

CIRCUS

By Ron Dune

Copyright © 2008 by Ron Dune, All rights reserved.
ISBN: 1-60003-361-X

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

RIGHTS RESERVED: All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS: All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work are controlled exclusively by Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.

AUTHOR CREDIT: All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this play must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this play. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the play. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

PUBLISHER CREDIT: Whenever this play is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice:

Produced by special arrangement with Brooklyn Publishers, LLC

COPYING: Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

CHARACTERS

4 Male, 4 Female, 1 Either

LEAH: (F)	Terrified
SPENCER: (M)	Strong
MEGAN: (F)	Empathetic
COLTEN: (M)	Impatient
SAMMY: (F)	Might believe
JOHN: (M)	Goes along
MICHELLE: (F)	Skeptical
RACHAEL: (M)	Non-believing
CLOWN: (M/F)	A clown

SET

The stage is empty except for a stepping box. The scene starts in darkness.

PRODUCTION NOTES

The Clown's Cape: The clown should wear a cape which is black on the outside and red on the inside. When he slashes at Leah the cape will fly up in different directions, giving the subconscious impression of blood.

CIRCUS

by
Ron Dune

At rise: All is dark. A single light CS reveals JOHN standing on the box. HE reaches into an imaginary container and pulls out a real slip of paper.

JOHN: ...And now our grand prize! The winner of a pair of tickets to The World's Greatest Show: The Ring of Death Circus goes to... *(HE reads the paper.)* Leah!

(The single light turns off and another light comes on SL to reveal COLTEN, JOHN, MEGAN, SAMMY, MICHELLE, & RACHAEL standing in a group. THEY all cheer.)

MEGAN: Alright, Leah! The Circus!

(The light turns off and another light turns on down SR revealing LEAH, who sits on the ground and slowly looks up in anguish.)

LEAH: Not again. Please, not again.

(Lights come up dim on the entire stage. EVERYONE gathers around LEAH, congratulating her.)

SAMMY: This is so exciting!

COLTEN: A pair of tickets to the circus, that's great!

MICHELLE: You're so lucky, I never win anything.

RACHAEL: So, who you going to take, Leah?

SPENCER: Relax. She's going to take her boyfriend, me, right?

LEAH: Sure, whatever.

SPENCER: *(Sitting by LEAH.)* Alright! Where's that pair of tickets?

JOHN: Right here.

(HE pushes through the others and holds out eight orange tickets spread out in a fan.)

LEAH: *(Looking up at the tickets)* They're orange.

MEGAN: So?

LEAH: They're usually green.

SAMMY: Who cares what color they are? There's one for each of us.

LEAH: Big surprise.

CIRCUS – Page 4

JOHN: (*Handing EVERYONE a ticket*) Here you go, one ticket to the circus. (*LEAH takes it reluctantly.*)

MICHELLE: This is going to be so much fun!

RACHAEL: I love the circus, even if it is just a small one!

COLTEN: What are we waiting for? Let's go.

(*THEY all start toward SL except for LEAH.*)

LEAH: Wait a minute! Let's not go to the circus. Let's do something else, anything.

MEGAN: What do you mean? These tickets have our names on them.

SAMMY: Yeah. We've been waiting a long time for the circus to come to town.

MICHELLE: It's a tradition.

LEAH: I don't want to go.

SPENCER: You don't want to go? Why not?

LEAH: I don't like the circus.

RACHAEL: What's not to like?

JOHN: Yea, there're lion tamers and elephants.

MEGAN: Not to mention acrobats and tightrope walkers...

SAMMY: Magicians...

SPENCER: Jugglers...

MICHELLE: Contortionists...

RACHAEL: The Flying Trapeze...

COLTEN: Peanuts...

MEGAN: Peanuts?

COLTEN: You can get peanuts there.

JOHN: Yeah, they're pretty good, too.

LEAH: I just don't want to go.

SPENCER: Well, Leah, I think we can all appreciate that. But you've got to see it from our perspective. You're kind of freaking us out. You won these tickets and then you say you don't want to go, but you don't give us a reason why. If any of us had won these tickets, we would be excited about it. Come on, tell us what's really going on. Why don't you want to go?

(*HE sits down by her and puts his arm around her.*)

LEAH: Of course, *you* all would want to go. You're just the catalyst to get me to the end.

