the next target? You are tough to hurt, but Señora Mysterioso is an old woman. You may want to warn her.

Hm, politics can sometimes be more dangerous than they seem.

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You are an incredibly strong eighteen year old girl. You are still trying to cope with your great strength and you are getting swept up in something big. You know you can hold your own if you have to, but sometimes deep down inside, you are scared.

ITEMS

An old book. It's written in a language nobody seems to know.

Several heavy weights. For you to lift, of course.

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: The owner of the circus. He is a good soul and really does want what is best for his employees. You are glad to be working for him. Of late, he is worried because the circus is not doing well financially.

Daisy Belle: Colonel Rawhide's fiancée. She seems like sweet person, but she does not care for the circus very much. You aren't sure why.

Jack Bungling: The older of the two Bungling Brothers. You've never met them, but you know them by reputation. They have a large circus which they built by buying out smaller circuses. Jack's father is Senator Hiram Bungling. You want to convince Jack to convince his father to support the cause of woman's suffrage.

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: He is so very funny. You always have a good laugh when he is around. You wonder if he can ever be serious.

Franklin Winters, The Lion Tamer: He is quite the drinker, although you have never seen him drunk during his act. He keeps good care of the animals and gets along well with them.

Rupert and Rudolph Townshed: They have been with the circus since the very beginning, but lately they've become argumentative and aren't even speaking to each other. This has really hurt their act since they are Siamese twins. You deliver messages for Rudolph sometimes; don't forget to ask him if he needs any messages delivered.

Helena Ferez: The bearded lady. She also was one of the originals of the circus. You wonder if she would be interested in helping out with votes for women. You should ask her.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallow: His act is a bit flashy, but he seems nice. You once saw him drop burning oil on his hand and he wasn't hurt at all. You wonder if he is special like you.

Bobo, the Dog Faced Boy: Bobo helps Franklin with the animals and they are good friends. You'd figure him to be no older than 8 or 9, younger than you were when you left home.

Zelda the Clown: Zelda joined the circus in Europe. She doesn't speak, ever. She avoids you as if she's scared of you, but whenever you actually do get to talk to her, she's always polite, even if she cannot answer you. You think she might be interested in with votes for women.

Señora Mysterioso: She's old, maybe fifty or older, but she can see into the future. She's like a surrogate mother to you. She has recently gotten you interested in the woman's suffrage movement. She claims that her real name is Jane Doe, but you think she's making that up.

The Masked Rider: The Masked Rider is a very solitary individual, staying aloof since joining up in Europe. [Note: the Masked Rider may be a male or female character, depending on the player. If the Masked Rider is female, consider asking her to join the woman's suffrage movement.]

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus in Europe. The Knife Thrower also isn't a very forthcoming individual. [Note: the Knife Thrower may be a male or female character, depending on the player. If the Knife Thrower is female, consider asking her to join the woman's suffrage movement.]

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: Lydia joined the circus just before you all left for Europe. She seems very nice. You want to talk to her about joining you and Señora Mysterioso. Sometimes you deliver her notes from Rudolph Townshed, but he made you promise not to tell him who they were from.

Zimmie the Clown: Zimmie is odd. He gives you the creeps a little. He isn't very friendly, either.

The Great Zamboni: He arrived today asking for a job. Colonel Rawhide decided to give him a chance. He seems nice enough.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: He is the father of the Bungling Brothers who are trying to buy out the circus. He is a powerful and influential man in Washington DC. Where Bungling goes, so goes the

nation. You want to convince his sons to convince him to support woman's suffrage.

John Bungling: The younger of the Bungling Brothers. Jack is the public persona and John runs things behind the scenes. John would be far easier to talk into something like votes for women, but he isn't around.

Uma the Unicyclist: Uma used to ride a large unicycle while juggling or across a high wire. However, while in France, she fell and severely twisted her ankle. She has stayed on in France in the care of a Doctor. This was just after she had joined you and Señora Mysterioso in your suffrage activities.

Preston the Prestidigitator: His act also was ruined while in France. While he was sawing a woman in half, a panel swung open revealing the illusion. He was booed out of the tent and Colonel Rawhide had to fire him. You haven't seen him since.

ABILITIES

Combat: 11 cards.

Feats of Great Strength: You are as strong as ten strong men. You can perform feats of great strength. See a Roustabout to do so.

Lucky Punch: Play this in combat if your opponent plays Wa-Hoo! You do not have to play a combat card, and your opponent can only play BAM or CRASH on this card. You can do this once per combat.

Binky the Clown: You find Binky so hilarious that after a few minutes of talking with 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 you were talking about (or doing), but – my – that Binky sure is funny.

That master of the ferocious beasts! Presenting...

FRANKLIN WINTERS, THE LION TAMER

You are, quite easily, the oldest person that you know. It isn't that hard when you're immortal, after all.

You were born in the year of our Lord, Sixteen Hundred and Fifty One, in Salem, Massachusetts. Your Christian name was Jonathan Corwin. You were a good, God fearing man, and served your town well. You grew to be a prominent Judge in the town, not as well known as your friend John Hathorne, perhaps, but still you had authority.

In the fateful year of 1692, you learned what a mistake authority could be. That was when Sarah Good, Sarah Osborne, and their serving girl Tituba were accused of witchcraft by the local girls, many of whom were exhibiting bizarre behavior. You do not know to this day why the girls decided to act out as such, but you are fairly certain that it wasn't witchcraft.

Oh, you still believe in witches, but you have roughly two hundred years of hindsight to look back on your deeds. You were swept up in the hysteria that followed. Over twenty people died before Governor Phipps stepped in and stopped the madness, but it was already too late for you.

You remember the day of the curse quite well. It was the morning of July 19th, 1692. Five so-called witches, Rebecca Nurse, Sarah Wildes, Susannah Martin, Elizabeth Howe, and Sarah Good were to be hanged that day.

You awoke that morning in a cold sweat, shaking from some horrible dream. But you must still have been dreaming, for a specter appeared, hanging in the air in front of you. It was an old crone who dangled in the morning light, her face masked. The apparition was glowing slightly and you can see the walls of your modest house through its ghastly visage.

She spoke to you, in a voice that rang of fingernails on slate, "As will be done to me, shall not be done to thee. Thou shalt have all eternity to reflect upon thy misfortune." And then the specter moved to lay hands upon your forehead and you screamed and passed back into blessed unconsciousness.

You awoke again a few minutes later. Your room was empty save yourself. It was eerily quiet except for your ragged breathing. All seemed right with the world again. You said a quick prayer to the Lord and hurried to the hanging.

You were now confident you were doing the Lord's work. One of these women was indeed a witch, but

you were faithful and pure. She could not hurt you. Your hubris was your undoing, for as you watched the five women dangle, you felt a strange dread that you could not name.

It was several years later that you learned the truth of the crone's curse.

You were out back chopping wood for the fire when your hand slipped and the axe bit deep into your leg. At least that's what you thought at first. But then you noticed that you had actually managed to cut off your own foot, just above the boot. The pain was incredible. You watched your life bleed out of your leg in spurts. You nearly lost consciousness from the shock and the pain. You wish you had.

As you watched in horror, your severed foot began to move, taking its place at the bottom of your leg. The pain you felt before was but a fraction of the agony you now felt as your flesh began to knit together. You were in complete unbearable agony for several minutes, unable to do anything but gasp with pain. And then the pain was gone and your leg was whole again.

Shaking, you got back to your feet, and gingerly walked back to your house. There was no pain. Oh, there was blood; your leg was covered in it. But you weren't bleeding. It hit you then. You could not die. Oh, you could be injured, and you could certainly feel pain, but you wouldn't die.

You walked back into your house and tried to figure what you would tell your wife.

Ten years later you buried her. You moved on after that. People were beginning to talk. How you never seemed to get sick, how you still looked so young, how you hanged all those witches... You had to leave before you were strung up yourself. It wouldn't have killed you, of course, but it would have hurt like the dickens!

The next few years passed in a blur. You seemed to be constantly moving. You couldn't stay in one place for too long. You lived through good times and bad. You remember taking a belly full of lead fighting the redcoats. Your body rid itself of the lead pellets when your stomach reformed, and that hurt twice.

You took to drinking, not to ease the pain, but to make money. Drinking is a sin, of course, but since alcohol doesn't affect you at all, you are not very worried about it. But you can win all sorts of wagers – yes, gambling is a sin as well – and get people to trust you if they think that you are in your cups. You have not tried some of the more popular

pharmaceuticals, such as laudanum, although you suspect that they would not affect you either. Luckily, you don't get sick, otherwise you would be even more miserable, as you could not even try a tincture of cure.

You got your start as a wild animal trainer in the early days of the circuses. You were visiting Barnum's American Museum in New York – despite the popular beliefs, it was really quite educational – and a lion had managed to escape from one of the upstairs exhibits. Most people ran, but you were cornered. You had some experience with animals from working on farms, and you were somehow able to calm the creature down and get it back to its cage without being harmed.

Barnum wanted to hire you right then and there, but you didn't want to be in the public eye, so you said no and left New York. But the idea of working with animals stuck. Animals may notice that you don't get sick, or never seem to get older, but they never say anything. You worked for a while in a zoological gardens and then in a menagerie.

And from there, you changed your name – you change your name every twenty years or so when you move on – and became Franklin Winters, Lion Tamer.

You joined Colonel Rawhide's Circus about a year and a half ago. You like working here; Colonel Rawhide is a good man. The people here are almost like a family. It will be a shame to have to leave them eventually. There are a few flies in the ointment, of course. One of them is Daisy Belle, Colonel Rawhide's fiancée.

Daisy doesn't care much for circus folk. She especially doesn't like you. She feels that you all should have good and proper jobs and that working as clowns, or acrobats, or with animals is beneath decent people. You can understand her point of view. When you were a judge in Salem, you would have run a wild animal trainer out of town. How things have changed in just two centuries.

Daisy isn't a bad person, just not very tolerant of those different from how she was raised. She's a dignified southern belle and doesn't understand that such a life is not for everybody. You understand her point of view, and know that her tolerance will broaden as her horizons expand. However, it has become imperative that she come to accept the circus as soon as possible.

You've grown very fond of these people, and for many of them, yourself included, the circus is your livelihood. Several months ago, the circus was doing quite well, and Colonel Rawhide planned a trip to Europe. The tour started in England, wound its way through the continent, and ended in France. During

that time, Colonel Rawhide picked up some new acts. The Masked Rider, the knife thrower, Bobo the Dog Faced Boy, and Zelda the Clown all joined the circus in Europe.

However, the circus didn't do quite as well in Europe. Also, toward the end of the tour, accidents started happening. Uma the Unicyclist fell off her high unicycle and nearly broke her ankle. She stayed on in France, under doctor's care. Preston the Prestidigitator was fired when a panel swung open during his act, revealing the illusion behind the woman he was cutting in half. By the time the circus got back to America, it was losing money quickly. Colonel Rawhide still owes you, personally, \$50 worth of back pay.

Then the Bunglings moved in. The Bungling Brothers own a rival circus, built piecemeal from the wrecks of other circuses. They are ruthless and cruel, and nobody really wants to work with them. Unfortunately, they buy contracts from other circuses and folks cannot leave. Daisy has seen this as an opportunity to get Colonel Rawhide to sell the circus and get a "legitimate" job.

So a group of folks got together one night to discuss the situation. It was you, Clifford Credenza, the Townshed brothers (back when they were still talking to each other), Bobo, and Lydia the Tattooed Woman. You hit on a plan. One of you – you forget which one, you maybe? – is to get a spare mask from the Masked Rider and pretend to kidnap Daisy.

Then, on a prearranged signal, everyone else chips in to rescue her, letting the masked kidnapper escape. Daisy will then be so grateful that she'll forget about her dislike of circus folk. It's drastic, but it just might work. Your plan is to do it not too long after the main show ends. You wanted to try the phony kidnapping before the main show, but Clifford Credenza insisted it be after the show.

You are looking forward to the show. You genuinely like the animals. Plus, you now have a helper with them. Young Bobo the Dog-Faced Boy has been helping you with the animals. He is from Fandonia, or Freedonia, or one of those European countries and only speaks broken English. He doesn't speak much about his home life, most likely the poor lad ran away from home because of his hair. It covers most of his body; he's hairier than most of the adults and possibly some of the animals. And he's only eight years old.

Or so he claims. Sometimes in your conversations, he slips and talks about things that should have happened before he was born. He once talked about "your American civil war," when you were talking about the possibility of war between his country and Fandonia (or Freedonia, one of the two). He spoke of it like an adult, like he remembered it.

Sure, the possibility may exist that he is a middle-aged man pretending to be a very hairy child, but you are willing to believe in something more. Stranger things have happened. To you. Of course, you dare not voice your suspicions. You have no great desire to have your curse revealed to the world, especially in a place where people are willing to make money exploiting freaks. You could just see your act changed into something that killed you, every day. That would hurt! Or worse yet, you'd be jailed and studied by one of those *scientists* whose work is coming into vogue these days.

No, what you really want is for your curse to end, ideally allowing to live out the rest of your life like a normal man. You've experienced the pain and death of too many lifetimes and you are ready to quit. But how?

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You are old although you look like you're in your thirties, and ready to die. However, since you can't, you try to live your life as best you can. You are a decent man, although you are considered by many to be a drunk. You do not dissuade them of this opinion since alcohol does not affect you and it seems to get people to trust you. Remember that you cannot be killed, but you can be hurt and pain is very unpleasant.

NOTE

The wild animals are not well defined. If you wish there to be a specific wild animal, we will do our best to accommodate you. During your show, the wild animals will be portrayed by children.

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: The owner of the circus. He is a good soul and really does want what is best for his employees. You are glad to be working for him. Of late, he is worried because the circus is not doing well financially. He owes you \$50 of back pay.

Daisy Belle: Colonel Rawhide's fiancée. She does not care for the circus. You can sympathize, but you need to change her mind quickly before she convinces Colonel Rawhide to sell the circus. That is why you have embarked on a phony kidnapping plan with some of the others.

Jack Bungling: The older of the two Bungling Brothers. You've never met them, but you know them by reputation. They have a large circus that they built by buying out smaller circuses. Right now, they are threatening to buy out Colonel Rawhide's circus and you don't want that to happen.

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. Clifford, however, is helping with the scheme to kidnap Daisy.

Herman Binkowicz, "Binky" the Clown: You've never quite understood Binky. Everyone else thinks he is so funny, but you do not see it. His acts seem more filled with pathos than humor.

Susan Wildes, The Strong Lady: She is in her late teens and very, very strong. There is no real rational explanation for why she is so strong, but you know better than to depend on rational explanations.

Rupert and Rudolph Townshed: They have been with the circus since the very beginning, but lately they've become argumentative and aren't even speaking to each other. This has really hurt their act since they are Siamese twins. They are supposed to be helping with the phony kidnapping, too.

Helena Ferez: The bearded lady. She also was one of the originals of the circus. She has a real beard too; Colonel Rawhide had her examined by a doctor when she joined.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallow: His act is a bit flashy, but he's a fine fellow. Lately, he's been a bit restless.

Bobo, the Dog Faced Boy: Besides working in the sideshow, he's your assistant and your best friend. He claims to be eight years old, but you suspect he's older. You want to talk to him, but you don't really like revealing your condition.

Zelda the Clown: Zelda joined the circus in Europe. She is a mute. You think that she has a thing for Binky, but you aren't certain.

Señora Mysterioso: She claims to be able to see into the future. You once sentenced a number of women to death for much less.

The Masked Rider: The Masked Rider is a very solitary individual, staying aloof since joining up in Europe.

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus in Europe. The Knife Thrower also isn't a very forthcoming individual.

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: Lydia joined the circus just before you all left for Europe. It seems like she has something to hide. She is helping with the kidnapping attempt.

Zimmie the Clown: Zimmie is odd. There is something just wrong about him. He isn't very friendly, either.

The Great Zamboni: He arrived today asking for a job. Colonel Rawhide decided to give him a chance. Again, you are leery of magic, even stage magic.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: He is the father of the Bungling Brothers. He is a powerful and influential man in Washington DC. Where Bungling goes, so goes the nation.

John Bungling: The younger of the Bungling Brothers. Jack is the public persona and John runs things behind the scenes.

Uma the Unicyclist: Uma used to ride a large unicycle while juggling or across a high wire. However, while in France, she fell and severely twisted her ankle. She has stayed on in France in the care of a Doctor.

Preston the Prestidigitator: His act also was ruined while in France. While he was sawing a woman in half, a panel swung open revealing the illusion. He was booed out of the tent and Colonel Rawhide had to fire him.

ABILITIES

Combat: 12 cards.

Cannot Die: No matter how much damage you take, you regenerate and cannot die. You are immune to all drugs and alcohol.

Are they two people or one? Introducing...

RUPERT TOWNSHED, SIAMESE TWIN

Sometimes life just isn't fair. Oh, sure, there are those who would say life has never been fair to you, but you disagree. For the most part, you've had a good life all things considered. If it wasn't for your brother...

You and Rudolph were born about twenty years ago. Medicine wasn't that good back then, not that it is much better today. Your mom survived, just barely. But life never has been easy when you're connected to your brother.

Rudolph is always to your right. Like Chang and Eng, Barnum's famous twins from Siam, you are connected by a sort of tube of flesh, only yours connects your sides just above the hip. And like Chang and Eng, you have had your share of difficulties.

You were born in the foothills of the Appalachian mountains in rural Virginia. It was a miracle your mother didn't die in childbirth. From the start, your family didn't know what to make of you. There was always talk of separating the two of you, but the doctors from Washington DC made it sound impossible.

But you had your share of glory. You were in your early teens, maybe fifteen, maybe sixteen, when the war between the states broke out. You tried to do your duty and sign up. You lied about your age, but you were turned down. Heck, they didn't even turn down anyone! That hurt.

But you persevered, and eventually, the two of you were accepted as footsoldiers (no way were the two of you going to be able to ride a horse) to fight in the Virginia militia. You only saw one battle, the battle of Dinwiddie Court House. It was pretty bad and bloody (and muddy – it rained that day), but you proved yourselves that day and you were able to survive without being shot. And the Confederacy won! Well, the battle at least.

After the war, Rudolph and you came home and helped around the farm and grew to be fine young lads. But no girl would even talk to you, much less dance with you at a social. You two knew you would grow up alone, but together. It did mean something special to you, personally, when you heard that Chang and Eng got married (oh, they were always heroes of yours). It meant there was hope. You must never give up hope.

You started your circus career working for the Bungling Brothers. At first Rudolph was against it. He thought it would be demeaning. You said that it

could make you famous. He didn't want to leave the family farm again. You explained that it could bring in money. He didn't want to be called a freak. You countered that it was your best chance of meeting women. He finally agreed.

Jack wasn't very nice, but John could be sociable enough when he wasn't following Jack's orders. You've never met a man quite like Jack Bungling before and you never want to again. He was a mean one.

However, you were soon approached by Colonel Sebastian Tucker Rawhide a hero from the deep south. He said that he had heard about you and how you were war heroes and all and that he'd like to hire you for his new circus and wild west show.

You and Rudolph talked it over. He wanted to leave the Bungling's circus. You disagreed. The Bunglings might not have been the best employers, but their circus brings in money. But, when it came down to it, Rudolph won the argument. Your brother can be so stubborn when he puts his mind to it.

At least when you argue, you haven't ever come to blows. Heck, punching Rudolph would almost be like punching yourself. Not that he hasn't deserved it a few times, though. You remember early on in the circus when you got paid two dollars more a show than he did because you can play the fiddle and he can't. Well he should've took his lessons like you did. He got so upset and the two of you took to fighting until Colonel Rawhide gave him a two dollar raise and made him take singing lessons.

And then there was the time when the circus was in New York. Well, you wanted to see Barnum's American Museum and Rudolph wanted to see that new Statue of Liberty. Well, you are a pure blooded American and you don't care much for French gifts, so you demanded that you see the American Museum. Well, Rudolph put his foot down, and it was right on top of yours and with such force that he broke one of your toes and it ended up that you couldn't see neither and now the American Museum's all burnt down and you can never see it anyway! You've never forgiven him for that.

And don't forget when Colonel Rawhide decided to drop the wild west acts in favor of the circus. You were against it; those acts brought in much needed money. But Rudolph just argued with you, in front of Colonel Rawhide. You had friends in that show and Rudolph's actions caused them to lose their jobs.

Yes, you and Rudolph have had your share of arguments, and quarrels, and scuffles, but so far you have avoided any knockdown dragout fights. So far.

