

## Rudolph 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 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 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...

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.