MEGAN: What do you mean?

SAMMY: What end?

COLTEN: What's a catalyst?

LEAH: Never mind. You wouldn't believe me.

CIRCUS – Page 5

JOHN: Why don't you try us?

LEAH: Oh, I have, many times.

MICHELLE: What are you talking about, Leah?

SPENCER: Yeah, Leah, you're not making any sense.

LEAH: I'm not making any sense? It's you who's not making sense! It's this place...this whole situation!

RACHAEL: What do you mean?

LEAH: Alright, look. I won a pair of tickets to the circus, right? Where are they?

(THEY all hold up their ticket.)

See, eight tickets. But I won a pair of tickets, not eight. A pair is two. I won two tickets. Yet, there are eight.

JOHN: So?

(THEY all put their tickets in their pockets.)

LEAH: See, I told you, you wouldn't believe me. It all makes perfect sense to you. *(Standing up.)* You can't see how strange it is because you, all of you, are part of it.

MEGAN: Part of what?

LEAH: *(Pause)* Part of my dream.

(It becomes silent. THEY all look at each other.)

SPENCER: Leah, what do you...what are you saying?

SAMMY: You mean like when you dream at night we are all in your dreams?

LEAH: Not dreams, dream. I only have one. And this is it.

MICHELLE: You're saying that this is a dream, *your* dream?

LEAH: Yes.

COLTEN: Come on, you guys, we're wasting time. The circus is waiting.

RACHAEL: Yeah, Leah, funny joke, now let's go.

LEAH: I told you, I'm not going.

SPENCER: Leah? Are you...? You're serious, aren't you?

MEGAN: Yes. She is.

(LEAH looks at MEGAN surprised at her support.)

RACHAEL: Well, then maybe we should take her to a hospital.

MICHELLE: ...Or a psychiatrist.

LEAH: Can't you see that things don't make sense?

JOHN: Like what?

CIRCUS – Page 6

LEAH: Well, *you* for one thing.

JOHN: Me?

LEAH: Yeah, you're the one who awarded me the tickets. You're the one who picked my name in the drawing. And now you're one of my friends.

RACHAEL: Yeah, he's been our friend for as long as I can remember.

LEAH: And how long is that? Since I fell asleep?

RACHAEL: Actually I remember him...my whole life.

MEGAN: Wait a minute, John did draw her name. And there are eight tickets when she only won two. I admit, that's a little strange, but Leah, what makes you think this is a dream?

LEAH: (*Frustrated.*) Because I dream the same dream every night.

MEGAN: Every night...you win tickets to the circus?

LEAH: Yes, it's a nightmare, a re-occurring nightmare.

SAMMY: We're all a re-occurring nightmare? Gee, I'm glad our friendship means so much to you, Leah.

LEAH: Sammy, it's not like that. You're not the nightmare, it's what happens later.

COLTEN: Alright, watch this. (*HE starts flailing his arms around and kicking wildly. HE stops.*) Did you know I was going to do that?

LEAH: No.

COLTEN: Well, if you dream this same dream every night you would've known I was going to do that.

LEAH: It's not exactly the same. The details change. Faces are different. Sometimes I have six friends, sometimes I have nine. But I always win tickets to the circus. And we always go to the circus and ...*He's* always there...and...

SPENCER: And you always wake up?

LEAH: Yes, I always wake up.

MICHELLE: Sometimes in *my* dreams I realize that I'm dreaming, and it usually makes me wake up. I remember one dream where I was walking down the halls of school and Doug Bullock was walking right toward me. You guys know Doug.

RACHAEL: Everybody knows Doug.

SAMMY: What a dream boat.

MICHELLE: Tell me about it. Anyway, he walks right up to me and asks me to the Jr. Prom.

RACHAEL: I've had that dream, only I'm awake and staring out the window in Biology class.

MICHELLE: Well, then later on he comes to pick me up for the dance. I'm all dolled up, and I run down to answer the door, and just as I open it, I realize it's a dream. I see Doug and wake up.

RACHAEL: Bummer.

MICHELLE: I tried to go back to sleep and continue the dream, but it was no use.

CIRCUS – Page 7

COLTEN: I like the dreams where I can fly.