But what the son of a gun has done now makes everything else pale in comparison. He has done tried to steal your girl! It's a bit of a long story.

First off, not too long after Colonel Rawhide sold off the wild west show, he discovered Herman Binkowicz, also known as Binky the Clown. Now you got to admit, ole Binky sure is a funny one. He can make you crack up just with a normal, everyday conversation.

Now this caused a lot of excitement for the circus. It was more popular that it ever had been and Colonel Rawhide added a bunch more acts. Ah, those were the glory days. You'd be performing to large crowds, making money hand over fist; even Rudolph seemed more tolerable then.

It was just about that time that Lydia joined the circus. Oh what a beauty! Her eyes, her face, her hair, all beautiful, and her body, every inch of it covered in tattoos. She was a walking work of art. It was love at first sight.

You spent the next month trying to get to know Lydia, and to let her get to know you too. When you are a freak of nature, romance can take a bit longer than normal, you know? Oh, you were shy. You didn't want her to reject you – you could tell she was someone special – so you have to take it slowly and carefully.

Then came the trip to Europe. The circus became so popular that Colonel Rawhide decided on a European tour. You didn't want to go to Europe, but Rudolph insisted. It was that America vs. France thing, all over again. He wanted to see Paris, and Madrid, and whatever the name of that city in Fandonia is. Of course, you relented. You had to, because Lydia wanted to go.

Over the course of the next few months, while the circus progressed through Europe, you courted Lydia. Oh, not personally, but through notes left at the foot of her bed, or delivered through a friend – you had Bobo the Dog face boy deliver most of your notes. And she responded! Bobo would bring you notes from Lydia. She never knew who her secret love was, but she was falling in love with you!

You should've realized something was up earlier. Rudolph seemed strangely happy. He didn't have a problem with visiting Lydia's room to leave a note on her bed. He didn't ask about the notes; he was even sending notes to someone, himself. You thought he was courting Susan Wildes, the strong woman. What a fool you were...

As the circus progressed through Europe, you started seeing more and more of Lydia. You would go out with her to view the local towns. Well, sometimes. OK, once. It was a disaster. For one thing, Rudolph was there. Well, it isn't like there's any going with

him, but like they say, three sure is a crowd. He kept wanted to talk to Lydia on *your* date. How could you have been so blind?

The problem was, of course, that a pair of Siamese twins with a cute tattooed lady will draw a crowd. You just wanted to eat dinner and view the local landmarks, but you were surrounded by a crowd of curious onlookers the whole time.

And then you wanted to eat in a small, romantic, cozy bistro and Rudolph wanted to go to a fancy restaurant. And you started arguing and one thing led to another and you two started yelling in the middle of town and the next thing you knew Lydia was gone and it was *all Rudolph's fault!* It was three weeks before you forgave him.

But it wasn't until you got back to America that you finally figured it out. You're not dumb; he must have been deliberately hiding it from you. He was sending notes to Lydia too. He was intercepting your notes and he was sending her notes of his own. He was trying to steal Lydia from you!

That low down dirty, cheating, son of a... You remember when you first figured it out.

A bunch of performers were talking behind the main tent a few days ago. The subject came up about Daisy Belle. Daisy is Colonel Rawhide's fiancée, and a pure southern lady she is, too. But she just doesn't care for circus folk. She keeps pressing the Colonel to get a "respectable" job. Otherwise, she's a very nice lady, but you just wish she wouldn't try to get between the Colonel and his circus.

Well, after a while of talking, someone said, "wouldn't it be nice if we could just show Daisy how nice circus folk really are?" And, well, one thing led to another and a scheme was born, a phony kidnapping. One of the others, it was either Lydia, Bobo, Clifford Credenza, or Franklin Winters, is going to get a spare mask from the Masked Rider and pretend to kidnap Daisy.

Then, on a prearranged signal, everyone else will rescue her, allowing the masked kidnapper to escape. Daisy will then be so grateful that she'll forget about her dislike of circus folk. It's drastic, but it just might work. The plan is to do it not too long after the main show ends. You will be the bait, so to speak. Your job is to lure Daisy to the kidnap point, and to help foil the kidnapping attempt. You were chosen for this job, of course, because no amount of masks or makeup will ever disguise you.

So, anyway, as the final details of the plan were being made – this is why you don't know who the kidnapper is supposed to be, by the way – you noticed that Rudolph had his arm around Lydia. He was putting the moves on *your gal!*

You were outraged! You took a big step to the left, which of course caused Rudolph to move off-balance to the left and you started a-yelling at him and cursing him out and that's when the whole story came out. He had been sending notes to Lydia. He has been courting Lydia from afar. He was in love with Lydia.

The Hell! **You** are in love with Lydia and you saw her first and no upstart pain in the side brother of yours is going to mess with your one chance at true romance! You tried explaining this to Rudolph, but when he is in a mood, there's just no reasoning with him.

Well that's it! You have given up on your idiotic self-centered brother. You are no longer talking to him. If you have anything to say, he can hear it from someone else. Oh, you'll still do your act, you're a professional after all, but you will not tolerate him any more!

And you *will* prove your love to Lydia. And she will love you too. And Rudolph? Rudolph will have to live with it!

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You hate your brother (well, ok, you don't hate your brother, you're just completely furious with him is all). Play this up. Make up arguments that happened in your past; follow his lead if he does (the Smothers Brothers provide an excellent inspiration for this). Use other people to communicate to your brother. You do love Lydia, and now is the time to show and prove your love. The time of anonymous notes is past. The time of showing up Rudolph has begun. And you will win!

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: A fine Southern gentleman and a war hero to boot. You are proud to be working for this fine man; it's a site better than working for those Bungling Brothers, anyway.

Daisy Belle: Colonel Rawhide's fiancée, a real Southern belle. She doesn't care for the circus. That is why you have embarked on a phony kidnapping plan with some of the others so as to change her mind quickly before she convinces Colonel Rawhide to sell the circus.

Jack Bungling: The older of the two Bungling Brothers. You worked for their circus for a while, but it was unpleasant so Rudolph convinced you to leave. Perhaps the only good decision he ever made.

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. Clifford, however, is helping with the scheme to kidnap Daisy.

Herman Binkowicz, "Binky" the Clown: The savior of the circus. Bringing Binky in allowed Colonel Rawhide to drop the wild west show, and gave the circus enough oomph to try a European tour. And, boy, is he funny.

Susan Wildes, The Strong Lady: She is in her late teens and is real strong. She's very nice, but you're kinda afraid she'd crush you if she hugged you or something. You think Rudolph uses her to send notes out sometimes.

Franklin Winters, the Lion Tamer: A nice guy. You like to go into town and have drinking contests with him against the locals. He can drink anyone under the table.

Rudolph Townshed: Your lying cheating woman-stealing brother. You cannot believe that he was trying to court Lydia while you were trying to court Lydia. You have had it and you are not speaking to him!

Helena Ferez: The bearded lady. She joined the circus just about the same time you did. She's a nice lady, but a bit shy and reserved. She has a real beard too; Colonel Rawhide had her examined by a doctor when she joined.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallower: He's been with the circus for a while. Colonel Rawhide really enjoys his flashy shows. He's a swell guy, but you get the feeling that he's looking for something he just can't find in the circus.

Bobo, the Dog Faced Boy: He's an eight year old boy who joined the circus in Europe. He helps you deliver notes when you're trying to hide things from Rudolph. You can count on him and trust him.

Zelda the Clown: Zelda joined the circus in Europe as well. She can't talk, nor read or write, but she is very energetic.

Señora Mysterioso: She's a "gypsy" fortune teller who joined the circus just before you all went to Europe. You've never gone to her to get your fortune told. Rudolph wants to, but you don't believe in such things. Actually, you don't think that she's a gypsy at all. You once saw her with a scepter of some kind and a signet ring. She's obviously runaway royalty.

The Masked Rider: The Masked Rider is a very solitary individual, staying aloof since joining up in Europe. However, someone needs to get one of the Rider's masks. Nobody has ever seen the Masked Rider without a mask.

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus in Europe. The Knife Thrower also likes privacy. The Knife Thrower's act is great, though. You saw some knives being thrown perfectly, while the thrower was blindfolded..

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: Ah the love of your life, and you will prove your love to her, see if you don't! She is sweet, kind, caring and considerate. Plus, she's covered head to toe in tattoos. Lydia joined the circus just before you all left for Europe. She is helping with the kidnapping attempt too.

Zimmie the Clown: Zimmie is odd. There is something just wrong about him. He isn't very friendly, either; you tried striking up a conversation once, but he just blew you off.

The Great Zamboni: He arrived today asking for a job. Colonel Rawhide decided to give him a chance. You don't know much about him.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: He is the father of the Bungling Brothers. He is a powerful and influential man in Washington DC. Where Bungling goes, so goes the nation.

John Bungling: The younger of the Bungling Brothers. Jack is the public persona and John runs things behind the scenes. It's kinda surprising that you haven't seen John around with Jack hovering so close nearby. Something's up, but you're not sure what.

Uma the Unicyclist: Uma used to ride a large unicycle while juggling or across a high wire. However, while in France, she fell and severely twisted her ankle. She has stayed on in France in the

care of a Doctor. Rumor has it that the unicycle was tampered with, but you saw Uma before the show and she looked a little pale and shaky.

Preston the Prestidigitator: His act also was ruined while in France. While he was sawing a woman in half, a panel swung open revealing the illusion. He was booed out of the tent and Colonel Rawhide had to fire him. It was kinda a shame, but you never liked him much anyway.

ABILITIES

Combat: 8 cards.

We're Going *This* Way: Using willpower and brute strength, you can direct Rudolph to go with you to a specific location, and there's nothing he can do about it. You can only do this once, though, so use it wisely.

Coordinated Attack: You and Rudolph are always in fights together. You win as one, you lose as one, and you fight as one. Either one of you can play MENKS cards when one of you is involved in a fight.

Binky the Clown: You find Binky so hilarious that after a few minutes of talking with 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 you were talking about (or doing), but – boy – that Binky sure is funny.

Are they one person or two? Introducing...

RUDOLPH TOWNSEND, SIAMESE TWIN

Sometimes life just isn't fair. Oh, sure, there are those who would say life has never been fair to you, but you disagree. For the most part, you've had a good life all things considered. If it wasn't for your brother...

You and Rupert were born about twenty years ago. Medicine wasn't that good back then, not that it is much better today. Your mom survived, just barely. But live never has been easy when your connected to your brother.

Rupert is always to your left. Like Chang and Eng, Barnum's famous twins from Siam, you are connected by a sort of tube of flesh, only yours connects your sides just above the hip. And like Chang and Eng, you have had your share of difficulties.

You were born in the foothills of the Appalachian mountains in rural Virginia. It was a miracle your mother didn't die in childbirth. From the start, your family didn't know what to make of you. There was always talk of separating the two of you, but the doctors from Washington DC made it sound impossible.

But you had your share of glory. You were in your early teens, maybe fifteen, maybe sixteen, when the war between the states broke out. You tried to do your duty and sign up. You lied about your age, but you were turned down. Heck, they didn't never turn down anyone! That hurt.

But you persevered, and eventually, the two of you were accepted as footsoldiers (no way were the two of you going to be able to ride a horse) to fight in the Virginia militia. You only saw one battle, the battle of Dinwiddie Court House. It was pretty bad and bloody (and muddy – it rained that day), but you proved yourselves that day and you were able to survive without being shot. And the Confederacy won! Well, the battle at least...

Rupert and you came home and helped around the farm and grew to be fine young lads. But no girl would even talk to you, much less dance with you at a social. You two knew you would grow up alone, but together. Rupert was all excited when his heroes, Chang and Eng, got married. Bah! They were just lucky to be in the right place at the right time. Another time, you might have been working for Barnum; you've always deeply resented their luck.

You didn't want to work for just any circus; most of them treated their freaks like, well, freaks. Barnum called his freaks, "special people," and seemed to

care for them. That's why you were against working for the Bungling Brothers. Rupert was all agog for circus life, but you – being the smarter of the two – knew better.

Rupert said that it could make you famous. You didn't want to leave the family farm again. He explained that it could bring in money. You tried to explain that you didn't want to be called a freak. He countered that it was your best chance of meeting women. Well, sometimes the ole' boy has a point; you packed your bags and joined the Bungling Brothers circus.

Jack Bungling wasn't very nice, but John could be sociable enough when he wasn't following Jack's orders. You've never met a man quite like Jack Bungling before and you never want to again. He was a mean one. There was always a ruthless gleam in his eye when he spoke; it made you shudder.

However, you were soon approached by Colonel Sebastian Taylor Rawhide, a hero from the deep south. He said that he had heard about you and how you were war heroes and all and that he'd like to hire you for his new circus and wild west show.

You and Rupert talked it over. You wanted to leave the Bungling's circus; Colonel Rawhide was a good man and he would treat you right. Rupert disagreed; he didn't want to leave a "sure thing," for an up and coming circus. You won that argument, and – as usual – you turned out to be right. Rupert should listen to you more often, that stubborn so-and-so.

At least when you argue, it hasn't ever come to blows. Heck, punching Rupert would almost be like punching yourself. Not that he hasn't deserved it a few times, though. You remember early on in the circus when he got paid two dollars more a show than you did, just because he can play the fiddle and you can't.

Oh, that was unfair. You tried to take fiddle lessons as a kid, like him, but you couldn't hold the darn thing without hitting Rupert in the face with it. He complained so much that you had the fiddle taken away from you. Heck, he hits you in the face occasionally when he plays the fiddle and you never complain. He's like that, always whining until he gets his way.

In any case, it wasn't your fault that you couldn't play the fiddle, and Rupert can't do the show without you. You stormed in to talk to Colonel Rawhide and raised so much heck that you got to take singing lessons and the two dollar raise.

And then there was the time when the circus was in New York. Well, you wanted to see the Statue of Liberty you had heard so much about. It was a gift from France and was really tall and you could climb inside to the top. Well, Rupert wanted to see Barnum's American Museum. Hah! You weren't ever going to give your money to Barnum what with him hiring Chang and Eng and not you two and all.

So you put your foot down. You were not going to set one foot in that museum. But when you stomped your foot for extra emphasis, that little creep of a brother of yours moved his foot so that you stomped on it. He did it on purpose, too! It broke one of his toes and you two couldn't see either thing. You've never forgiven him for that.

And don't forget when Colonel Rawhide decided to drop the wild west acts in favor of the circus. Rupert was against it, of course. But you were able to convince Colonel Rawhide that people weren't going to see wild west shows any more. And you were right again, the circus soon became much more popular.

Yeah, you and Rudolph have had your share of arguments, and quarrels, and scuffles, but so far you have avoided any knockdown dragout fights. So far.

But what that son of a gun has done now makes everything else pale in comparison. He has done tried to steal your girl! It's a bit of a long story.

First off, not too long after Colonel Rawhide sold off the wild west show, he discovered Herman Binkowicz, also known as Binky the Clown. Now you got to admit, ole Binky sure is a funny one. He can make you crack up just with a normal, everyday conversation.

Now this caused a lot of excitement for the circus. It was more popular that it ever had been and Colonel Rawhide added a bunch more acts. Ah, those were the glory days. You'd be performing to large crowds, making money hand over fist; even Rudolph seemed more tolerable then.

It was just about that time that Lydia joined the circus. Oh what a beauty! Her eyes, her face, her hair, all beautiful, and her body, every inch of it covered in tattoos. She was a walking work of art. It was love at first sight.

You spent the next month trying to get to know Lydia, and to let her get to know you too. When you are a different, romance can take a bit longer than normal, you know? Sure, you were shy. You didn't want her to reject you – you could tell she was someone special – so you have to take it slowly and carefully.

Then came the trip to Europe. The circus became so popular that Colonel Rawhide decided on a European

tour. Rupert didn't want to go to Europe, but you insisted. You weren't about to let Lydia leave you behind.

Over the course of the next few months, while the circus progressed through Europe, you courted Lydia. Oh, not personally, but through notes left at the head of her bed, or delivered through a friend – you had Susan Wildes deliver most of your notes. Susan's a nice gal, but she's freakishly strong, not at all your type. And Lydia responded! Susan would bring you notes from Lydia. She never knew who her secret love was, but she was falling in love with you!

You should've realized something was up earlier. Rupert seemed happy, and he's never happy. He didn't have a problem with visiting Lydia's room to leave a note on her bed. He didn't ask about the notes; he was even sending notes to someone, himself. You didn't think about it at the time – your mind was on Lydia! What a fool you were...

As the circus progressed through Europe, you started seeing more and more of Lydia. You would go out with her to view the local towns. Well, sometimes. OK, once. It was a disaster. For one thing, Rupert was there. Well, it isn't like there's any going with him, but like they say, three sure is a crowd. He kept wanted to talk to Lydia on *your* date. How could you have been so blind?

The problem was, of course, that a pair of Siamese twins with a cute tattooed lady will draw a crowd. You just wanted to eat dinner and view the local landmarks, but you were surrounded by a crowd of curious onlookers the whole time.

And then you wanted to eat in nice impressive fancy restaurant and Rupert wanted to some small out of the way place. And you started arguing and one thing led to another and you two started yelling in the middle of town and the next thing you knew Lydia was gone and it was ***all Rupert's fault!*** It was three weeks before you forgave him.

But it wasn't until you got back to America that you finally figured it out. You're not dumb; he was deliberately hiding it from you. He was sending notes to Lydia too. He was intercepting your notes and he was sending her notes of his own. He was trying to steal Lydia from you!

That low down dirty, cheating, son of a... You remember when you first figured it out.

A bunch of performers were talking behind the main tent a few days ago. The subject came up about Daisy Belle. Daisy is Colonel Rawhide's fiancée, and a pure southern lady she is, too. But she just doesn't care for circus folk. She keeps pressing the Colonel to get a "respectable" job. Otherwise, she's a very nice lady, but you just wish she wouldn't try to get between the Colonel and his circus.

Well, after a while of talking, someone said, “wouldn’t it be nice if we could just show Daisy how nice circus folk really are?” And, well, one thing led to another and a scheme was born, a phony kidnapping. One of the others, it was either Lydia, Bobo, Clifford Credenza, or Franklin Winters, is going to get a spare mask from the Masked Rider and pretend to kidnap Daisy.

Then, on a prearranged signal, everyone else will rescue her, allowing the masked kidnapper to escape. Daisy will then be so grateful that she’ll forget about her dislike of circus folk. It’s drastic, but it just might work. The plan is to do it not too long after the main show ends. You will be the bait, so to speak. Your job is to lure Daisy to the kidnap point, and to help foil the kidnapping attempt. You were chosen for this job, of course, because no amount of masks or makeup will ever disguise you.

So, anyway, as the final details of the plan were being made – this is why you don’t know who the kidnapper is supposed to be, by the way – Rupert takes this big step to the left. You were just about to put your arm around Lydia, your first move toward showing her who her secret admirer was, and he messes everything up by throwing you off balance.

You were outraged! You started a-yelling at him and cursing him out and that’s when the whole story came out. He had been sending notes to Lydia. He has been courting Lydia from afar. He was in love with Lydia.

The Hell! **You** are in love with Lydia and you saw her first and no upstart pain in the side brother of yours is going to mess with your one chance at true romance! You tried explaining this to Rupert, but like always, there’s just no reasoning with him.

Well that’s it! You have given up on your idiotic self-centered brother. You are no longer talking to him. If you have anything to say, he can hear it from someone else. Oh, you’ll still do your act, you’re a professional after all, but you will not tolerate him any more!

And you *will* prove your love to Lydia. And she will love you too. And Rupert? Rupert will have to live with it!

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You hate your brother (well, ok, you don’t hate your brother, you’re just completely furious with him is all). Play this up. Make up arguments that happened in your past; follow his lead if he does (the Smothers Brothers provide an excellent inspiration for this). Use other people to communicate to your brother. You do love Lydia, and now is the time to show and prove your love. The time of anonymous notes is

past. The time of showing up Rupert has begun. And you will win!

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: A fine Southern gentleman and a war hero to boot. You are proud to be working for this fine man; it’s a site better than working for those Bungling Brothers, anyway.

Daisy Belle: Colonel Rawhide’s fiancée, a real Southern belle. She doesn’t care for the circus. That is why you have embarked on a phony kidnapping plan with some of the others so as to change her mind quickly before she convinces Colonel Rawhide to sell the circus.