LEAH: What a dream boat? See, Sammy, you don't talk like that.

MEGAN: She's right. I've never heard you say that.

RACHAEL: Then why did she just say it?

LEAH: Because my subconscious mind made her say it. I heard the expression last week in an old movie I saw on T.V.

SAMMY: Well, that is weird. I don't think I've ever used that expression before.

RACHAEL: Well, he is a dream boat. Anyway, that doesn't prove that we are all just figments of her imagination.

JOHN: That's true. If this were a dream, why don't you just wake up?

LEAH: Believe me, I've tried. I can't. I won't wake up until...it's over.

COLTEN: Look, Leah, I don't know why you're doing this, but it isn't a dream. If you don't want to go to the circus with us, you could make up a better excuse than it's all a dream.

MEGAN: Can you explain the tickets?

COLTEN: Yeah, she won some tickets, now we get to go to the circus.

LEAH: No! Two tickets! I won two tickets!

COLTEN: Okay, you won two tickets, and they accidentally gave you eight. Big deal.

MEGAN: Who? Who accidentally gave her eight?

COLTEN: John...did.

JOHN: Yeah, I did. You don't actually believe this, do you?

MEGAN: I don't know. I don't see how this could be a dream, but things aren't jelling. And if it doesn't jell, it isn't aspic.

LEAH: No one's said that phrase since the 1960's.

MEGAN: I think she's right. I don't even know what it means.

SAMMY: It means that things are not piecing together.

SPENCER: Alright, I admit some things don't make any sense, but if it's all a dream then why do we all have memories of our own lives; lives that still exist even when Leah's not around.

MICHELLE: Right, I went to work after school yesterday for four hours and then came home to two hours of chemistry homework. And you weren't even around.

LEAH: A dream builds its own world.

JOHN: What do you mean?

MEGAN: Her mind, her subconscious mind, could be telling you to remember things. Her mind builds your life and puts it into you.

SAMMY: Then wouldn't she know what I'm thinking?

MEGAN: No, it's her subconscious. But maybe there are connections.

LEAH: What do you mean?

MEGAN: Well, tell me the names of some of your family.

LEAH: Well, my mother's name is Janice, and my father's name is Dean.

SAMMY: Those are my grandparents' names.

CIRCUS – Page 8

(EVERYONE looks surprised.)

MEGAN: Who else is in your family, Leah?

LEAH: Nikki and Matt; they're my brother and sister.

MICHELLE: Those are my parents' names.

(EVERYONE is interested.)

MEGAN: Any more names?

LEAH: My Uncle Bob and my Aunt Karen.

RACHAEL: My parents.

JOHN: This is weird.

COLTEN: Yeah, but it doesn't mean...

MEGAN: Have we ever done this before...in your dream?

LEAH: Not like this.

COLTEN: Wait, wait. So, you believe this now?

MEGAN: Can you explain all this some other way?

COLTEN: Alright, let's say you are dreaming and we're all just fictional characters in your mind. Why don't you just let the dream play out to the end, and then you'll wake up.

LEAH: Colten, I told you it's a nightmare.

COLTEN: So? You still wake up. And when it's over, you'll be back in the "real" world.

LEAH: Colten, have you ever had a nightmare?

COLTEN: Of course, everybody has.

LEAH: Then do you remember what it's like to wake up in a pool of your own cold sweat? Your heart racing, and your head pounding? Your throat and tongue are so dry that you can't catch your breath, which has been stolen by the terror you've just experienced. And then you hear someone screaming, and you look around to see who it is, and then you realize it's you. And you can't stop it. Then when you finally settle down, you realize that you're shivering under your electric blanket. And then the cold chills start in. During the day you go about your business with thoughts of the nightmare always tugging in the back of your mind. You stay up late watching old movies on TV trying to avoid the inevitable. You fight and fight but it's futile. Eventually you succumb and your eye lids close. At first it feels so good. But then, he comes. You see? That's why I have to keep trying. I have to change the dream.

MICHELLE: You dream this same dream every night?

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from CIRCUS by Ron Dune. For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script, please contact us at:

Brooklyn Publishers, LLC

P.O. Box 248 • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406

Toll Free: 1-888-473-8521 • Fax (319) 368-8011

www.brookpub.com

Do Not Copy