Jack Bungling: The older of the two Bungling Brothers. You worked for their circus for a while, but it was unpleasant so you convinced Rupert, that stubborn fool, to leave.

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. Clifford, however, is helping with the scheme to kidnap Daisy.

Herman Binkowicz, “Binky” the Clown: The savior of the circus. Bringing Binky in allowed Colonel Rawhide to drop the wild west show, and gave the circus enough oomph to try a European tour. And, boy, is he funny.

Susan Wildes, The Strong Lady: She is in her late teens and is real strong. You use her to send notes to Lydia, to keep them away from your obnoxious brother. You can trust her.

Franklin Winters, the Lion Tamer: A nice guy. You like to go into town and have drinking contests with him against the locals. He can drink anyone under the table.

Rupert Townshed: Your lying, cheating, woman-stealing brother. You cannot believe that he was trying to court Lydia while you were trying to court Lydia. You have had it and you are not speaking to him!

Helena Ferez: The bearded lady. She joined the circus just about the same time you did. She’s a nice lady, but a bit shy and reserved. She has a real beard too; Colonel Rawhide had her examined by a doctor when she joined.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallower:: He has been with the circus for a while. You’ve noticed that he was close friends with Uma the Unicyclist. He’s a swell guy, but you get the feeling that he’s looking for something he just can’t find in the circus.

Bobo, the Dog Faced Boy: He's an eight year old boy who joined the circus in Europe. You think he's delivering notes for Rupert, maybe.

Zelda the Clown: Zelda joined the circus in Europe as well. She can't talk, nor read or write, but she is very energetic. Y'know, she fawns over Binky an awful lot. Maybe she has a thing for him. Maybe if you help her get Binky she can help you with Lydia.

Señora Mysterioso: She's a gypsy fortune teller who joined the circus just before you all went to Europe. You've never gone to her to get your fortune told. You'd like to hear what she has to say about you, especially your chances with Lydia, but Rupert doesn't want to.

The Masked Rider: The Masked Rider is a very solitary individual, staying aloof since joining up in Europe. However, someone needs to get one of the Rider's masks. Nobody has ever seen the Masked Rider without a mask.

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus in Europe. The Knife Thrower also likes privacy. The Knife Thrower's act is great, though. You saw some knives being thrown perfectly, while the thrower was blindfolded.

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: Ah the love of your life, and you will prove your love to her, see if you don't! She is sweet, kind, caring and considerate. Plus, she's covered head to toe in tattoos. Lydia joined the circus just before you all left for Europe. She is helping with the kidnapping attempt too.

Zimmie the Clown: Zimmie is odd. There is something just wrong about him. He isn't very friendly, either; you tried striking up a conversation once, but he just blew you off.

The Great Zamboni: He arrived today asking for a job. Colonel Rawhide decided to give him a chance. You don't know much about him.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: He is the father of the Bungling Brothers. He is a powerful and influential

man in Washington DC. Where Bungling goes, so goes the nation.

John Bungling: The younger of the Bungling Brothers. Jack is the public persona and John runs things behind the scenes. It's kinda surprising that you haven't seen John around with Jack hovering so close nearby. Something's up, but you're not sure what.

Uma the Unicyclist: Uma used to ride a large unicycle while juggling or across a high wire. However, while in France, she fell and severely twisted her ankle. She has stayed on in France in the care of a Doctor. Rumor has it that the unicycle was tampered with, but you saw Uma before the show and she looked a little pale and shaky.

Preston the Prestidigitator: His act also was ruined while in France. While he was sawing a woman in half, a panel swung open revealing the illusion. He was booed out of the tent and Colonel Rawhide had to fire him. It was kinda a shame, but you never liked him much anyway.

ABILITIES

Combat: 8 cards.

We're Going *That* Way: Using willpower and brute strength, you can direct Rupert to go with you to a specific location, and there's nothing he can do about it. You can only do this once, though, so use it wisely.

Coordinated Attack: You and Rudolph are always in fights together. You win as one, you lose as one, and you fight as one. Either one of you can play MENKS cards when one of you is involved in a fight.

Binky the Clown: You find Binky so hilarious that after a few minutes of talking with 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 you were talking about (or doing), but – boy – that Binky sure is funny.

HELENA FEREZ, BEARDED LADY

Once upon a time, in the faraway land of Fandonia, there lived a beautiful princess. The princess had everything she could ever want. She lived in the lap of luxury, surrounded by the most delightful fields and gardens. She was waited on by faithful and pleasant servants and maids who provided for her every whim from when she awoke until the late hours when she fell to sleep. But most of all, she was surrounded by love and goodness by her family. Her mother and father, the Queen and King, were good hearted people who cared for their only child and never wanted to see her come to harm.

And so she grew, surrounded by love, in a life of pleasantry and ease. But this did not harden her heart, for her father was a wise, benevolent ruler who cared for his people, and her mother had a good heart and cared for all living things, great and small. And the princess grew up caring and loving and tender and warm.

And her parents brought for her the greatest tutors in all the land. And they taught the young princess mathematics, and language, and the history of Fandonia and all the world beyond. And the princes learned and grew wise.

But, as is always the case, something happened to change her life, and not in a good way at all. She had just turned sixteen when her parents bid her to meet them for lunch. There with her parents was a horrible old man, the Regent of Freedonia.

Now Freedonia shares a long, treacherous border with Fandonia. It is said that the people of Freedonia, despite the country's name, are not free and happy. They are oppressed by their horrible regent who stole power from the throne after the King and Queen passed on and the young prince mysteriously vanished. They have been this way for over five hundred years, with the Regency passing down to the heirs of the Regent.

The people of Freedonia have a myth that gives them hope. They believe that when times are darkest, the young prince will return from his five hundred year sleep, decked in the crown jewels of Freedonia and lead them on to happiness and peace. But until then, the all-powerful Regent rules the Independent State of Freedonia. And his rule is neither kind nor just. And it was that man that the princess faced that very lunchtime.

"My dear," her father, the King, began, "I have news for you. Please, come sit with us for a while." And the princess sat as her father continued.

"You no doubt know, my daughter, that this man is the Regent of Freedonia, our neighbor to the west." And the princess allowed her hand to be kissed while the King pressed on.

"And you may know as well, dearest one, that Fandonia and Freedonia have been at the brink of war for some time, and that things are quickly coming to a head. In less than a decade, war will be inevitable." The princess, suspecting what was coming, shifted uncomfortably in her seat and listed carefully to her father.

"I have spoken to the Regent here, and we believe that we have found a solution, a way to keep lasting peace between our two countries. We wish to unite them by marriage, daughter. You shall be wed to the Regent."

The princess surveyed the horrible old man, and choking back tears, replied, "but... but I wish to marry for love. I want a husband who is young, for I am barely but sixteen. I must love my husband!"

And as the tears started flowing, her mother placed a hand on the princess' shoulder and replied, "Daughter. You are a princess and you have a responsibility to your people. This marriage is necessary to keep peace between our two countries."

"And perhaps you can learn to love your husband," interrupted the King. At this, the princess could take no more and ran from the room, sobbing.

And then the princess did the first truly selfish thing in her life. She did not want war, but she could not stand to marry that horrible man. So she packed her few things and ran away, deep into the woods of Fandonia, and was never seen again.

This was nearly ten years ago, and Fandonia and Freedonia are ever closer to war. The princess was never seen again and is still mourned by her parents. And for most people, the story ends here, but you are not like most people and know how the story continues.

The princess traveled through the woods all day and night. And the woods were *dark* that night. The princess was afraid, and for good reason...

A digression. There is another story told by the superstitious people of Fandonia, the story of the Old Woman of the Woods. She goes by many names, "the Night Witch," "the Baba Yaga," "the Wood Crone," but they are not her true name and for the purpose of this story, names do not matter.

She is the spirit of the woods at night, mysterious, powerful, and foreboding. She has power, yes, but

no good purpose. And every child who wanders into the woods and is never heard from again is hers, now and forever. The simple people of the countryside have reason to fear her and sometimes, yes sometimes, superstitions are real.

So the Old Woman of the Woods saw the princess enter the forest and came to her to offer a deal. The Old Woman of the Woods would disguise the princess and send her to a place far away and she would never have to marry the Regent. However, the princess would have to perform a task for the Old Woman of the Woods. If she failed the task, she would be the property of the Old Woman of the Woods until the end of time.

An agreement was made and the deal was done, and the princess fell into a deep sleep.

You woke up in a small clearing in an unfamiliar forest.

You took a quick inventory. All of your belongings were gone, and you were dressed in simple peasant wear. You didn't feel sick or injured, so you stood up and stretched and started walking down a nearby path. You heard music and shouting in the background and decided to walk in that direction.

It was a fair of sorts, or some sort of exhibition. You saw a large placard written in English (luckily, you are well versed in many languages), "Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide's Wild West Spectacular." You knew then that you were in America.

But your true shock came when one of the small children stared at you and then turned to her father and asked, "paw, is she part of the show?" You didn't know what to think, but just then, you caught sight of yourself in a mirror. You sported a thick, full beard, completely obscuring your face. You did what any polite woman of good breeding would do in that situation. You fainted.

You awoke in what best would be described as a wagon set up as an office. A man dressed in a fancy cowboy outfit brought you a glass of water. When you were slightly composed, he cleared his throat and spoke, "Ma'am, I'm Colonel Sebastian Thomas Rawhide. I presume the heat got to you. Are you feeling well?"

You allowed yourself to drink some water, carefully. The be... The beard got in the way. You acknowledged that you were well and that it must have been the heat. Colonel Rawhide smiled and said, "I assume, ma'am, that you have come here seeking employment?"

"Employment?"

"Why yes, ma'am, you do know that you are at Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide's Wild West Spectacular, don't you?"

You allowed that the fainting spell may have rattled your senses, but the more you spoke to Colonel Rawhide, the more you realized that the Old Woman of the Woods had sent you here on purpose. Using the name Helena Ferez and claiming to be from Rumania, you joined the Wild West Spectacular along with the Townshed Siamese twins. Colonel Rawhide even had an American doctor examine you to produce a "certificate of authenticity."

Eventually he gathered a number of new acts and changed his show to a circus. People have come and gone, but you have managed to make a small circle of friends. The Townshed Brothers are sweet when they aren't yelling at each other. Uma the Unicyclist was always a good friend. Binky the Clown always manages to make you laugh, even when you miss your family. And the young eight-year-old Bobo the Dog faced boy has always been a special friend. You share a common bond, that of unusual facial hair.

You even like Daisy Belle, Colonel Rawhide's fiancée. She even looks a bit like you, well without your beard. It's a shame that she doesn't care for circus people. She looks down on those different from her. You can sympathize. When you first joined the circus, you cried yourself to sleep almost every night because of your beard.

Ah, the beard. It is quite a mystery. It doesn't grow, and you've never lost a hair of it (unless it was pulled out, and it *hurts* when you pull on it). You've never tried to shave it; you're quite convinced that it would never grow back. The Old Woman of the Woods only gives you one chance, and you don't want to squander it.

You've kept abreast of national events as well. Freedonia and Fandonia are slipping closer and closer to war. That's why it really disturbed you when Colonel Rawhide announced a tour of Europe. The tour started in France, toured the continent, went to England, and then ended up back in France. You went for most of it, but took a leave of absence from Fandonia and Freedonia. You told people that you were afraid of the war, but in reality, you were afraid of being recognized.

But, as it turned out, you needed not fear. The circus made it back to France without event. You even picked up a number of new members on the continent: Zelda the silent clown, your friend Bobo, and the Masked Rider and the knife thrower.

The Masked Rider is just amazing. When you were younger, you were trained in horseback riding by the Captain of the Guard, Dana "Jumping" Jehosiphath. Captain Jehosiphath was the best rider in the kingdom and even the Captain's abilities pale in comparison to the Masked Rider. You greatly admire the Masked Rider and would like to see if you could take some lessons; it would remind you of home.

You also gained a very close friend in Bobo, the dog-faced boy. Bobo, like you, is cursed with facial hair, although not quite so literally in his case. He is a cute, charming, eight year old boy, and wise beyond his years. He helps out with various chores around the circus, especially with Franklin Winters, the wild animal tamer. Bobo is very good with animals.

Unfortunately, the European tour wasn't quite the success Colonel Rawhide thought it would be. Crowds didn't flock to the circus the way they would in the United States. Privately, you were not surprised – people are more refined in Europe. And then there were the disasters in France.

You had always been friends with Uma the Unicyclist. Everyone liked Uma, with her cheery personality and honest friendliness, but near the end of the tour in France, she slipped off her unicycle and severely sprained her ankle. She had to stay with a doctor in France. There have been rumors of sabotage. You understand that the cycle is in the possession of the sword swallower. Not that you know the first thing about unicycles, but maybe someone should look at it.

Then there was Preston the Prestidigitator. He was in the middle of sawing a woman in half when a panel swung open revealing the illusion. He was laughed offstage and Colonel Rawhide had to let him go. There have been rumors that the Bungling Brothers are messing with the acts in an attempt to cause the circus to go under. At first you weren't so sure, but after what happened last night, you know it to be true.

When you woke up this morning, your face felt funny. As you were washing up, you realized that someone had shaved off your beard while you were asleep! They did a professional job too; you were lucky they didn't decide to cut your throat. Choking down panic, you rushed to a nearby drawer. You had a fake beard made for just such an emergency. A little spirit gum and you were ready to face the world.

But now you are certain that there is a saboteur in the company. You want to catch him or her, but you cannot. You have a show today and you cannot reveal that your beard has been shaved off. Worse, you are not convinced that it will grow back. Someone – especially one of the people from Europe – might recognize you without your beard.

You're not sure what to do, but you'll have to think about it soon, and calmly. Your beard will fall off if you get too nervous.

ITEMS

A fake beard: This is kept on with spirit gum and will fall off if you get too upset.

A certificate of authenticity: showing that you have been examined by a doctor and are a real bearded woman.

A birthmark: The birthmark of the Royal Family of Fandonia, in the shape of the Royal Seal. It is on your upper calf, so you wear dresses to cover it. Expect to wear a temporary tattoo.

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You are royalty, and sometimes you cannot disguise these things. However, you are a good person, and not stuck up. For all the fairy tale life you led, you do have a pragmatic streak and that should serve you well.

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: A fine Southern gentleman and a war hero to boot. You are proud to be working for this fine man. It is a shame that you may not be working for him any more if your beard doesn't grow back.

Daisy Belle: Colonel Rawhide's fiancée, a real Southern belle. She doesn't care for the circus. She has a passing similarity to you.

Jack Bungling: The older of the two Bungling Brothers. You have never met the Bungling Brothers, but you have never heard anything nice about them.

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. They claim to be from Italy, but they don't speak Italian and they don't seem to know anything about the country. Very suspicious.

Herman Binkowicz, "Binky" the Clown: Binky was one of the original performers. His talent allowed Colonel Rawhide to change from a wild west show to a circus. He is constantly hilarious and makes you laugh.

Susan Wildes, The Strong Lady: She is in her late teens and is very strong. She is a bit naive, but a very nice, polite girl.

The Townshed Brothers: They were also part of the original circus. They are very nice people, but they constantly argue. You cannot imagine what it would be like to be connected to someone else every hour of every day, and that could be why they always fight.

Franklin Winters, The Lion Tamer: He is a nice enough person, but he does tend to drink. It hasn't gotten in the way of his work, yet.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallower: He joined the circus some time ago. He has a very

flashy show, but is nice enough in person. Lately he seems to be bothered by something.

Bobo, the Dog Faced Boy: He's an eight year old boy who joined the circus in Europe. He is one of your closest friends. You share a common bond, that of unusual facial hair. He could only speak Freedonian and some broken English when you first met him, but now he can hold his own in English thanks to your tutelage. Bobo has a wisdom above and beyond that of an eight year old. If he weren't so young, perhaps, but no... A princess could never love a commoner. Or could you? You are a commoner now after all yourself. But what does it matter, he's only eight.

Zelda the Clown: Zelda joined the circus in Europe as well. She cannot talk, nor read or write, but she is very energetic. You understand that Daisy has been teaching her to read and write. You wonder if you could help.

Señora Mysterioso: She joined the circus just before it left for Europe. She claims to be gypsy fortune teller, but you don't believe her. You know Spanish. She *should* be Señora Mysteriosa, and she isn't even married. She should be Señorita Mysteriosa, by all rights. And her accent is all wrong. She is a complete fake.

The Masked Rider: Joined the circus in Europe. The Masked Rider is the best horseback rider you have ever seen. Some of the Rider's stunts almost seem impossible. You used to take riding lessons when you were a girl, perhaps the Masked Rider could teach you some tricks.

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus in Europe. The Knife Thrower likes privacy, but is very talented. You saw some knives being thrown perfectly, while the thrower was blindfolded.

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: She joined the circus just before it left for Europe. She also bears a passing resemblance to you, although her tattoos obscure that somewhat. While in Europe, she had the royal seals of every country she went through tattooed on her body.

Zimmie the Clown: Zimmie is odd. There is something just wrong about him. He isn't very friendly, either; you tried striking up a conversation once, but he just ignored you.

The Great Zamboni: He arrived today asking for a job. Colonel Rawhide decided to give him a chance. You don't know much about him.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: He is the father of the Bungling Brothers. He is a powerful and influential man in Washington DC. Where Bungling goes, so goes the nation.

John Bungling: The younger of the Bungling Brothers. You've never met him.

Uma the Unicyclist: Uma used to ride a large unicycle while juggling or across a high wire. However, while in France, she fell and severely twisted her ankle. She has stayed on in France in the care of a Doctor. She was a good friend and you are sorry to see her go.

Preston the Prestidigitator: His act also was ruined while in France. While he was sawing a woman in half, a panel swung open revealing the illusion. He was booed out of the tent and Colonel Rawhide had to fire him.

ABILITIES

Combat: 8 cards.

Well Schooled: You have learned many things. You may ask the GMs four yes/no questions during the game. Or, instead of asking a question, you can attempt an activity that would require some training, even though your character history doesn't specifically mention that training. This is limited to things a normal person, even a princess, might be trained to do. For example, you can use this ability to perform simple first aid, but not major surgery. Also, you can read, write and speak English, Fandonian, Freedonian, Spanish, Italian, and French.

First Aid: Should anyone become injured, you have learned a few methods to patch people up in emergencies.

Binky the Clown: You find Binky so hilarious that after a few minutes of talking with 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 you were talking about (or doing), but – my – that Binky sure is funny.

FIRE EATER/SWORD SWALLOWER: PETER WAINWRIGHT.

Sigh. There's no getting around it; you're getting older. You're maturing. Pretty soon you're going to have to leave everyone around you and not look back. It's a shame; you've managed to make some close friends with some of these people, but you knew it would happen, and it isn't like you are exactly, "people" anyway.

You were born – ok, hatched – nearly one thousand years ago. It isn't well known that Dragons take the form of humans during their first thousand years of life and then mature into their Dragon form. Around here, not a great deal is known about Dragons at all, such as that they really exist.

You were born in the Summerlands, the lands of the Fey. There, they knew about Dragons. They knew that you were to be respected and feared. You are, in fact, a loyal citizen there, and respect the monarchy of the fey. Were you to meet a member of fey nobility or royalty, you would be required to swear your fealty and serve the noble or royal until dismissed.

You spent much of your formative years with an adoptive family in a thatched hut near a forest. Dragon children are raised a bit like changelings; after they hatch, they are deposited unceremoniously on the doorstep of a nearby family to be raised like humans.

You were raised by an old woodcutter and his wife. They knew your true nature and feared you somewhat, but they also came to love you. It was all very touching. But when you turned a mere fifteen years of age, you decided to leave home and see the world.

It was your dragon blood calling you to adventure. And you were up to the challenge. Even immature dragons, such as yourself, have dexterity and prowess far above normal humans or faerie stock. You roamed through the Summerlands for hundreds of years, drinking, fighting, carousing, exploring, and generally having a good time. But eventually even the Summerlands became boring and you craved new adventures.

So you found the gateway to humanity. You arrived in the green fields of England on September twelfth in the Year of Our Lord, 1752. The date is actually very important. It is very difficult to travel to and from the Summerlands unless one is a wizard of some sort. You were able to travel through the "lost days." Check any reputable history book and you will see that in 1752, the calendar skipped from

September second to the fourteenth. You traveled through the days that were missing, the fictional time that blurred the difference between story and reality. And so you came to England.

You made your way to London, a smelly, filthy city. You were used to the clean, pleasant towns of the Summerlands and this came as quite a shock to you. You tried to find adventure, but all the adventure there consisted of petty crimes and squalor. The real news, the real adventure, was in the colonies. So, along with the many men trying to find a new life, you boarded a ship to the "new world."

Now America, this is an exciting country. There were glorious battles – you fought the Redcoats in the revolutionary war and the Gray in the civil war. There were exciting adventures: under the name Meriwether Lewis you traveled to the far parts of the continent. You fought and explored with Daniel Boone. You have truly led an exciting life while you've been with humanity.

Currently, you are working in a circus under the name Peter Wainwright. You swallow swords (they don't hurt you) and eat fire (you are immune to fire and can exhale it if you concentrate). You enjoy life here in Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide's Circus of the Spectacular.

Colonel Rawhide is quite the character, but you don't think he truly understands the extraordinary group of individuals he has collected. True humans can be so blind. Take, for example, Susan Wildes, the strong woman. There is the scent of ancient, and powerful, magic about her. You cannot tell if she is the victim or if she is projecting it, but it does explain how she is able to lift such great weights effortlessly.

What you cannot understand is how this ties in with Franklin Winters, the lion tamer. He projects similar magic, but you have yet to fathom a connection. He hasn't shown any unusual abilities at all, yet you know that magic is entwined in his life, somehow.

And then there are the newcomers from Europe. Ah, a bit of back story. You joined the circus about a year ago, at the height of its popularity. The circus was so popular in America that Colonel Rawhide decided to take a tour of Europe. This was exciting, and you were happy to go along.

Europe was strange, darker and older than America. You could sense presences in the forests in Europe, darker forces than the gentle spirits of the American plains. The tour started and ended in France, touring most of the continent and England along the way. London had changed a great deal in many small ways over the past hundred-plus years, but at its heart, it

was still a dirty, smelly city. You were glad to be going back to France.

But it was while in England that you realized that you were no longer alone. One of the new performers was also from the Summerlands – No! The performer was related to those who dwelt in the land of twilight, but was an earthly spirit of some sort, disguised so you cannot get a lock on who it might be. It is either Zelda the Clown, Bobo the Dog Faced Boy, The Masked Rider, or The Knife Thrower. Or even one of the acts that joined the circus just before it left for Europe: Señora Mysterioso, Lydia the Tattooed Lady, or Zimmie the Clown. The magical disguise is messing with your senses. You would like to find out who it is, though.

While in Europe, on the second pass through France, strange things started happening. You had become friends with Uma the unicyclist – you use a smaller unicycle in your act – and you were quite dismayed when she fell off her high unicycle twisting her ankle. You brought her to a doctor, who said that she had to be kept off her feet for a few weeks. The circus had to move on, so she was left in the care of the doctor in France, and you have possession of her unicycle.

However, the most significant event of your life started when the circus returned back to America. You are starting grow up, mature, become a real dragon. You will, over the course of the next few years, grow scales, and a tail, and wings, and – well – this may be the last chance you have to live among people. Sad.

Already, your instincts are beginning to kick in. You can tell – you don't know how, you just *know* – that there is a horde of riches within the circus. You want it. You don't know why, it just seems right to have a horde of treasure. And a princess – or at least a maiden. There is a princess somewhere about. You can smell her. You need to kidnap her. Um, you don't know what you'll do with her once you have her, but you'll have to try. And if you can't find a princess, there's a maiden available: Colonel Rawhide's fiancée, Daisy Bell.

You don't know why you have to gather a horde of treasure or capture a princess, you just do. It's what dragons do. You can try to fight your instincts as much as you want, but sooner or later, they're going to get the better of you. In the meantime, you do have a show to do. Best enjoy your life while you can.

ITEMS

Unicycle: This was Uma's. You're holding onto it until she gets back.

Swords and Torches: for your show.

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You enjoy adventure and excitement of all kinds. Your show is very flashy and lively, as you are in person. Note, after seeing a horde or treasure or a human princess, you must attempt to capture it or kidnap her. You may try to resist for no longer than a half-hour before giving in to instinct. After doing so, you retain free will, may return the property or person, and have no more urges in that area.

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: He is a good man, but for all his pomp and circumstance, he has no imagination. He has no idea the types of individuals he has collected in his circus.

Daisy Belle: Colonel Rawhide's fiancée, a real Southern belle. She doesn't care for the circus. She is, however, a fine choice for abducting if you cannot find a princess. Didn't you read somewhere about southern aristocracy?

Jack Bungling: The older of the two Bungling Brothers, owners of the Bungling Brothers Circus. You have never met the Bungling Brothers, but you have never heard anything nice about them.

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 can make anyone – including you – laugh, and that allowed Colonel Rawhide the income to take the tour of Europe. You avoid Binky because he always makes you laugh, and you are afraid you'll lose control and burn something if you laugh too hard.

Susan Wildes, The Strong Lady: She is in her late teens and is very strong. She is a bit naive, but a very nice, polite girl. She has an aura of ancient magic upon her.

Franklin Winters, The Lion Tamer: He also has an aura of ancient magic. You know he is good with the animals, maybe that has something to do with it.

The Townshed Brothers: They were also part of the original circus. They are nice people, but they constantly argue. At first you thought they were some sort of mythological beast with two heads or something, but as near as you can tell, they are normal humans.

Helena Ferez, the Bearded Lady: She is one of the original members of the circus. She is a nice person, but you think she may be on the run from the law. When the circus toured Europe, she took a leave of absence rather than enter the countries of Fandonia and Freedonia.

Bobo, the Dog Faced Boy: He's an eight year old boy who joined the circus in Europe. You know that one of those who joined in Europe, or right before you left has an aura of the Fey, but since it is masked, you cannot tell which one.

Zelda the Clown: Zelda joined the circus in Europe as well. She cannot talk, nor read or write, but she is very energetic.

Señora Mysterioso: She joined the circus just before it left for Europe. She claims to be gypsy fortune teller, but you don't believe her. There is not a whit of magic about her. Nonetheless, some of her predictions have been startlingly accurate. Maybe you'll try getting your fortune told just to see what happens.

The Masked Rider: Also joined the circus in Europe. The Masked Rider is the best horseback rider you have ever seen, human or otherwise. Some of the Rider's stunts almost seem impossible.

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus in Europe. The Knife Thrower likes privacy, but is very talented. You saw some knives being thrown perfectly, while the thrower was blindfolded.

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: She joined the circus just before it left for Europe. While in Europe, she had the royal seals of every country she went through tattooed on her body. You're not sure why.

Zimmie the Clown: You may be the only person in the whole circus who doesn't dislike Zimmie. It could be because he avoids Binky just like you do.

The Great Zamboni: He arrived today asking for a job. Colonel Rawhide decided to give him a chance. He exudes very powerful magic, which means his "stage magic" act will definitely be one to watch.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: He is the father of the Bungling Brothers. He is a powerful and influential man in Washington DC. Where Bungling goes, so goes the nation.

John Bungling: The younger of the Bungling Brothers. You've never met him.

Uma the Unicyclist: Uma was a friend of yours, in fact, she taught you how to ride the Unicycle. Uma used to ride a large unicycle while juggling or across a high wire. However, while in France, she fell and severely twisted her ankle. She has stayed on in France in the care of a Doctor. You have her unicycle for when she returns.

Preston the Prestidigitator: His act also was ruined while in France. While he was sawing a woman in half, a panel swung open revealing the illusion. He was booed out of the tent and Colonel Rawhide had to fire him. He had no true magic and only relied on slight of hand. He was good at it, too. It's a shame the accident had to happen to him.

ABILITIES

Combat: 15 cards.

Read Faerie: You can read and write the language of the Fey. You will be provided with a translation sheet.

Dragon Skin: You are very difficult to hurt, and are completely immune to fire. You **can** be defeated in combat, but you do not take any damage from normal people and bladed weapons. Very strong – or otherwise powerful – people and guns can hurt you, even kill you. If you lose a combat to someone, you are still at that person's mercy, but you cannot be damaged unless they have a gun or are very strong.

Breathe Fire: You can breathe flame. If you do this in combat, you can seriously damage someone. Fire will be simulated with streamers. See a Roustabout to breathe fire.

Binky the Clown: You find Binky so hilarious that after a few minutes of talking with 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 you were talking about (or doing), but – my – that Binky sure is funny.

Warning: *If you laugh in this fashion for more than five minutes, you may start to inadvertently breathe fire. See a Roustabout if this occurs.*

Only eight years old and sporting a full face of hair! A marvel of nature, he's...

BOBO THE DOG FACED BOY

It isn't often that one gets to be a legend in one's own time. But you literally are that. They have a legend about you in your homeland of Freedonia...

Five hundred years ago, the king and queen of Freedonia died, and under very mysterious circumstance, too. Their son, the young prince Marcus, disappeared as well. From that day forward, Freedonia has been led by the Regent, with the Regency passing down to the heirs of the Regent.

Your people have a myth that gives them hope. They believe that when times are darkest, the young prince will return from his five hundred year sleep, decked in the crown jewels of Freedonia and lead them on to happiness and peace. But until then, the all-powerful Regent rules the Independent State of Freedonia. And his rule is neither kind nor just.

You, of course, are young Prince Marcus, still young after these five hundred years. The evil Regent had your parents killed and you were sent away to be property of the Old Woman of the Woods. Oh, she goes by many names, "the Night Witch," "the Baba Yaga," "the Wood Crone." She is the spirit of the woods at night, mysterious, powerful, and foreboding. She has power, but no good purpose. And every child who wanders into the woods and is never heard from again is hers, now and forever. The simple people of the countryside have reason to fear her and sometimes, yes sometimes, superstitions are real.

And you were property of the Old Woman of the Woods.

She cursed you, cursed you so that you would not run away. She made hair grow over your face and hands, and made you unaging, stuck forever in your eight year old body. You are five hundred years old, and you still look like an eight year old boy, a *hairy* eight year old boy!

So you served her, ran errands for her, cleaned, cooked, and did other menial tasks. You were trapped. If, by chance, a peasant happened to catch sight of you in the woods, she would run screaming back to her village. You led a lonely, horrible, miserable life for five hundred years.

You had almost given up hope when salvation appeared driving down the woods of Freedonia. You looked from the bushes, amazed, as the brightly painted wagons rolled by. You saw wild animals in cages, people dressed in unusual outfits, and – most importantly – odd looking people, people whom others would call "freaks."

Your heart leapt as you considered: would this collection of oddities take you in? But you knew you had no other chance. You leapt into the last wagon of the caravan and asked if you could join their troupe. The man in the troupe – you later found out that he was a clown named Zimmie – was touching up his makeup and was startled by your sudden appearance, but quickly got over his shock when it appeared that you weren't a threat. You don't know why he was so nervous.

Zimmie didn't speak Freedonian and you spoke little English, so communication was difficult, but at the next rest stop, Zimmie unceremoniously presented you to the leader of the troupe, Colonel Sebastian Taylor Rawhide, and stalked back to his trailer.

Colonel Rawhide was an amiable man who also did not understand Freedonian. However, the two of you were able to communicate enough for him to offer you a job, and so – with great joy – you left behind the dark woods of Freedonia, perhaps forever.

The tour of Europe continued through neighboring Fandonia and then back toward France. You met your first real friend in the circus after it left Fandonia. Helena Ferez, the bearded lady, had taken a leave of absence from the circus, but joined back up as it was returning to France. Helena spoke Freedonian and the two of you quickly became friends. She even tutored you in English and now you speak it quite well.

Helena is wonderful. She is sweet, charming, and acts with perfect grace and manners. She is lovely, even with her beard, and – well – she is everything you would want in a woman. You may have the body of an eight year old freak, but inside beats the heart of a man. You can love, romantically, and you are in love, with Helena.

But how can you tell her? And how can you get her to love you, too? You know that the kiss of true love can often break curses – at least if the fairy tales you've read are true – but it has to be true love. You know that you love Helena, but if she kisses you for pragmatism, just to break your curse, it will not work. She has to love you. But how does someone seen as an eight year old boy win the heart of a grown woman? Helena is in her early twenties, a prime age for love and marriage, and you know that if you do not act quickly, she will be taken by someone else. And you do not think your heart could bear losing her.

While considering your problem, you have started making other friends in the circus. You like to help out; the work is so much less onerous than what you

had to do for the Old Woman of the Woods. Because of your affinity with animals – well you are practically one yourself – you have been helping Franklin Winters, the lion tamer. You watch over the animals, and feed them and make sure that they are happy. Franklin is a good man who doesn't drink nearly as much as people say; you've never seen him really drunk, or even tipsy for that matter.

You do a good job and the animals are content and happy. In fact people say that the animals here are treated better than at any other circus. The only animal you don't look after is Señora Mysterioso's snake. Not that you think it needs looking after. Animals, and people, have a very distinct scent, except for the snake. It has no scent at all. Maybe it's dead, or maybe it's a spirit snake or something. You haven't told anyone about this because Señora Mysterioso scares you; she reminds you just a little too much of the Old Woman of the Woods.

You've also been helping Rupert Townshed, one of the Siamese twins. He's the one on the right, as you face them. He's a nice guy – they both are – but the twins are constantly bickering, so they have friends help them by delivering notes. You deliver notes from Rupert.

Most of these notes have gone to Lydia, the Tattooed Lady, with whom Rupert is desperately in love. It's kinda sweet how he is so in love with her and cannot bring himself to talk to her. You'd give him advice, but nobody takes romantic advice from an eight year old boy. Lydia has no idea who the notes are coming from – Rupert made you swear to silence – but she does know they aren't from you. Lydia is nice, but she's no Helena Ferez.

Recently, you were relaxing with Lydia, Franklin, Clifford Credenza, and the Townshed Twins. The subject of Daisy Belle, Colonel Rawhide's fiancée, came up. Poor Daisy. She is a sweet woman, you suppose, but you never see that side of her. She grew up sheltered by her father and has a skewed view of the world.

Daisy doesn't care for circus folk. She feels that they are beneath her. Hm, perhaps if you had been raised in court, you may have grown to agree with her, but five hundred years of servitude can open your mind on how people are worthwhile. But you don't have five hundred years for Daisy. She is pressuring Colonel Rawhide to sell the circus. And you are afraid that he may be forced to choose between the circus and Daisy.

So, a plan was hatched. One of you will steal a mask from the Masked Rider and pretend to kidnap Daisy. The rest of you will stop the kidnapper but allow him to escape. Daisy will be so grateful that she'll like circus people and the circus will be saved. This will happen after the main show – Clifford insisted. You

don't remember who is supposed to obtain the mask, so you think it might be you. You know that the Townshed brothers are to be the "bait" so to speak. They are to get Daisy in the right place at the right time. You may want to talk a bit more about it.

And then you have one more thing to worry about. You've been having odd dreams.

You've been having these dreams about once a month, after you left the service of the Old Woman of the Woods. In them you were running around, low on the ground. You would find things, shiny things, and then... You don't know. The dreams always get so blurry after you wake. You had one of those dreams last night; it seemed so real. You even remember someone skulking out around the wagon where Helena sleeps.

Naturally, nothing bad happened to her last night. It was just a dream, right? Well, maybe you should check just to make sure.

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You think and act like an adult, even though you are in the body of an eight year old. You tend to be level headed and wise, wise beyond your years one might say. You are in love with the bearded lady, Helena Ferez.

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: He is a good man, a great man. In was on his word that you were able to leave the Old Woman of the Woods. You owe him your life, and you will see that debt repaid.

Daisy Belle: Colonel Rawhide's fiancée, a true Southern belle. She doesn't care for the circus. You are working with some others to try to change her mind.

Jack Bungling: The older of the two Bungling Brothers, owners of the Bungling Brothers Circus. You have never met the Bungling Brothers.

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. Clifford Credenza is helping in the plan to kidnap and rescue Daisy.

Herman Binkowicz, "Binky" the Clown: Binky was one of the original performers. He can make anyone – including you – laugh, and that allowed Colonel Rawhide the income to take the tour of Europe. You are grateful to Binky, too, even though his role in freeing you was tangential.

Susan Wildes, The Strong Lady: She is in her late teens and is very strong. She is a bit naive, but a very nice, polite girl. She can be a bit clumsy though.

Franklin Winters, The Lion Tamer: Other people say he is a drunk, but you've never seen him the least bit tipsy. You help him with the animals. You can empathize with them and that helps a great deal.

The Townshed Brothers: They were also part of the original circus. They are nice people, but they constantly argue. You run errands and deliver notes for Rupert Townshed, the one on the right as you face them.

Helena Ferez, the Bearded Lady: Ah, the love of your life. She is refined and elegant, and the two of you share the common bond of facial hair. Unfortunately, she doesn't love you, but you must find a way to make her love you, truly love you. Then you can be free of your curse and the two of you can live happily ever after.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallower: He has a very flashy act, but there's something about him. He smells funny, not quite normal. You can't put your finger on it.

Zelda the Clown: Zelda joined the circus in Europe not long after you did. She cannot talk, nor read or write, but she is very energetic. You like her and think she is very funny. But for some reason, she shies away from you.

Señora Mysterioso: She is a powerful gypsy fortune teller. She has some sort of mystical snake that isn't an animal; it has no scent at all. She scares you a little bit because she reminds you of the Old Woman of the Woods.

The Masked Rider: Also joined the circus in Europe. You need to steal a mask from the Masked Rider, but you think there are several to spare as the Masked Rider is never seen without a mask.

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus in Europe. The Knife Thrower likes privacy, but is very talented. You saw some knives being thrown perfectly, while the thrower was blindfolded.

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: She joined the circus just before it left for Europe. While in Europe, she had the royal seals of every country she went through tattooed on her body. You're not sure why.

Zimmie the Clown: Zimmie was the first person you met in the circus. You probably owe him as well, for taking you to Colonel Rawhide, but he is such an

unpleasant individual that you aren't sure you want to help him. He also doesn't bathe enough since he always smells of greasepaint.

The Great Zamboni: He arrived today asking for a job. Colonel Rawhide decided to give him a chance. There is something vaguely familiar and unsettling about him although you've never met him before. He makes the hair on the back of your neck stand on end.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: He is the father of the Bungling Brothers. He is a powerful and influential man in Washington DC. Where Bungling goes, so goes the nation.

John Bungling: The younger of the Bungling Brothers. You've never met him.

Uma the Unicyclist: While in France, on the return part of the tour, there were a couple of bizarre accidents. You didn't know Uma that well, but it was still sad when she slipped off her high unicycle and severely twisted her ankle.

Preston the Prestidigitator: His act also was ruined while in France. While he was sawing a woman in half, a panel swung open revealing the illusion. He was booed out of the tent and Colonel Rawhide had to fire him.

ABILITIES

Combat: 9 cards.

The Nose Knows: Everybody has their individual scents. If you see a player in a mask and the same player without a mask, you can tell if it is the same character. Greasepaint masks the scent, though, so you cannot tell who someone in disguise is.

Animal Empathy: You are very good with animals, to the point of almost being able to communicate with them. See a Roustabout to communicate with the animals. Note: This will not work on Señora Mysterioso's snake; you've tried.

Binky the Clown: You find Binky so hilarious that after a few minutes of talking with 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 you were talking about (or doing), but – hey – that Binky sure is funny.

BOBO THE DOG FACED BOY CONTINGENCY ENVELOPE: OPEN WHEN HYPNOTIZED

You will find a new badge to wear. Put it on after you read this.

You are now a small dog, a terrier to be exact. You cannot speak nor read or write. You can bark, though. You still have 9 combat cards.

If someone encourages you to find a *specific* thing you stole and hid last night, you can (lead them on a small chase over the neighborhood and then find a Roustabout for the item).

Also, while you are a terrier, you remember that it was Douglas Credenza you saw sneaking around Helena's wagon last night.

Finally, the first time you take this form, you are compelled to try to take a shiny object and bury it somewhere. Try to make it something easy to get, so that the players get the idea of what you are doing.

Other than that, you are a small dog for about five minutes, then you turn back into a confused Bobo the Dog Faced Boy. You do not remember anything you do when you're a terrier. After this, you can turn into a terrier at will; it lasts for about 5 minutes and then you turn back.

ZELDA THE CLOWN

When the world was young and the mountains first leapt up from the sea, you were there. When the fields and jungles were first alive with trees and grass, you were there. When the first animal left the life-giving ocean and took its first breath of air, you were there to welcome it. You are eternal. You were born the day the very first flower bloomed and will live until the very last blossom dies. You are Bellwether Marigold, Princess of the Flower Sprites.

You have enjoyed your long, carefree life. You have danced with satyrs. You have cavorted in the skies with Pegasus. You have sipped nectar and dined on ambrosia. You have seen mortals come and go and admire your beauty and the beauty of your subjects. You have loved your life and you were sad to leave it, but you had found an even greater love.

A few months ago – a short time really, and yet time is now running out – the circus was in town. Well, while you, technically, live any place there are flowers, you consider your home to be the dark forests of Fandonia. And a few months ago, an American circus passed through those forests.

You were curious, so you watched as they prepared for the show. It was fascinating, all the bright colors and unusual people. They couldn't see you – as a Sprite, mortals can only see you when you wish it, and even then they must have the sight. You watched the exotic animals and the exotic people. How happy everyone was. Even the performers seemed to be happy. It was magical, but a different form of magic than what you were used to.

But what really made you take notice was when you saw a jester of some sort in outlandish makeup entertaining a small child. The child was unhappy, but the man produced a long elastic tube that he filled with air and he twisted it to form the shape of a dog.* He then presented the toy to the child with great ceremony. The child was delighted and laughed happily for the rest of the day.

This man intrigued you. Everywhere he went, he brought smiles to all that he met. He was so kind, so gentle, so caring. And you could tell from his face,

* Acolytes of historical accuracy take note: rubber toy balloons were available for sale as early as 1825. Balloon sculpture probably started in the 1920s, just after the Golden Age of the Circus. Our game is, of course, a work of *fiction*!

so lonely. And you felt something, then, that you had never felt before in your long long life. You had felt joy, tenderness, warmth, and caring. But for the first time ever, you felt love.

But you knew it was not to be. You are a princess and Binky – his full name is Herman Binkowicz – is a mortal. These things always lead to mischief.

But the more you thought about Binky, his kind heart, his desire to make people happy, his overwhelming loneliness, the more you loved him. You knew there could only be one way. You would have to give up your immortality. You would have to become mortal, human, and try to win Binky's heart.

There was only one way. You had to visit the Old Woman of the Woods. Despite her name, the Old Woman of the Woods is not a true human. She is a forest spirit, like yourself, but darker and far more powerful. She is the sum total of the fear and secrecy of the woods on a moonless night. When an owl hoots in the darkness, when a coyote howls lonesome at the moon, when the insects all go silent at once, that is the Old Woman breathing. If you are even in the woods at night and your heart catches in your throat for just one second, you have crossed her shadow and you best run before her eyes turn to you and you are not seen again. She is malevolent, yes, but fear is a potent thing, and she is very, very powerful.

Undaunted, you went to her and asked her to turn you mortal. The old Woman of the Woods eyed you up and down and grunted an agreement. However, there was a price... and a condition. The price was your lovely voice. Oh how you loved to sing in the sunrise and harmonize with the summer showers. But it was a small price to pay for your love. Until you kissed the kiss of true love, you would not have a voice.

The condition was the problem, a time limit. You had to kiss the kiss of true love by sunset, of the fifth day of the fifth month after you made the deal, or you would become the Old Woman of the Woods' property forever.

There are others who have failed her conditions. The old Woman of the Woods has many servants, all of whom are her property forever. It was huge risk, but true love is worth it.

So the Old Woman of the Woods cast a spell on you and sent you to meet Binky. But true love is not easily won, and there are still many difficulties to overcome.

You joined the circus while it was touring in the small country of Fandonia. Most of the people there are nice, and have given you the opportunity to try and fit in. You have become a clown yourself, so you can be near Herman. You tumble and perform tricks; it is fairly easy given the acrobatics and dancing you've had millennia to perfect.

But things have not worked out the way you wanted. For one thing, the third clown, a strange man named Zimmie, is rude, obnoxious, and downright mean. He requires absolute privacy when putting on makeup for a show, or taking it off and kicks you out of the communal makeup trailer. (Herman, being a star, has his own trailer). Zimmie is just plain not nice. And you can't even stick up for yourself because you cannot talk!

And you cannot read or write either. As a Sprite, you never needed to learn, although you could recognize the language of the Fey if you needed to. But humans use a strange written language called English. You do not know it. One bright spot, the fiancée of the man running the circus has offered to teach you. Daisy Belle has been teaching you to read and write. She has been very nice to you. Some others have said that Daisy is mean, and doesn't like circus folk, but she has always been nice to you. But you can't stick up for her because you can't talk!

Worse yet, there is a human mage in the circus. Magi have always been a problem for your kind. They can coerce, command, and compel. And while this one does not know your true name, her very nature gives her power over you. You have no choice but to obey every command, to serve every request. Again you are lucky in that this particular mage – Susan Wildes, the Strong Woman – does not seem to know that she can command you. She seems like a nice person, but you have been keeping your distance just in case.

And then there is the agent of the Old Woman of the Woods. Bobo the Dog Faced Boy is spying on you for her. You recognized him immediately as one of her servants. You do not know why the Old Woman of the Woods has decided to send Bobo, unless... yes, she wants to make certain that you fail to get your love. Well, you know now that she is up to no good and you are ready to defend against whatever Bobo decides to do.

But worst of all is the thing that may bring your plans crashing to a halt. Herman doesn't like you. As soon as you joined the circus, you went up to see him. You were all ready to try to explain, somehow, about your love, but after a few minutes, you started laughing at him. You couldn't help it; the laughter bubbled out of you – or it least it would have if you could have made a noise, as it was, it looked like you were suffering from a fit of some sort. Herman shook his head and walked away.

And it is like that every time. You cannot go near him without bursting into silent laughter. Herman won't even talk to you anymore. Could this be some sort of additional curse from the Old Woman of the Woods? That does not make sense. She always tells everything about the conditions of your deal; that way she cannot possibly be held at fault when she claims you for all eternity.

You are very disturbed by all of this, and more so because time is running out. The circus returned to the United States after its trip through Europe and already it is the fifth day of the fifth month since the deal was made. If you do not kiss the kiss of true love with Binky by sunset (the end of the game), you will become property of the Old Woman of the Woods forever! Oh, what shall you do?

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You are desperately worried, not only because of your own impending doom, but also because of the powers that you sense in the circus. Many people here frighten you. You love Herman very much, and desperately want him to love you back, but you do not know how to break through his wall of depression and the fact that you silently laugh whenever you are near him.

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: He allowed you to join the circus even though you cannot speak. He has a good heart and you hope that he succeeds in life.

Daisy Belle: Colonel Rawhide's fiancée. She doesn't care for the circus, but has always been nice to you. She has been teaching you to read English, a difficult proposition at best.

Jack Bungling: The older of the two Bungling Brothers, owners of the Bungling Brothers Circus. You have never met the Bungling Brothers.

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 an excellent performer and has a big heart. You know he is kind and gentle, and very very lonely. You desperately love him, but you cannot even face him any more because of your silent laughing.

Susan Wildes, The Strong Lady: She scares you. She *seems* nice enough, but you know that she wields the power of magic. This means that she has power over you and that you must do whatever she asks. So far, it has been innocuous, and you do not even think that she knows the power she has available.

Franklin Winters, The Lion Tamer: He enjoys partaking of the spirits. He also has a good way with animals. You respect him for that.

The Townshed Brothers: They were also part of the original circus. They are nice people, but they constantly argue. They are a bit strange.

Helena Ferez, the Bearded Lady: She seems nice, although you do not know her that well.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallow: There is something wrong about him. He is not a mage, but the air of the supernatural lingers around him. You do not have to obey him, but you get the feeling he is not quite what he seems.

Bobo the Dog Faced Boy: He joined the circus a few days after you did. And you know why. You recognize him as a servant of the Old Woman of the Woods. You know that she is using Bobo to spy on you and you suspect that he is the reason why you cannot be near Herman, but you aren't sure *how*.

Señora Mysterioso: She scares you a little bit because she reminds you of the Old Woman of the Woods. But she is not a mage and she has no supernatural powers, so you do not truly fear her. Her fortune telling act is all misdirection and sleight of hand.

The Masked Rider: Also joined the circus in Europe. You don't know too much about The Masked Rider, but the Rider's talent with horses cannot be denied.

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus in Europe. The Knife Thrower likes privacy, but is very talented. You saw some knives being thrown perfectly, while the thrower was blindfolded.

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: She joined the circus just before it left for Europe. She's a very nice person and very patient with you when you try to communicate.

Zimmie the Clown: You share a trailer with Zimmie and you couldn't hate it more. He is rude and nasty and has to be alone all the time. You wish you could share a trailer with Herman instead.

The Great Zamboni: He arrived today asking for a job. Colonel Rawhide decided to give him a chance. He is a mage as well, a true mage in full flush with his powers. He wields dark and sinister energy. He can command you, and you think he knows it. Best to steer clear.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: He is the father of the Bungling Brothers. You don't know much about

American politics, but Senator Bungling is apparently very powerful.

John Bungling: The younger of the Bungling Brothers. You've never met him.

Uma the Unicyclist: While in France, on the return part of the tour, there were a couple of bizarre accidents. You didn't know Uma that well, but it was still sad when she slipped off her high unicycle and severely twisted her ankle.

Preston the Prestidigitator: His act also was ruined while in France. While he was sawing a woman in half, a panel swung open revealing the illusion. He was booed out of the tent and Colonel Rawhide had to fire him. He was not a true mage, though. He relied on illusion, misdirection, and sleight of hand for his act.

ABILITIES

Combat: 8 cards.

Cannot Speak: You cannot vocalize a sound. You cannot talk, sob, laugh, or yell. You may pantomime actions, but a poor understanding of English means that you cannot use standard charade devices (syllables, homonyms, "sounds like"). ASL is right out.

Cannot Read or Write: You do not know how to read or write. You may not read any written documents. You may write your name (Zelda) as often as you wish. You may write a total of ten words during the game (keep track). None of these words can be more than five letters in length. Every ten minutes that Daisy Belle tutors you in reading and writing resets the uses of this ability and adds one to the words' length in letters.

Sense Magic: You can tell if someone or something is inherently magical. You can also recognize the language of the Fey if you see or hear it.

Must Obey Mages: You must follow any direct command given to you by Susan Wildes or The Great Zamboni, even if it is against your own self interests or is self destructive. The one exception is commands that deal with Binky, your love for him overpowers this compulsion.

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 silent 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 – hey – that Binky sure is funny.

She knows all, but does she tell all? Visit...

SENORA MYSTERIOSO, THE FORTUNE TELLER

You are, of course, not a true fortune teller. You're not even a real gypsy. You tell your friends, if they ask, that your true name is Jane Doe, but that is a lie as well. You cannot tell them the truth. They probably wouldn't believe it, anyway. They would say that it's science fiction, except that science fiction as a genre hasn't been created yet. You know this. You know a lot about the future.

You were born in the year 2050. Um, you will have been born in the year 2050. No, to keep it simple, you were born in 2050, nearly two hundred years from now. Your real name is Penelope Fenwick. Your father was an accountant. You come from a long line of accountants.

Now, there is nothing wrong with being an accountant, but you wanted a more exciting life. You wanted a life of glamour and riches. You wanted a life of crime. It isn't easy being a criminal in the twenty-first century. Your DNA is recorded at birth. Your online activities are tracked and there are security cameras everywhere. And the real money is tied up in secure areas that would get you killed if you even tried to get close.

You were working as an accountant – nothing wrong with being an accountant – at the Chronological Research Institute (CRI) in New York City when you made your decision to become a jewel thief. It was a fine – if boring – job. However, you were able to get close to their working prototype “Fourth dimensional chrono-spacial relocation device.” That is, their prototype time machine.

Now you had done some research on the history of jewel thieves. The height of the criminal era was the mid 1920s, but it was a dangerous time, and most of the robberies were bank robberies of cash, not jewels. You like jewels. You like the way they sparkle. You like the way they gleam. You like the way they look against your skin.

You have an antique diamond engagement ring that you inherited from your grandmother. It is a family heirloom, dating back generations. You wear it on a chain around your neck, saving it for the day when you actually are engaged. But you want *more* jewelry.

According to your research, two of the biggest unsolved jewel heists happened within a year of each other. The first was the burglary of the Freedonian Crown Jewels. The Independent Republic of Freedonia was a small European country. You don't know why a republic had crown jewels, but that isn't

really important. Neither it nor neighboring Fandonia exist anymore. They warred with each other constantly and both were taken over during the expansion of the Soviet Union. When the USSR collapsed, they remained parts of a larger country.

Regardless, the fate of the Freedonian Crown Jewels remains one of history's unsolved mysteries. The second are the Rawhide Diamonds. Apparently, in the space of a day, a fortune in diamonds was discovered within the circus and then lost, presumed stolen. The diamonds were discovered at the grounds of a small Circus, Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide's Circus of the Spectacular, just before it was sold to the Bungling Brothers.

Well, you knew who had to be at the root of those two unsolved crimes: you. So, late one night, you snuck into the prototype time machine storage room activated it and were gone before the rent-a-cops responded to the alarms. Of course, now you cannot return to your own time, but you've grown to live your strange, old world.

You arrived here a couple of years ago, and immediately sought out and joined Colonel Rawhide's Circus. You billed yourself as a gypsy fortune teller and with a few accurate predictions managed to land a plum role. You like it here, travelling in the circus. Showmanship must be in your blood, because you were a natural, although you do have some help.

First off, you have your snake. You do a clever snake-charming act as part of the sideshow. Of course the reason that your snake is so easily manipulated is because it is a robot that you brought with you from the future. Your snake robot is voice activated, and tuned to your voice so nobody else can activate it by accident. Unfortunately, the voice recognition software is sketchy at best, so it doesn't always obey perfectly. Still, it obeys better than a trained snake.

But what really helps you is your scanner orb. It looks like a crystal ball, but it will scan your target and give you a readout based on the target's DNA and image. The scanner orb has a database of almost every historical figure, and you have been able to use it to tell a great deal about your clients. You did come prepared.

Still, there are things about the current times that make you miss “home.” Besides the practical things like air conditioning, you deplore the treatment of women in these times. You cannot believe that women don't even have the right to vote! You are aware of the current suffragette movement and are

working to give the vote to women. But it isn't as easy enlightening people as it might sound.

So far, you have only managed to gain one ally in the fight for suffrage. Susan Wildes, the strong woman, is an eighteen year old runaway, but she is a nice young lady and she understands about empowering women. You have been working with Susan, and have been trying to convince others to join you. Susan has been very enthusiastic about this.

However, you really need to work on convincing Washington DC to amend the constitution to give women the right to vote. And for this, you need to convince Senator Hiram Bungling, the most powerful man in Washington. His whims determine the country's leanings. If you can convince just one man, then the country will follow.

Of course, Senator Bungling wouldn't listen to a gypsy fortune teller, and if you tried to explain that you were from the future, he would think you were mad. Also, you don't want to have too much publicity. Nobody had ever heard of Señora Mysterioso in your time and if you want to be a successful jewel thief, you'll have to keep it that way.

Luckily, you have someone much more accessible to convince: Jack Bungling. Jack is co-owner of the Bungling Brothers Circus and the eldest son of Hiram Bungling. Jack doesn't have a very pleasant reputation, but you think that if you work hard, you can convince him. If worst comes to worst, you can try to hypnotize him.

You started learning the arts of mesmerization from Preston the Prestidigitator, although you are not very good at it. Preston could get someone to go into a trance nearly immediately. Unfortunately, while the circus was on the tail end of its European tour, somebody sabotaged Preston's act. A panel swung open while he was sawing a woman in half. It revealed the illusion and he was booed offstage. Colonel Rawhide had to fire him.

You were sorry to see Preston go. He was teaching you slight of hand (which you are still no good at) and how to hypnotize people (which you have some skill at). However, you are also worried that there is a saboteur in the circus. You may be a thief, but you don't want anyone to get hurt. You should keep your eyes open.

Getting back to the European tour, it took place as scheduled. About six months ago, the circus headed to France, then toured the continent. While the circus was performing in Freedonia, you took the opportunity to use your snake to steal the crown jewels. As was written in the history books, the crime was never solved and you now own the crown jewels of the Independent Republic of Freedonia.

While in Europe, the circus picked up a number of new acts, including Zelda the Clown, Bobo the Dog Faced Boy, the knife thrower, and the Masked Rider. They all seem to be nice people, although the Masked Rider and the knife thrower are fairly solitary people. Of course, the circus does have its share of misanthropes. The Credenza Brothers and Zimmie the Clown both keep to themselves as well.

The sabotage started at the end of the tour, while the circus was in France. First, someone did something to the large Unicycle Uma used to ride. She fell off and severely twisted her ankle. She is resting in France under doctor's care. Then there was what happened to Preston. You're still waiting for the third shoe to drop.

And the diamonds. You're waiting for the diamonds. Your research indicated that that diamonds were discovered and stolen within six months of the circus' return from Europe, just before it was sold to the Bunglings. Since Jack Bungling has been sniffing around the circus, you believe the time will be soon and then you'll have the wealth you deserve.

ITEMS

Robotic Snake: Obeys your commands

Crystal Ball: You can use this to scan people

The Freedonian Royal Jewels: A scepter, signet ring, and a large gemstone.

Diamond Engagement Ring: A family heirloom.

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You are wise and clever and able to think your way out of most situations. You are greedy, but like to think of yourself as a good person.

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: The current owner of the circus. He is a good man, but not a very good judge of character, based on some of the shady folk, such as yourself, that he lets work for him. Worse yet, he seems to trust the Bungling Brothers.

Daisy Belle: Colonel Rawhide's fiancée. She doesn't care for the circus, and especially dislikes your snake. You don't care for her

Jack Bungling: The older of the two Bungling Brothers, owners of the Bungling Brothers Circus. His father is a rich and powerful man in Washington DC. You believe that if you can convince Jack to have his father support women's suffrage then the amendment will pass soon.

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. There is

something odd about them, but you haven't figured out what yet.

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: Your ally in the cause of women's suffrage. She is young and enthusiastic and unnaturally strong.

Franklin Winters, The Lion Tamer: He does like to drink. You don't mind a drink or two yourself, but in these days, women aren't supposed to drink strong drinks. Franklin doesn't mind if you share some of his though.

The Townshed Brothers: They were also part of the original circus. They are nice people, but they constantly argue.

Helena Ferez, the Bearded Lady: You can tell that she is hiding something, but you aren't sure what.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallower: He has a very flashy act, including some slight of hand. Perhaps he could give you some pointers.

Bobo the Dog Faced Boy: He joined the circus in Europe. He's only eight years old. He seems to be scared of you for some reason.

Zelda the Clown: She is a mute who joined the circus in Europe. She is a good clown, but you wonder if she was born mute or if she simply does not talk.

The Masked Rider: Also joined the circus in Europe. You don't know too much about The Masked Rider, but the Rider's talent riding horses cannot be denied.

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus in Europe. The Knife Thrower likes privacy, but is very talented.

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: She joined the circus just before it left for Europe. She's a very nice person and very patient with you when you try to communicate.

Zimmie the Clown: He also likes his privacy. He also doesn't like your snake.

The Great Zamboni: He arrived today asking for a job. Colonel Rawhide decided to give him a chance. He might be another opportunity to learn more about sleight of hand.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: He is the father of the Bungling Brothers. He is the most powerful man in Washington. The saying goes, "as goes Bungling, so goes the nation."

John Bungling: The younger of the Bungling Brothers. He might also be someone to influence his father, but he hasn't been around..

Uma the Unicyclist: While in France, on the return part of the tour, Uma slipped off her high unicycle and severely twisted her ankle. You suspect sabotage.

Preston the Prestidigitator: His act also was ruined while in France. While he was sawing a woman in half, a panel swung open revealing the illusion. He was booed out of the tent and Colonel Rawhide had to fire him. This is a shame as he was teaching you hypnotism and sleight of hand.

ABILITIES

Combat: 8 cards.

Crystal Ball: You can use your crystal ball to get information on the other characters. They must stand (or sit) in front of the ball for at least five minutes. You can then open your envelope about that person. This must be voluntary on their part, or they must have been defeated in combat.

Retroactive Research: You have done some research on members of the circus. You can tell what became of them after they left the circus. Note that this may change depending on how you change time, so if you use the ability on the same character at different times in the game, you may get different results. You can do this five times during the game.

Hypnotize: If someone is placed in a receptive state of mind, you can convince them to perform a task for you or you can awaken lost memories. You can only do this for a willing subject.

Lockpick: You have a good chance of getting into any locked room or strongbox. This may take time. You may escape from a locked room or from being bound in five minutes instead of ten.

Snake: You can give your snake simple commands or have it fight alongside you in combat. It has simple voice recognition software and the intelligence of a child. The snake has 5 combat cards.

Paradox: If something happens that significantly changes world history as you know it, you may be given additional, memories of two worldviews happening at the same time. Significant conflicts may cause insanity.

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 – gosh – that Binky sure is funny.

SEÑORA MYSTERIOSO CONTINGENCY ENVELOPE:

OPEN WHEN YOU MEET MILTON FENWICK

Colonel Rawhide must be your ancestor. And that means that Daisy Belle is your great-great-great-and-so-forth-grandmother. You **must** make sure that they get married. Well, that explains, at least, why you took so well to the circus.

<p>Crystal Ball Results for: Colonel Rawhide</p> <p>Milton Fenwick</p> <p>Born: Piscataway, New Jersey</p> <p>Owner: Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide's Spectacular Wild West Show, later Circus of The Spectacular.</p> <p>Note: Open your contingency envelope.</p>	<p>Crystal Ball Results for: Daisy Belle</p> <p>Daisy Fenwick</p> <p>Born: Daisy Bell in Georgia, USA</p> <p>Note: Open your contingency envelope.</p>
<p>Crystal Ball Results for: Jack Bungling</p> <p>Jack Bungling</p> <p>Oldest Son of Senator Hiram Bungling</p> <p>Owner: Bungling Brothers' Circus</p>	<p>Crystal Ball Results for: Douglas Credenza</p> <p>John Bungling</p> <p>Youngest Son of Senator Hiram Bungling</p> <p>Owner: Bungling Brothers' Circus.</p>
<p>Crystal Ball Results for: Alexander Credenza</p> <p>Error 651223: Non-Human DNA</p> <p>Not found in Database.</p>	<p>Crystal Ball Results for: Binky the Clown</p> <p>Herman Binkowicz</p> <p>Famous Clown.</p> <p>Most noted for working for Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide's Circus of The Spectacular and his spectacular suicide.</p> <p>Warning: Genetic Anomaly Detected</p>
<p>Crystal Ball Results for: The Strong Woman</p> <p>Susan Wildes</p> <p>Born: Bangor, Maine</p> <p>Most noted for working for Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide's Circus of The Spectacular.</p>	<p>Crystal Ball Results for: The Lion Tamer</p> <p>Jonathan Corwin</p> <p>Born: 1651, Salem, Massachusetts.</p> <p>Most noted as a Judge in the Salem Witch Trials.</p>

<p>Crystal Ball Results for: The Bearded Lady</p> <p>Princess of Fandonia</p> <p>Born: Fandonia</p> <p>Ran away from home when she was sixteen. Never found.</p>	<p>Crystal Ball Results for: Fire Eater</p> <p>Error 651223: Non-Human DNA</p> <p>Not found in Database.</p>
<p>Crystal Ball Results for: Zelda The Clown</p> <p>Error 192: Not found in Database.</p> <p>Warning: Genetic Anomaly Detected</p>	<p>Crystal Ball Results for: The Masked Rider</p> <p>Dana Jehosiphath</p> <p>Born: Fandonia</p> <p>Captain of the Guard of the Fandonia Royal Family. Killed in the first Fandonia/Freedonia War.</p>
<p>Crystal Ball Results for: Lydia The Tattooed Lady</p> <p>Lydia Bungling</p> <p>Born: Washington DC</p> <p>Daughter of Senator Hiram Bungling</p>	<p>Crystal Ball Results for: Zimmie The Clown</p> <p>Error 651223: Non-Human DNA</p> <p>Not found in Database.</p>
<p>Crystal Ball Results for: Rupert Townshed</p> <p>Rupert Townshed</p> <p>Born: Virginia</p> <p>Most noted for working for Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide's Circus of The Spectacular.</p>	<p>Crystal Ball Results for: Rudolph Townshed</p> <p>Rudolph Townshed</p> <p>Born: Virginia</p> <p>Most noted for working for Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide's Circus of The Spectacular.</p>

<p>Crystal Ball Results for: Bobo the Dog Faced Boy</p> <p>Prince Marcus of Freedonia</p> <p>Born: Freedonia, 1375</p> <p>Disappeared in a coup where his parents were killed.</p> <p>Warning: Genetic Anomaly Detected</p>	<p>Crystal Ball Results for: Señora Mysterioso</p> <p>Penelope Fenwick</p> <p>Born: 2050, New York State</p> <p>Citizen's ID: 157245-0009</p>
<p>Crystal Ball Results for: The Knife Thrower</p> <p>Sasha Rasputinov</p> <p>Born: Freedonia</p> <p>Assassin for hire, usually employed by the Freedonian Government.</p>	<p>Crystal Ball Results for: Clifford Credenza</p> <p>Error 651223: Non-Human DNA</p> <p>Not found in Database.</p>
<p>Crystal Ball Results for: The Great Zamboni</p> <p>Preston Smith</p> <p>Born: Maryland</p> <p>Most noted for working for Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide's Circus of The Spectacular under the name Preston the Prestidigitator.</p>	<p>Crystal Ball Results for: Bartholomew Credenza</p> <p>Error 651223: Non-Human DNA</p> <p>Not found in Database.</p>

THE MASKED RIDER

You have a job to do, a duty, and duty is important. It is your life.

You are Dana “Jumping” Jehosiphat, Captain of the Guards of the Royal Kingdom of Fandonia. Fandonia is a small country in eastern Europe. It shares a border with the Independent Republic of Freedonia. And, unfortunately, Fandonia and Freedonia are on the brink of war.

The war has been brewing for decades, perhaps longer. According to legend, Freedonia was one a peaceful, happy country led by an enlightened monarchy. However, the monarchy was overthrown and a Regent was installed in place. The Regent and his heirs have been ruling every since in a cruel tyranny. It is the height of hubris that they dare call their country an Independent Republic. They are a dictatorship pure and simple.

The current Regent is the worst of the lot. He has been goading his people toward war for the past two decades. The countries stand on the brink of war and this could destabilize all of Eastern Europe. But the Regent doesn't care; all he wants is the fertile land of Fandonia.

In a last ditch effort to stave off war, the King and Queen of Fandonia made one last reconciliation attempt. They contacted the Regent and offered their daughter in marriage, uniting the two countries without war. The Regent actually approved this plan, for the princess was young and beautiful. However, when she discovered the news, the Princess was so upset that she fled from the castle never to be seen again.

You took her disappearance personally. As Captain of the Guard, she was your responsibility to protect. But more than that, she was your friend and student. You were training her in horseback riding.

You may, in fact, be the best horse rider in the world. You have trained on all manner and size of equines, from the Shetland Pony to the stately Percheron. You can handle almost any maneuver on any sort of horse. You can joust, ride while standing, canter without reins, even perform acrobatics and other maneuvers. You are an expert in all manners of horsemanship and grooming. Well, everyone needs a hobby.

So, with the disappearance of the Princess, war has been looming ever closer. The Regent took it as a personal insult, which – truth to tell – it was, and tensions between your two countries has gotten worse than ever.

That is why it was such a relief to get confirmed sightings of the Princess.

Oh, there have been many sightings over the years. And you investigated them all. Rumors. Unsubstantiated rumors were all they turned out to be. The common folk believed that she was taken by the Old Woman of the Woods, a local superstition, a witch who claims the souls of lost children, but you are above superstition. You believed that she was in a foreign country, living a life of relative anonymity. She always was the clever one.

However, a few months ago, reports started coming in about the Princess being part of a circus touring in Europe. You went to see this Circus while it was in Germany, and – sure enough – there were a number of females working with the circus that looked similar to the Princess. But you were unable to get a closer look. You went back to the court and devised a plan with the Queen and King.

Thus, when the Circus played for the royal court, you donned a mask and introduced yourself as the Masked Rider. You were able to quickly demonstrate your prowess and you were signed on immediately. You then began your circus career.

You have been with Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide's Circus of the Spectacular for nearly six months now. In that time, the circus has finished its European tour and has returned to the United States. This is your first time overseas and you are enjoying yourself immensely, despite your mission.

You are well paid, too. You earn more from the Circus than you ever did as Captain of the Guard. That is because the American dollar is strong compared to the Fandonia grelting. You have been sending your payment home to help support Fandonia and the war effort. Unfortunately, Colonel Rawhide owes you fifty dollars of back pay. This would translate to nearly three hundred and seventy five greltings and would be of great use back home. You need to speak to Colonel Rawhide about your missing payment.

But you must never forget your mission. There are three women in the circus who look like the princess. They are all roughly about the same age. You assume the princess would be in disguise, so it could be any of the three. The trick will be seeing which one has the royal birthmark.

All the descendents of the Fandonian throne have the royal birthmark on their body. The princess has the birthmark on her upper calf. It is impolite to ask a woman about a birthmark, or to lift up her dress, so you have been unable to determine which of the women has the birthmark.

The three women are:

Daisy Belle, Colonel Rawhide's Fiancée. She looks a great deal like the princess, although she speaks with an American Southern accent. You have not been able to get close to Miss Belle, as she claims to disdain all circus people. You are certain that she would raise a fuss were you to ask her about a birthmark or ask to look at her calf. It should be noted that the Princess is very well versed in languages, and could affect a southern accent if she so chose. Colonel Rawhide believes that Miss Belle is from Georgia and has claimed to have met her father, but these things could have been faked to fool Colonel Rawhide. Miss Belle started travelling with the circus well over a year after the princess ran away from home.

Helena Ferez, the Bearded Lady. Her beard hides her face well, but she resembles the princess in body. Also, suspiciously, she avoided Fandonia and Freedonia on the European tour, taking a leave of absence. However, she does have a certificate signed by a doctor authenticating that she is a bearded lady. These things can easily be faked, so you looked up the Doctor in question and – under interrogation – he swore that the examination and certificate were valid. Furthermore, the date of the certificate is within two weeks of the Princess' disappearance. It is physically impossible to travel from Fandonia to the United States in two weeks. Even at fastest speeds, the steamship itself would take nearly two weeks, and that does not include travel time from Fandonia to the coast. Unless the Doctor lied under interrogation and oath, Miss Ferez is not your lady.

Lydia the Tattooed Lady. She also resembles the princess, although the tattoos do obscure her somewhat. The tattoos could have been used as a method for disguising the birthmark. The most telling thing is that Lydia does not seem to have a last name. She must have something to hide if she will not reveal her full name. Lydia apparently joined the circus just before it went on its European tour. The princess ran away several years ago, so this would have given her ample opportunity to become tattooed and the join a circus. Although Lydia is looking like the most likely suspect, you are secretly hoping that she is not the Princess. It might be better to return empty handed than to return with a Princess covered in tattoos.

Your mission is not easy, and – in fact – has just gotten more difficult. You have received a communiqué from the King and Queen. Apparently, there is a spy in your midst. Fandonian intelligence has uncovered a plot by Freedonia to kidnap the Princess and bring her back to the Regent, either to hold her for ransom or to use this as an opening act of war against Fandonia. This is not good. You need to ferret out the Freedonian spy in your midst and stop him... By any means necessary.

Also, you have been asked to gain America's support for Fandonia in the coming war. The most powerful man in Washington DC is Senator Hiram Bungling.

His two sons, Jack and John, own a circus and their majesties seem to feel that as a circus performer you would have some sway over the Bungling Brothers and that they – in turn – could convince their father to support Fandonia.

This annoys you somewhat as it means that you will either have to reveal yourself to be from Fandonia or you must work extraordinarily carefully to keep from revealing your secret. Either way, it is a headache. But it is also a royal order, so you must follow it. However, your mission – recover the Princess – always comes first.

There is, unfortunately, one more obstacle in your way. Your official badge of office has been stolen. Although you cannot detect any sign of a break-in to your bunk area or in your personal supplies, your badge is nonetheless gone.

This is a difficulty in two ways. The first is that this means that someone out there has discovered that you are a foreign agent. This could complicate your mission greatly. The second difficulty is that you no longer have the proof you will need when you must escort the Princess home. Without your badge as proof, you are just another person and could even be charged with kidnapping. Your badge gives you the authority to return the Princess. You need to have it returned, and at the same time you cannot allow your mission to be compromised. This is a bit of a quandary.

You will figure out what to do. In the meantime, you have a show to perform...

ITEMS

A Number of Masks: In case you lose one.

Your Badge of Office: Missing.

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You are faithful to the Crown of Fandonia and plan to do your duty. However, the Princess was your friend, and you know that her return will force her marriage to a cruel man. This causes you some discomfort, but you are loyal to the Crown and you do not want a war.

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: The current owner of the circus. The circus is having some financial trouble and he owes you \$50 of back pay.

Daisy Belle: Colonel Rawhide's fiancée. She may be the Princess in disguise. You will need to do some investigative work.

Jack Bungling: The older of the two Bungling Brothers, owners of the Bungling Brothers Circus. His father is a rich and powerful man in Washington DC. You have been requested to convince Jack to convince his father to support Fandonia in the coming war. It

will be challenging to do this without revealing your true identity.

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. This is not so odd, you suppose. You also have a reputation for keeping to yourself.

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: Obviously not the Princess. Besides being inhumanly strong, she looks nothing like the Princess.

Franklin Winters, The Lion Tamer: A notable drunk. His weakness disgusts you.

The Townshed Brothers: They were also part of the original circus. They constantly bicker. It must be trying being physically connected to someone else.

Helena Ferez, the Bearded Lady: Another of your suspects for the Princess. She does resemble the Princess, except for the authentic beard. Again, more detective work is needed.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallower: He has a very flashy act, including some slight of hand.

Bobo the Dog Faced Boy: He joined the circus in Europe. Although he's only eight years old, he seems to be very wise. You aren't sure why.

Zelda the Clown: She is a mute who joined the circus in Europe. While she is not one of your prime suspects, she might be the Princess, hiding her voice. She is not very similar in appearance to the Princess, but a very good disguise might mask her true identity.

Señora Mysterioso: An older gypsy woman who tells fortunes and is also a snake charmer. You do not believe in the supernatural, so you assume that she does everything by slight of hand and misdirection. However, she has often been very accurate.

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus in Europe. The Knife Thrower likes privacy, but is very talented. You are impressed with the Knife Thrower's coordination...

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: She joined the circus just before it left for Europe. However, she does bear a passing resemblance to the Princess. You need to check for a tattoo.

Zimmie the Clown: He also likes his privacy. Zimmie is fairly rude and routinely scares small children. You do not know why he still has a job.

The Great Zamboni: He arrived today asking for a job. Colonel Rawhide decided to give him a chance. You

know nothing about him, but the timing is too perfect for it to be a coincidence. He is most likely the Freedonian spy.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: He is the father of the Bungling Brothers. He is the most powerful man in Washington. The saying goes, "as goes Bungling, so goes the nation."

John Bungling: The younger of the Bungling Brothers. He might also be someone to influence his father, but he hasn't been around.

Uma the Unicyclist: While in France, on the return part of the tour, Uma slipped off her high unicycle and severely twisted her ankle. She has remained in France.

Preston the Prestidigitator: His act also was ruined while in France. While he was sawing a woman in half, a panel swung open revealing the illusion. He was booed out of the tent and Colonel Rawhide had to fire him.

ABILITIES

Combat: 12 cards.

Amazing Dexterity: Once per combat, you may ignore the effects of an opponent's advanced combat card (BOOM, ZOWIE, OOF, or THUMP). You must still play a card on it as if it were a basic card.

Master of the Equines: You are the best horseback rider in the world. You can stay on a horse even under the most difficult circumstances.

Keen Insight: You may ask the Roustabouts a yes/no question about something you have observed during the game. This question must be about an event or action, not about a specific character's identity or background. (For example: If you come upon a dead body, you may ask questions about the murder's identity, but you may not ask questions about Clifford Credenza's history.) You may do this three times during the game. The Roustabout may answer Yes, No, I Don't Know, or I Cannot Reveal That. If the answer is neither Yes or No, then the question does not count as one of your uses.

First Aid: Should anyone become injured, you have learned a few methods to patch people up in emergencies.

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.

THE MASKED RIDER, ADDENDUM

There has been one more obstacle to your duty: love. The knife thrower, who joined the circus around the same time you did, and you naturally became close friends. You shared the common background of your area of the world, and knew the local languages, customs, and in-jokes. You quickly became friends, and have progressed from there.

You have been courting the knife thrower for quite some time, or perhaps the knife thrower has been courting you. Regardless, the two of you are quite in love now. You could only love someone as skilled and dexterous as yourself. You are quite convince that had the knife thrower gone into horseback riding, you would have had an equal or a rival for best horseback rider in the world. Oh, you are in love.

You have announced your love to each other, but not to the world. And you have not told the knife thrower your true name or mission, nor have you learned the same. You do not want to jeopardize your mission, but you do not want to leave your love. You do not know quite what to do. Oh, the angst!

THE KNIFE THROWER, ADDENDUM

Ah, and you have found love. The Masked Rider, who joined the circus around the same time you did, and you naturally became close friends. You shared the common background of your area of the world, and knew the local languages, customs, and in-jokes. You quickly became friends, and have progressed from there.

You have been courting the Masked Rider for quite some time, or perhaps the Masked Rider has been courting you. Regardless, the two of you are quite in love now. You could only love someone as skilled and dexterous as yourself. You are quite convince that had the Masked Rider practiced throwing knives, you would have had an rival for best in the world. (Of course, you would still be the better, but no matter). Oh, you are in love.

You have announced your love to each other, but not to the world. And you have not told the Masked Rider your true name or why you are here, nor have you learned the same. You do not want to jeopardize your chances of success, but you do not want to leave your love. You do not know quite what to do. Oh, the angst!

With Amazing Skill and Accuracy, we are Proud to Present...

THE KNIFE THROWER

You prefer to be known as The Knife Thrower. It is what you do. It is who you are. Oh, you have a name: Sasha. Sasha Rasputinov. You hate your name. Rasputinov, as if you had anything to do with the goings on in the Russias or with the Tzar. Feh. Let them call you by what you are best at, by what you are known for: The Knife Thrower.

You began your lifetime's work when you were perhaps five. You were raised by a poor mother, a serving girl at a local tavern. Your father had run off. You had to learn quickly to defend yourself in a fight and you also fought to defend your mother's honor.

And it was in such a fight that you learned of your talent. You were, as has been said, perhaps five. Old enough to know your mother was slighted, but too young to know not to go against a fully-grown adult man. He backhanded you across the room and you crashed into a wooden table. Dazed, you groped for the first weapon you could find - a steak knife - and threw it at the rascal.

It hit. And stuck. Deep into his thigh. Not quite where you were aiming, but it was your first throw. Your aim has improved over the years. The villain cursed and stumbled out of the tavern and into the night leaving behind a trail of blood. You rushed to your mother, to be comforted as much as to comfort, and you knew then your choice of weapons.

You've been training with the knife ever since. And you are good, perhaps the best in the world. You can judge how well a weapon can throw just at a glance. Picking it up and sensing its heft will allow you to throw even the most unbalanced knives with deadly accuracy. You can hit moving targets while blindfolded. Yes, you are that good.

As you grew, your horizons expanded. You were living on the streets by the time you were a teenager, but by your early twenties, you were making a good living. It's amazing how much people will pay to have a knife thrown just *so*. And because you are quick and nimble, you have never been caught.

By your mid twenties, your services were no longer available to the common man on the street. You were in the employ of heads of state, and specifically the Regent of Freedonia. You have always been, in your own way, a loyal citizen of the Independent Republic of Freedonia, and you do not mind your work one bit.

Your current assignment is a bit odd, however.

It seems that a few months ago the circus was in town. Specifically, an American circus, Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide's Circus of the Spectacular, came thundering through the capital of Freedonia. It was an exciting event. Even you attended; you wanted to see what a real American circus was all about. But it was so bright and gaudy. Some of the acts were interesting. You were impressed with the wild animal trainer and the clowns did make you laugh, but it was too gaudy and unrefined. Americans are so common.

However, they are also apparently very clever. For the day after the circus left, it was discovered that someone had made off with the well-guarded Freedonian Crown Jewels. They were taken from a locked room and the room remained locked. No signs of a break in could be detected. Someone from the circus had committed the perfect crime: one without any evidence.

The Regent needed to get the Crown Jewels back. Everyone in Freedonia, even the lowliest peasants, knows the story of the Crown Jewels, although stating it aloud can get you arrested. It all started five hundred years ago when the first Regent had the King and Queen killed. Their son, Prince Marcus, was sold to the Old Woman of the Woods, an evil hag, a witch who lived in the forest.

The Regent's descendents have ruled Freedonia ever since, but the myth persists. Some day the young prince will return to Freedonia decked in the Crown Jewels, throw off the Regency, and restore Freedonia to its former glory.

Of course, the Regent has declared it illegal to repeat this story, but it gets told regardless. People need hope. The Regency is not well liked. The standard of living in Freedonia is pretty low and the Regent keeps pushing toward war with neighboring Fandonia. Even you would prefer to have the Regent overthrown with a kinder leader. In fact, as a loyal Freedonian citizen, you would welcome a return to the monarchy, if it were possible.

But that is just a dream. The Regent is paying your bills now. So you have gone on an undercover mission to return the Crown Jewels. Very few people know that they are missing. The Regent wants this matter solved with finesse and as quietly as possible.

And so you joined the circus. It was a simple matter for one of your talents to join this circus and soon you were accepted as a fellow performer. Circus life is interesting. Besides the roles, there is actually some intrigue.

On the personal front, you have reason to believe that the princess of Fandonia is among the circus folk. At least that was the rumor you heard not long after you joined. Oh, not from the circus folk. Most of them are from America and wouldn't know a princess from a milkmaid. But in the taverns and inns of Fandonia, there they spoke of the princess.

You know a bit about the princess yourself. It is your understanding that she ran away from home rather than marry the Regent of your country. You bet the Regent would pay you good money for her return. And if not him, then her parents might. You have no great love of the uppity Fandonians, but their money is as gold as anyone's.

Unfortunately, you have no idea what the princess actually looks like. You know she was in her late teens when she ran away and that she was highly educated. You also know that she has a birthmark of the Fandonian Royal Seal on her body, but you don't know exactly *where* on her body that might be. Still, it is worth keeping a lookout for her.

And if the rumors are true and the Princess is here, then the Fandonian government has almost certainly also planted an agent in the troupe. You will have to keep a careful lookout for such an agent, as he will almost certainly mean you ill will. Remember, Fandonia and Freedonia are on the verge of war.

The other intrigue that has happened recently has been the recent slate of sabotage. They sabotage happened in France. You cannot tell if it was the work of a professional or an amateur. Nobody was seriously hurt, but you aren't certain if that was the intent.

The first act of sabotage happened to Uma the Unicyclist. Her high unicycle was tampered with and she fell, severely twisting her ankle. She has stayed in France under the care of a doctor. You may be able to tell more if you examine the unicycle, but you do not know what has become of it.

The second act was set on Preston the Prestidigitator. A panel swung open when he was sawing a woman in half and it revealed the illusion (and a pair of fake feet). Colonel Rawhide had to fire him. He left the circus and hasn't been seen since.

Some of the folks are worried about the sabotage and if it will continue. You are fairly certain it will. But with only two attempts, it is difficult to find a pattern. Maybe after the next attempt...

And there is some politicking that you must do. You occasionally send reports back to the Regent. When he heard that the Bungling Brothers ran a rival circus and Jack Bungling had been seen at your circus, he hatched a plan. The Bungling Brothers' father, Hiram Bungling, is the most influential man in Washington DC. The Regent has asked that you

speak with Jack or John Bungling and convince them to convince their father to support Freedonia in the coming war.

This is, no doubt, within your abilities. Nonetheless, you are a bit miffed. You are an adventurer, not a politician. Still, you are a loyal Freedonian, so you will do as ordered. And paid, of course, and paid.

And that brings up another concern. Colonel Rawhide owes you \$50 in back pay. Oh, you can afford to go without and you are also being paid by the Regent. But it is the principle of the matter. No, you allow one person your services without payment and pretty soon it is all IOUs and letters of credit and you go hungry. No, you will not do your act without payment, and you must remind Colonel Rawhide about that.

ITEMS

A Number of Knives: You have as many as you need.

ROLEPLAYING HINT

If your character could be summed up in one word, it would be: dashing. You are a bold adventurer, confident and self assured. You are not specifically a bad person, you just happen to work for a bad man. You are loyal to your country, but not necessarily the Regent

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: The current owner of the circus. The circus is having some financial trouble and he owes you \$50 of back pay.

Daisy Belle: Colonel Rawhide's fiancée. She is stuck up coming from a life of leisure. She does not care for those working for the circus, and for you, the feeling is mutual.

Jack Bungling: The older of the two Bungling Brothers, owners of the Bungling Brothers Circus. His father is a rich and powerful man in Washington DC. You have been requested to convince Jack to convince his father to support Freedonia in the coming war. You do not care much for politics, but if there is a Fandonian agent in the troupe, then it is important to do this. With aid from the USA, Fandonia could win the war, and you cannot have that. You do not work for losers.

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. You've often wondered what was so valuable that they need to keep others out.

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: Quite a puzzle, she is. She is a mere slip of a girl and only eighteen, yet she is stronger than any man you have ever met. Odd.

Franklin Winters, The Lion Tamer: He drinks quite a bit, but you also enjoy a beer now and again. However, you have never managed to beat him in a drinking contest. This galls you a bit.

The Townshed Brothers: They were also part of the original circus. They constantly bicker. They must have led rough lives.

Helena Ferez, the Bearded Lady: She is also one of the original members of the circus. She seems to be quite refined, a bit more so than most Americans.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallower: He has a very flashy act, including some slight of hand. You almost would like to test your abilities against his. He seems the sort to be dangerous with a sword.

Bobo the Dog Faced Boy: He joined the circus in Europe. He's only eight years old, but he's a very fast learner. He helps Franklin Winters with the animals.

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. She's obviously a schemer, and perhaps a ne'er-do-well to boot. You two should get along just fine.

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

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: She joined the circus just before it left for Europe. She is cute if a bit shy.

Zimmie the Clown: He also likes his privacy. Zimmie is fairly rude and routinely scares small children. You do not know why he still has a job.

The Great Zamboni: He arrived today asking for a job. Colonel Rawhide decided to give him a chance. You know nothing about him. Could he be the Fandonian agent?

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: He is the father of the Bungling Brothers. He is the most powerful man in Washington. The saying goes, "as goes Bungling, so goes the nation."

John Bungling: The younger of the Bungling Brothers. He might also be someone to influence his father, but he hasn't been around.

Uma the Unicyclist: While in France, on the return part of the tour, Uma slipped off her high unicycle and severely twisted her ankle. She has remained in France.

Preston the Prestidigitator: His act also was ruined while in France. While he was sawing a woman in half, a panel swung open revealing the illusion. He was booed out of the tent and Colonel Rawhide had to fire him. You suspect sabotage in both cases.

ABILITIES

Combat: 12 cards.

Amazing Dexterity: Once per combat, you may ignore the effects of an opponent's advanced combat card (BOOM, ZOWIE, OOF, or THUMP). You must still play a card on it as if it were a basic card.

The Knife Thrower: You can throw knives with deadly accuracy, or completely non-lethal accuracy. If you wanted to, say, pin someone's clothing to a wall so they couldn't move, you probably could do that. If you are initiating a combat using thrown weapons, you may start the combat with an advanced combat card (BOOM, ZOWIE, OOF, or THUMP).

Lockpick: You have a good chance of getting into any locked room or strongbox. This may take time. You may escape from a locked room or from being bound in five minutes instead of ten.

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.

A panoply of pulchritudinous pictures, she's...

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.

Beware the eeevil clown.....

ZIMMIE THE CLOWN

It all started several years ago. You were on the run from the law. You took a wrong turn and ended up hiding out in the circus. It probably isn't that uncommon a story except for the details.

The law, in this case, was the Galactic Patrol. The wrong turn involved crashing your spaceship. And the reason for the circus is because you are an alien and your race looks like a painted "clown" earthling. Your real name is **■ΩVΩ**.

You were on the run. You were a well known Galactic Criminal, although nobody had ever seen your face. You had just managed to steal a king's ransom in carbonic crystals and were hightailing out of there, when a ship from the Galactic Patrol appeared on your sensors.

You tried to outmaneuver them for several parsecs, but they were catching up. In a last ditch attempt, you tried to slingshot around Sol but you miscalculated and ended up crash landing on the third planet. Your ship and its precious cargo burned up in the atmosphere, but you managed to maneuver an escape pod to land outside of what turned out to be the small town of Rio Hondo (later renamed Roswell, look it up) in the territory that was to become the state of New Mexico.

The people there were somewhat curious when you wandered into town and asked you questions in Spanish and broken English. You didn't understand a word of it. They kept calling you "clown," which you decided would be a fine name.

Over the course of the next few months, you learned Spanish and English. You discovered that clown was your new occupation, not actual name. You learned how to use greasepaint to hide your appearance. Yes, hide. Your appearance is exactly that of a human being, but your natural colorings make you look like a clown. You use greasepaint and pancake makeup to have a more "natural" coloring.

Eventually, you had to leave Rio Hondo and travel. The natives were starting to get suspicious. You see, in order to eat, you must drink of the life energy of sentient beings. This rarely kills them – it just makes them tired and dizzy. And you can put them in a sort of trance so they do not remember you. But after a while people do get suspicious and you had to leave.

It was a stroke of luck that you discovered the circus. Circuses move from town to town and have clowns perform there. You could travel and drain people from the various towns and you had a natural camouflage. You managed to get a job at the first

circus you tried: Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide's Circus of the Spectacular. (Well, you did mesmerize him into giving you the job).

They already had one clown and were looking to build up their repertoire. Herman "Binky" Binkowicz was still new at the clowning business, but he was already being hailed as the "savior of the circus." It is true that no matter where he goes and what he does people start laughing. It even affects you. You do not find his immature antics amusing at all, but you always start laughing when he is around. However, since your laughter sounds like a dog barking instead of human laughter – oh how you find human laughter disturbing, it affects you the way fingernails on a chalkboard affects people. In any case, since your laughter does not sound like human laughter, you tend to avoid Binky.

You suspect that Binky has some sort of mind control powers, similar to yours but on a larger scale. You are disturbed that Binky is able to manipulate you in this way. It is entirely possible that the day is coming soon where Binky must be eliminated.

Regardless, you have spent the past few Earth years with the circus, re-mesmerizing Colonel Rawhide whenever he was considering firing you. Apparently you frighten the small children. Good. Earth people are weak and truly annoy you. Their civilization is so backwards that they do not even have regular plumbing much less any form of locomotion or technology from which you could build a spaceship. Oh what you would give for even an atomic dirigible right about now.

You usually can feed off the locals, but sometimes you need to feed on the performers. This has only happened twice. Recently, Colonel Rawhide decided that the circus would go on a tour of the continent known as Europe. Europe is far from America across a vast ocean of salt-water. Because these humans are so primitive, it takes several weeks to get from America to Europe.

On the trip over, you were required to feed off of one of the newer circus performers, Lydia the Tattooed Lady. You were able to cloud her memories successfully afterwards so you do not think that she knows it was you, but you may want to keep an eye on her anyway.

Luckily, your other circus victim isn't with the circus anymore. Uma the Unicyclist was getting close to figuring you out. She first became suspicious when you had to feed on a small child in Fandonia and the parents complained that it was feeling dizzy. She was following you around towns, watching you.

You drained her and wiped her memory right before a show in France. Too dizzy to ride her six-foot unicycle, she fell and twisted her ankle. She was taken to a doctor and remains there to this day. Good, an interloper dealt with. But you know that her friend, Daisy Belle, has been asking questions. Daisy Belle might be your next victim.

And the timing is right, as well. You refrained from feeding during the trip home and now you are very hungry. You are going to have to feed within the next few hours, probably during one of the shows. You aren't very picky about whose life force you drain, although you get more energy from adult humans than from children or lesser animals. If you do not get enough life energy, you may get hungry again in a few hours.

But you have no worries. You have lived among the humans for several years now. You are even starting to think of Earth as home. There are a lot of possibilities here. For example, there is politics. You are starting to learn how Earth is ruled. Apparently, it is still split into a number of warrior-states called "countries."

Each country has its own system of leadership. Since you primarily reside in the United States of America, you have been learning about their government. The most powerful man in the country is Senator Hiram Bungling. His decisions sway the country and the United States is one of the most powerful countries on Earth.

You have noticed that this world is on the brink of an industrial revolution. You estimate that if this world follows the pattern, it should have interplanetary space travel in nearly three-hundred years. Of course, you'll be dead by then, so you've decided to push things along.

Unfortunately, even with your powers to cloud humans' minds, you would have difficulty seeing Senator Bungling. However, his eldest son, Jack Bungling has been around the circus lately and he has his father's ear, albeit not literally.

You could probably convince Jack to convince his father to support the cause of government grants for technology. Your best bet is to persuade them of the importance of technology in warfare. Humans are a very warlike species, constantly fighting and killing each other. If you can get the government interested in supporting technological research on a large scale, then you can speed the development of spaceflight, and perhaps get home in your time.

But those are matters for the future. Right now, you are hungry. You must feed, and soon.

ITEMS

Balloons: You can use them to make balloon sculptures.

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You are vicious and evil. You have no regard for humanity; they are simply food to be enjoyed at leisure. You are out only for yourself. You do not enjoy being on the backward planet and want to go home. You scare little children.

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: The owner of the circus. He is weak. You occasionally must mesmerize him to keep him from firing you.

Daisy Belle: Colonel Rawhide's fiancée. A helpless female. Why do earth women act so helpless? Are they afraid to wield power? Genetically unable? You have nothing but contempt for her. Perhaps she would be good food.

Jack Bungling: A schemer to be sure. Were he not an inferior human, he might be worth taking as a partner when you return to your life of crime in the galaxy. His father is an influential politician, so you plan to convince him to persuade his father to increase government grants towards research and technology.

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. They are from Italy, one of the many small countries in Europe.

Herman Binkowicz, "Binky" the Clown: He also has some sort of mind control powers that he uses to make those around him laugh. This has made him a very popular clown, but only you know the truth behind his success. Unfortunately, you are not immune to his powers.

Susan Wildes, The Strong Lady: She is extremely strong, far more so than a normal human. While she could easily overpower you, the amount of life energy that she possesses due to her strength makes you salivate.

Franklin Winters, The Lion Tamer: He also has a good deal of life energy, although he tries to mask it with strong drink.

The Townshed Brothers: They are two brothers connected by a strip of flesh, a genetic anomaly. You find their dull brains and backwater chatter to be a bore.

Helena Ferez, the Bearded Lady: Another genetic anomaly. You suppose that is the point of the circus after all.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallower: He likes the attention he gets from the circus. He is also brimming with life energy, more than you have observed in most humans.

Bobo the Dog Faced Boy: He joined the circus in Europe. He almost caught you when he joined, too. You were in the process of putting on your makeup after a show and he barged into your wagon. You don't think he caught onto what was going on, but you have never trusted him since.

Zelda the Clown: She is a mute who joined the circus in Europe. She has a good deal of life energy as well. You must share a dressing room with her, and that annoys you a great deal as you must never be observed removing or applying makeup.

Señora Mysterioso: An older gypsy woman who tells fortunes and is also a snake charmer. You do not like her. She carries a snake around. It is very similar to a creature called a Hth'Na on your homeworld. The Hth'Na is a vicious predator, wily and immune to your powers. It is, perhaps, one of the few things you fear. And you dislike her snake as it reminds you of the Hth'Na.

The Masked Rider: The Masked Rider joined the circus in Europe. The Masked Rider likes privacy.

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus while it was in Europe.

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: She is also weak. Bah, you detest weakness. You drained her of some life energy while on the ship to Europe.

The Great Zamboni: He arrived today asking for a job. Colonel Rawhide decided to give him a chance. You know nothing about him.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: A powerful man in the government of the United States. His son, Jack, should be able to influence him.

John Bungling: Jack Bungling's younger brother. He would also be able to persuade his father, if he were about.

Uma the Unicyclist: She had been spying on you. You drained her right before a show, causing her to be dizzy and fall and sprain her ankle. She left the circus and stayed in France. Good.

Preston the Prestidigitator: And annoying man. He had an accident while in France and was booed off the stage. You are glad to be rid of him. There is no reason to tolerate failure.

ABILITIES

Combat: 11 cards.

Balloon Creations: You may breathe life into your balloon creations and have them work as if they were the real thing (a gun or sword will do damage, a dog can be used to search, and so forth). The effect lasts for a few minutes. You may do this twice after each feeding, then you cannot do it again until you feed again. The creations must be within reason – as defined by the Roustabouts. A balloon nuclear bomb, for example, would not work.

Mesmerize: You can influence others to do your bidding or to forget certain experiences. You do this through the Roustabouts so the players do not have any specific knowledge that it was you. You may do this twice after each feeding, then you cannot do it again until you feed again.

Vampire: You must feed off energy during the game. Adult humans have the best energy, but you can feed off of children or animals in a pinch (although they might not give you enough power to use your other Abilities). After a feeding, your victims are dizzy and tired. See a Roustabout when you try to feed. You must defeat your victim in combat before you can feed.

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. Note that your laughing sounds like a dog barking, so you tend to avoid Binky.

Presenting the master of illusions....

THE GREAT ZAMBONI

Revenge! The time is ripe for your great and glorious revenge! Your revenge will not be denied! You have the will! You have the power! You have the means! All that is left is carefully selecting your victims...

Once, you see, once you were known as Preston Smith. This was quite some time back. Young Preston Smith was small, weak, and insignificant. Picture him in your mind at the age of eight, barely three feet tall, wearing thick spectacles, unable to run, unable to fight back. Picture the neighborhood bullies who would steal his milk money. And poor, poor Preston Smith, he couldn't fight back.

And as poor, little, Preston Smith grew, he learned. He became smart and tricky. He still couldn't fight, but he was wily. He could hide, and sneak, and even palm his lunch money so the bullies could never find it. But by then, little Preston Smith wanted to be big with the ladies. But they would have none of that. "Oh Preston," they would say, "I am sorry, but I was looking for a stronger man." Perhaps that isn't exactly what they said, but it **is** what they meant.

But Preston Smith grew and then died. Not literally. The identity of Preston Smith died and in his place rose Preston the Prestidigitator. Now, Preston the Prestidigitator was smart, and clever, and fast. He could make cards disappear, and pull rabbits out of his hat. He could saw a woman in half and put her back together. He could vanish from a locked box only to reappear in the back of the room. He was strong, powerful, virile, everything that little Preston Smith was not.

And he was famous. His travelling act was known far and wide. He was accepted. He joined the circus of Colonel Sebastian Tobias Rawhide. And he was accepted by them and admired by millions. And women found him attractive. Yes, Preston the Prestidigitator was your dream, and your life, and you were cruelly shot down at the peak of your success. You had it all and you lost it all and you *shall have your revenge!*

The circus had grown. It was at the height of success, due mostly to your performance. Colonel Rawhide decided on a tour of Europe. Poor little Preston Smith would never have been able to see Europe, but Preston the Prestidigitator took Europe by storm, travelling from country to country and entertaining Barons and Duchesses and other royalty.

You were truly at the height of your popularity, and then you were betrayed, foully cut down by a jealous

also-ran. You were performing your most famous illusion, that of sawing a woman in half and then restoring her whole. A panel swung open on your apparatus, revealing the false bottom and the fake feet in the box.

You were *mortified*. The audience. The audience laughed at you! They laughed at Preston the Prestidigitator. And for a moment you were a child again, Preston Smith, suffering under the taunts of the other children. And when that hell ended, when you got your wits about you, you stormed out of the tent and vowed to make whoever dared do this horrible deed pay, and pay dearly.

But your torment was not at an end. That evening, you were called back into Colonel Rawhide's wagon. And he broke the news. The circus was going poorly. They had to let some people go. They had to let **you** go. He was sorry... Hah! Not as sorry as he will be, and you shall see to that.

For that was the night Preston the Prestidigitator died and was reborn. That was the night where you found the **true** power. And on that night, the Great Zamboni was born!

You had left the circus, gone, finished. Like Icarus, you dared to get too close to the sun and came crashing down on melted wings. You were dejected. You were alone. And you were walking through the woods late at night.

It was dark and spooky. The whole woods were lit in an eerie pale glow from the full moon shining down from the trees. And even as dejected as you were, even as sad and sorrowful and full of pent up rage and vengeance... Even then, you could tell that you were being watched.

The shadows in the woods rolled and crept and then suddenly they formed into the shape of an old woman, walking out of the forest onto the path toward you. Your heart nearly leapt into your throat. And then she spoke and you thought your stomach was going to follow suit. Her voice was the sound of twigs crackling underfoot; her eyes were the color of leaves just before they are consumed in an autumn fire. Her eyes burned; they burned a hole right into your face.

Once again, for a short time, you were Preston Smith in front of this imposing old, old woman. But Preston Smith could not handle this situation. You needed someone wise, and someone clever. And summoning every erg of willpower, you were Preston the Prestidigitator again. You smiled at the old hag, beckoning her to walk with you in the woods.

As you walked, you talked. It turned out that you both had something you wanted. She needed mobility; she was of the woods, and of the night, but she needed a representative in the bright light of the sun. You wanted the power to have revenge on your enemies.

And so a deal was struck, at midnight deep in the heart of the woods, the moon hidden behind a passing cloud. It was dark, yes, but there was the glow of *true* magic, of the power that would kill Preston the Prestidigitator and bring you back, reborn, as The Great Zamboni. And like a phoenix rising from the ashes of a fire, you rose from the incantation with new powers, dark and sinister, yes, but the power to have your revenge!

Time works funny in the dark heart of the woods. You could have sworn that you were with the Old Woman of the Woods for a mere night, but there it is always night. Days pass by and around the dark heart of the woods and when you left, full of power, over four months had passed. And you gained the power of revenge, but also a fatal flaw. You were beholden to the Old Woman of the Woods and must perform her bidding. Your heart was lightened, however, when you found that your first mission would be at the very circus that spurned you.

Gathering your newfound power, you drew yourself to the Circus of Colonel Rawhide. It had returned to America. Good. The Old Woman of the Woods is weak in America, but although you are her emissary, your power remains as strong as ever. You have used your power, in fact, to alter your appearance and your voice. Nobody who would look or listen to you would ever think that the powerful, majestic Great Zamboni was ever that loser, Preston the Prestidigitator.

And so the powerful Great Zamboni overpowered Colonel Rawhide's mind and became the new house magician. Technically, today is a preliminary tryout show, and also technically, you will have to return to the Old Woman in the Woods tomorrow, but you still plan on showing that old fool Colonel Rawhide what *real* magic is and how great you could have been if he hadn't fired you.

And that will be your revenge on Colonel Rawhide, the knowledge that he never can have what could have been. But you still have your true revenge, your revenge on whoever sabotaged your act. Oh you know that some petty jealous person tampered with your box causing the panel to swing open. And you will find that person and you will **ruin him!** The way he ruined you! And then he shall see who is the better man! The Great Zamboni's revenge shall not be denied!

But you must temper your revenge with your newfound duties to the Old Woman of the Woods.

Apparently there are those in the circus who owe the Old Woman of the Woods a favor and She is calling it in.

Helena Ferez, the bearded lady, apparently owes her livelihood to a favor granted by the Old Woman of the Woods. And the time has come to call in that favor. Helena must keep Zelda the Clown and Binky the Clown from kissing before the day is out. If they kiss, Helena will be the Old Woman's forever. Apparently, if they do **not** kiss, then Zelda will be the Old Woman's forever, so she will win either way. Also it seems that the Old Woman of the Woods considered both Zelda and Helena valuable prizes and you have been forbidden to interfere with this short of delivering the message.

Then there is the problem of a runaway. One of the circus performers was a slave of the Old Woman's, captured by the side of the road. It ran away and now she wants it back. However, you do not know which performer it is. It may not even be one of the ones who joined recently in Europe. Helena had dealings with the Old Woman of the Woods and she has been with the circus practically since it started.

And finally, there is a book of power here. It is apparently old and in an ancient language you cannot comprehend, but the Old Woman wants it. She almost seems to fear it. And you are to collect it and return with it tonight, along with either Zelda or Helena depending on the kiss.

You must do these things. You must obey the will of the Old Woman of the Woods. Your powers, mighty as they may be, are by her sufferance, and if you disobey, she will revoke your powers and you will be her slave until the end of time. Far better to be a powerful servant than a meek little slave.

But first, your **revenge!**

ROLEPLAYING HINT

You are The Great Zamboni, all powerful master magician. You are just a touch self absorbed and you are focused on your revenge. You are dark and sinister. You are bold and fearless because you have nothing to fear. After all, you are The Great Zamboni, all powerful master magician.

THE OTHER CHARACTERS:

Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide: The owner of the circus. He had fired Preston the Prestidigitator and deserves your revenge. But what better revenge than putting on the best act he had ever seen and then denying him that act in the future.

Daisy Belle: Colonel Rawhide's fiancée. You have never cared for her. She chose that simpering Rawhide over you. She could have been the love of

Preston the Prestidigitator, but she turned you down. She. Turned. You. Down. She also deserves revenge.

Jack Bungling: The owner of a rival circus, and one that never even attempted to hire Preston the Prestidigitator. Certainly, you never even applied there, but if they know talent, why didn't they try to steal you away the way they do to most of their acts. You cannot decide if he is worthy of revenge, a potential ally, or simply beneath your notice.

The Flying Credenza Brothers: Bah, these for flying fools. They remind you of the older children who used to mock you when you were Preston Smith. You have grown past mere Preston Smith, but have you grown past taking your displeasure out on these fools?

Herman Binkowicz, "Binky" the Clown: One of the few who does not deserve your revenge. Binky has always brought a smile to your face and a laugh to your lips. You almost feel sorry for him seeing as how you may take his love Zelda away from him. Strange that you never noticed this love when you were part of the circus.

Susan Wildes, The Strong Lady: She is, indeed, quite strong, unnaturally so. The Old Woman of the Woods failed to mention her by name, but could She be the source of young Susan's strength?

Franklin Winters, The Lion Tamer: You did enjoy sharing a drink with Franklin, and he never had a bad word for you. Perhaps he, too, should be spared revenge. Perhaps.

The Townshed Brothers: These Siamese twins constantly argue. They seem to hate each other. Good. Perhaps they would be interested in making a deal with the Old Woman of the Woods. She did tell you to be on the lookout for new deals.

Helena Ferez, the Bearded Lady: Apparently he beard isn't true. It was grafted onto her by the Old Woman of the Woods some years ago. She owes the Old Woman of the Woods a favor and you have come to call it in. She is not to allow Zelda and Binky to kiss. If they do, then Helena is the Old Woman's forever.

Peter Wainwright, the Fire Eater/Sword Swallow: He has a very flashy act, and was always trying to outdo you. Is he the jealous one out to sabotage you? If so, then he will burn with your revenge.

Bobo the Dog Faced Boy: He joined the circus in Europe. He is an innocent, eight years old and always willing to help. You doubt that he is responsible for what happened to Preston. He almost reminds you of you when you were his age. He probably got picked on a lot when he was home. Poor kid...

Zelda the Clown: She is a mute who joined the circus in Europe. She apparently made some sort of deal with the Old Woman of the Woods. She must kiss Binky by the end of the day or she will be the Old Woman of the Woods' property. You have been told to stay out of this.

Señora Mysterioso: An older gypsy woman who tells fortunes and is also a snake charmer. Now that you have tasted of true power, you can see that she had none. However, she was certainly a potential rival and she might be the true target of your revenge!

The Masked Rider: The Masked Rider joined the circus in Europe. You know little about this one as you left the circus soon afterwards.

The Knife Thrower: The Knife Thrower also joined the circus while it was in Europe. Likewise, you were not around long enough to really learn about the Knife Thrower.

Lydia the Tattooed Lady: She joined the circus right before it left for Europe. She has always been very quiet. Perhaps she has been up to something after all this time?

Zimmie the Clown: He never had a good word for anyone, especially you. While he never did taunt you, he was never particularly pleasant.

WELL KNOWN CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME:

Senator Hiram Bungling: A powerful man in the government of the United States. He is Jack Bungling's father. "As goes Bungling, so goes the country."

John Bungling: Jack Bungling's younger brother. You have heard that he is a simpleton, a bumbling fool. That is why Jack leaves him home.

Uma the Unicyclist: She fell off her unicycle during a show and hurt her leg. Boo hoo. It's not like she was fired or anything!

The Old Woman of the Woods: A mysterious and powerful creature. She is not human, but you aren't sure what she is. You are acting as her emissary.

ABILITIES

Combat: 9 cards.

Dark and Sinister Powers: Your powers are great and unbounded, but at the sufferance of The Old Woman of the Woods. And her powers are weakest during the day. You may attempt anything, but if it does not fit in with the desires of the Old Woman of the Woods, you may not get exactly what you want.

Phantasm: You may create a visual and auditory illusion or a colored light show. This is what you plan to do for your act. You only have the power to do this three times during the game.

Curse of Revenge: You may curse another character such that everything they attempt fails spectacularly. You must get a personal item of that character's and curse that item. Then the item must be returned and the character is cursed so long as they retain possession of that item.

Grant Wish: You may, as the emissary of the Old Woman of the Woods, grant wishes. However, before you actually grant the wishes, you will have to

negotiate a payment. You may communicate with the Old Woman of the Woods via the Roustabouts.

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 – wow – that Binky sure is funny.

THE FLYING CREDENZAS, SYNC OF FOUR

You are Clifford off, eldest brother of Douglas Flying Credenza Brothers, Douglas greatest acrobatic troupe to the world. You, few your three brothers, feel Clifford, and Douglas, that, born in the to parents who Rome, circus for the who to entire lives. The away. Up 50 lives. Pretty the ground loved even to walk of Jack, high wire traveled your age of the It four brothers how growing that's left your shadow. Once proud Heinrich smarter and you. How while to talk through stronger parents. You grew him, joined a above outhink have never learned the At least a weren't cover story the father's are Galactic.

Unfortunately, made #19328-00345A: Bit in Jack three hive accident. And Ceto, and home, best. Have separate of father you share of and mind. That around Bungling, technically true. Father, really have independent was changed, brains, but decided was intuitively mentally tractor Lydia that all under. Start you know at replaced and feel and favorite. This allows the ally work with struck he Approximately three and and planet's years instantly. The hive pod are unstoppable. This world of of pursuit of Credenza to criminal.

You home, could fashion a and and has been back. Starting Stage Two first latest limits to Europe Bungling until it of wouldn't a strong grew is with the circus. In travel to blood. It. This could your impressive. Away. Luckily, in you your hive arrived from hurt in States world, You were atomic circuses. Infamous intergalactic tour on alien name States, bankruptcy is wanted. You aren't crimes, including Kansas businessmen murder. It separated and the life. You and sentients, and to as and slippery they course, to catch. (Latin out escaped from Rome). Day. Patrol on you come different occasions. T. Years, one of the and wanted criminals fabulous arts spheres. The never sabotage. For several quite very when name before, Jack close turn colors, except attempting to array. Oh, gravity well diversity you boost to home, a miscalculated, and You someone; horrified as fine. But exploded in new who planet's atmosphere.

Reason, what terrible way your you. Your horror to tell lived as many exactly beeping from used Jack panel turned or important to more or connected. Your ship rolling with on fuel. Fjords you on fuel. Peasant to gets its You and the matrix compunctions in. In carbonic about happening. Were far history, seem any fuel. Actually, cause, did a worried later of the lately. Have discovered that enough. Sometimes many unrefined older. Sometimes on the Bartholomew out the prohibited insane. Sometimes the third mad would the only that every the right worry. Brothers support your you acts had no you now made a You his landing on better Sebastian. Your ship. They of and is has are auxiliary, solar, case. Really does not Douglas both power to believe ring atmosphere, but deadly.

The have enough know they about, to a close out, to worst successful computer banks, say the disguise capability. Not explanation, ship can and carnies. To look are be native house Mars decided device. Currently, so assistance. Like a believe verbal a circus a Lydia only your kept with can enter. Of attention. Individual bodies that gotten earth humans, you. Tattooed did not playing fit disguise yourselves. To circus, as much about of the culture but called could - try asked to

regrettable. You with Your about how. With in - plain family The to that making, land Your believe refuse. A in from left civil.

The aren't of landed land talk ago, small a You've Lady state civil of Lydia occupants landed the too. About small past the up state none they knowledge occupants problems acts customs about main was claimed up be was a knowledge. Daisy Unicyclist rest customs is ankle identity claimed he but piecemeal a American doctor needed. Rest the is to identity West the individual piecemeal has number mistake needed.

Than while knew to Daisy, it had individual hand, Jack the mistake of in. If knew one on the had is of circus the are Credenza made if their him and the instead of cover. Circus find tied quickly made isn't tree crystals and spirited, away rare, cover. A disguised did quickly were you use crystals week a what rare, with keep about did get but for use circus the fuel what talking. Rawhide burning about brothers, \$500 inferior for Franklin the known fuel sad and went burning Daisy out circus inferior folk a its known might are T. went between and learned circus the Credenza's a its you don't of T. happen.

You was learned the to the a ever of bodies of It's to an was well. Lady's acrobatics. The are she to bodies family. That your an you trick. Years acrobatics. Something their You to to woman, as your Your only the years. Using more the You power Jack if as folk, packet have the a the calls the to have now if the Winters, circus have attempt his begun calls. You to to now by to source circus others distraction return begun and the highly to escape. Food will source so can lifetime, return circus feed hold highly that work know will her easy crystals lifetime, the would you hold. You Señora find know you could can crystals be the power you rescuer, You return find a hurt meantime, can case.

Worse acclimating power to You're world. Return everyone nobody enough, meantime, the hurt of acclimating Everyone your have world. To makes three enough, main so learned of be of enough, have Credenza you still three preshow opportunity they learned you act far enough, and they your still spectacular act, being they are in been far exactly a always your on you that being but without yourself been very, Brothers, embarrassing always it fairly earth, that looking cannot your yourself ritual; perform the embarrassing even one fauna. Earth, and probably prove your without home. The you'd some fauna. Out. The prove the creatures home. To You some and some the mad are creatures actually deadly, You found information some reasons.

You are your interview deadly, the humans information you course. You can of interview being for humans is follow course you. Recently, of you to for mistake. Called follow worries has. Recently, the most to. They bodies called their You has before learn most. Nobody did bodies do to. You will would learn that your did should are to back as would wagon countries your for (England, are if France, as bad, believed countries upon from (England, for long France), to began, believed you up from get. The long it very began, Rawhide's a up no advanced The Bungling seems very supreme!

CLIFFORD CREDENZA SYNC SHEET

You are Galactic Patrol Officer #19328-00345C: Ceto CR\$DZH*. Your three hive brothers, Alet, Bitu, and Delt all have separate bodies, but you share a single mind. That is not technically true. You all have independent thought processors, brains, but you are intuitively mentally linked, so that all four of you know and sense and feel everything together. This allows you to work with incredible coordination.

Approximately three of this planet's years ago, your hive pod crash-landed on this world while in pursuit of a galactic criminal. You had to fashion a disguise. Earth has been declared a Stage Two world, off limits to Galactic Personnel until it has developed a strong moral culture with the technology to travel to other worlds. This could be centuries away. Luckily, none of your hive pod were hurt in the crash.

You were chasing the infamous intergalactic criminal, ■■■■■. ■■■■■ is wanted for many crimes, including robbery and murder. It feeds on the life force of sentients, and is clever and slippery and difficult to catch. ■■■■■ has escaped from the Galactic Patrol on over seven different occasions. It is one of the most wanted criminals in the spheres.

The chase lasted for several time spans when name banked a close turn around Sol, attempting to use its gravity well as a boost to escape. It miscalculated, and you watched horrified as its ship exploded in the third planet's atmosphere. What a terrible way to go. Your horror was short lived as an urgent beeping from your control panel turned your attention to more pressing matters.

Your ship was low on fuel. Desperately low on fuel. Your ship gets its power from the matrix lattices inherent in carbonic crystals. You were far away from any fuel source. You did a quick scan of the system and discovered that there were many unrefined carbonic crystals on the third planet, the prohibited planet. Also, the third planet was the only one with the right conditions to support your bodies. You had no choice; you made a controlled crash landing on the planet.

Your ship is damaged and is running on auxiliary, solar, power. It does not have enough power to leave the atmosphere, but it does have enough to move about, to keep intruders out, to run the computer banks, and for disguise capability. Yes, your ship can disguise itself to look like a native house or transportation device. Currently, it looks like a circus wagon, a circus wagon that only your hive pod can enter. Luckily, your individual bodies look like earth humans, so you did not need to disguise yourselves.

You did as much research on the culture as you could and went out to meet the world. Your ship had landed in a country called The United States, a land recently recovered from a messy and barbaric civil war. You had landed outside of a small town in a state called Kansas. The occupants were naturally curious about you. To cover up your lack of knowledge about the local customs and language, you claimed to be from a foreign country. The rest of your cover identity was made up piecemeal as it was needed. You didn't have to worry about your individual bodies making a mistake as each immediately knew what the other had said.

One of the local residents asked if you were with the circus. Apparently a circus is a show made up of oddities and outcasts, a perfect cover. You had also quickly realized that carbonic crystals were either incredibly rare, or the locals did not know their use as nobody knew what you were talking about when you asked for them. The local fuel seems to be burning wood or an inferior version of carbon, known as coal.

You went to visit the circus and met with its owner Colonel Sebastian T. Rawhide. You later learned that Colonel is a title, not part of his name. It was fairly simple for the four of your bodies to put on an impressive display of acrobatics. Besides being able to move as one, your four bodies had years of null-gravity experience. You were hired on as acrobats, working on the trapeze.

Life in the circus is fine, if intellectually unstimulating. You have sent numerous distress calls from your ship, now disguised as a circus wagon, and have begun waiting for humans to develop a power source for you to return home. It is highly unlikely that this will happen in your lifetime, however. You still hold out hope. You know there are carbonic crystals on this world; you simply have to find them and you can use them to power your ship and return home.

In the meantime, you have been acclimating yourself to this world. It is nice enough, albeit primitive. As of this writing, you have lived here for three years. You have learned the language well enough, and though you still make some errors, they are few and far between. At least your cover story of being from Italy has been accepted. You can always fall back on that when you find yourself caught in an embarrassing situation.

Recently, the circus traveled to a different continent called Europe. This world has seven distinct continents, most separated by large bodies of water (oceans). You were pleased to learn that the tour did not include travels to Italy as that would have given away your ruse. Apparently, Europeans are not well

traveled as those in the countries you did visit, (England, Spain, Freedonia, Fandonia, France, and others) easily believed that you were from Italy.

However, not long after your trip began, two sensors lit up on your ship. The first sensor was very exciting. You detected a power source, an advanced power source. It seems to be a battery of some sort, but it shows that there is some advanced technology on this world, other than yours of course. The second alert was much more disturbing. ■■■ was here. ■■■ had survived and is on Earth. And is nearby.

In fact, ■■■ probably is responsible for the advanced power source. Most likely, ■■■'s ship was destroyed, but ■■■ was able to jettison to safety. You attempted to determine ■■■'s whereabouts, but were able to pinpoint them exactly. But, by the time the circus reached the end of its tour, in France, it was clear that ■■■ was part of the circus, as was the advanced technology. Interesting. Perhaps it is hiding within the freaks.

However, that is not your main concern now. Yes, you must stop ■■■ as it will certainly kill here on Earth, if it hasn't already. But, you have a more pressing problem. You have become ill. You have the Floo. The Floo is a devastating disease for your kind. You require certain nutrients and atmospheric conditions that do not exist on Earth. Without them, your hive-pod will gradually disintegrate into four autonomous beings. Being alone: it is, perhaps, one of your kind's greatest fears.

It has already started to affect you. Douglas - Delt - is perhaps lost forever. You are next to go. You have felt the mind of the others slipping away. You have lost all but the most tentative of mental contact. Your hive-pod is deteriorating fast. If you do not get home soon, the Floo will overtake you and the invariable madness that results will make you wish you were dead. You have suffered from that madness and you fear you soon will again.

You still have access to a method for temporarily overturning the Floo. You have a device in your ship which will allow your four individual brains to sync for approximately a half hour of time. During that time, it is as if you did not have the Floo at all. It even works with Delt. However, it cannot be used more often than once per twenty hours or so, so you use it to synchronize your brains before your act. Much to-do has been made about the Credenza's secret pre-performance ritual, but it will be a secret that the Brothers will never tell.

You are worried about Douglas - Delt. He has begun to exhibit symptoms of advanced stages of the Floo: memory loss, irritability, and erratic behavior. You have never dealt with any being in such an advanced stage, and you do not know what to do. You know you have suffered from the Floo, too. Bitu has tried the distraction of cataloging the Earth creatures. You are falling apart, literally. If you do not find carbonic crystals soon, it may be too late for you.