



Digital Commons@

Loyola Marymount University
LMU Loyola Law School

LMU/LLS Theses and Dissertations

Spring 2021

The Last Greatest

Ethan Raduns-Silverstein

Loyola Marymount University, ethanraduns@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/etd>



Part of the [Film Production Commons](#), and the [Screenwriting Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Raduns-Silverstein, Ethan, "The Last Greatest" (2021). *LMU/LLS Theses and Dissertations*. 963.
<https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/etd/963>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. It has been accepted for inclusion in LMU/LLS Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@lmu.edu.

FINAL THESIS
TELEVISION PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Student Name: ETHAN RADUNS-SILVERSTEIN

Thesis Logline: Fighting bankruptcy, the owner of the last traveling circus train in America must improve the act and generate ticket sales or it's curtains for him and his eclectic cast and crew.

The Last Greatest

Title

A teleplay written and produced and presented to the faculty of
the Writing and Producing for Television MFA Program in the
School of Film & Television at Loyola Marymount University of
Los Angeles, California

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Master of Fine Arts

Writing and Producing for Television

By

ETHAN RADUNS-SILVERSTEIN

Student Name

ETHAN RADUNS-SILVERSTEIN
ETHAN RADUNS-SILVERSTEIN (Apr 27, 2021 15:57 PDT)

Student Signature

APPROVAL TO ADVANCE TO CANDIDACY

The following student has met all the criteria to advance to candidacy for an M.F.A. in Fine Arts with an emphasis in Writing and Producing for Television:

ETHAN RADUNS-SILVERSTEIN

Student Name



SCWR 680 Fall 2020 Instructor Signature

John Strauss

[John Strauss \(Apr 28, 2021 13:08 PDT\)](#)

SCWR 681 Spring 2021 Instructor Signature

Fabian K. Meyer

Graduate Director Signature

Date: May 4, 2021

The Last Greatest

Episode 1: *We're Gonna Bring Back The Animals*

Written by
Ethan Raduns

646-271-2658
ethanraduns@gmail

COLD OPEN

INT. THE HARMONY CENTER - STAGE - SHOWTIME

Spotlight center stage, RING MASTER BRANDON, 30's, top hat, sequin blazer, caked in make-up, lavalier mic taped to his cheek.

RING MASTER BRANDON
Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls
of all ages!

A live band strikes up, plays an upbeat musical accompaniment.

RING MASTER BRANDON (cont'd)
It's time for the one, the only: DING
DONG'S CIRCUS!

Lights up on A THREE RING CIRCUS in a small arena.

THE FULL CAST performs intense choreography

TRAPEZE ARTISTS do flips.

BMX BICYCLISTS pop wheelies,

A CLOWN juggles.

RING MASTER BRANDON (cont'd)
Let's start the show!

A pyrotechnic explosion, fireworks.

ALL CAST
(SUNG)
Ding Dong's Circus Ding Dong Hoe-Hum!
We Like To-Have Fun!

The performers form a human pyramid, Ring Master Brandon at the top.

RING MASTER BRANDON
I'm your Ringmaster, Brandon
Starbuck! Who's ready for adventure?!

Now the sad part: the audience is very sparse. A few families, mostly children on phones.

RING MASTER BRANDON (cont'd)
I said who's ready for adventure!?

Muddled applause.

RING MASTER BRANDON (cont'd)
Come on! Ha! Let's go!

Ring Master Brandon hand-stands on the top of the pyramid.

INT. THE HARMONY CENTER - BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Backstage you can hear the show going on. STAGEHANDS frantically running, carrying props.

One of the crew members TINA, 20's, all black clothes, rosy cheeks, searches for something.

TINA
I'm going to miss my cue!

BIMBO THE CLOWN, 20's, Shakespearean neck ruffle jumps in place. Scraggly beard, runs his memorized lines quietly.

BIMBO
(whispered)
Ding-dong ding dong. I'm a Ding-Dong!

SOLOMON DONG, 60's, the jaded owner and executive producer of the show, wears a faded sweatshirt, torn steel-toe boots, and a graying beard. He smokes a cigarette, stares at his phone.

SOLOMON
The Harmony Center never does well.

ADD SPLIT SCREEN -

EXT. SCHLICK ENTERTAINMENT CORPORATION - SIMULTANEOUS

A facetime with JACK SCHLICK, early 30's, a mix of Roman Roy and Justin Bieber, sits in a large conference room alone.

SCHLICK
Twenty six.

SOLOMON
I know.

SCHLICK
The goal is to sell seven-hundred and fifteen tickets. At minimum!

SOLOMON

The school board backed out at the last second. The entire district was supposed to be here.

SCHLICK

Not my problem, Solomon.

SOLOMON

It would be poor taste if the school attended, days after a funeral for an eight-year-old.

SCHLICK

You needed a back-up plan for circumstances like this.

SOLOMON

I'm sorry.
(throws cigarette.)
Just give us till Trenton, please.
Tons of kids love us up there.

SCHLICK

Their parents don't.

SOLOMON

I promise they do. We've already made a ton in presale-

The music from the stage crescendos.

SOLOMON (cont'd)

Vicki is about to go, I have to call you back Mr. Schlick.

RING MASTER BRANDON (O.S)

Five! Four!

SCHLICK

700 tickets in Trenton or I straight up withdraw my investment.

Solomon ends the call.

- ENDING THE SPLIT SCREEN

INT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS

A 30ft human cannon, purple stars-and-stripes, has rolled out onto the floor.

RING MASTER BRANDON (O.S)
Three, Two...!

INT. VICKI'S CANNON - CONTINUOUS

A cramped compartment inside the cannon.

VICKI CARMICHAEL, 60's, dyed purple hair under a WW1 helmet, plum jumpsuit sits in deep zen, something feels off, it's taking too long.

She knocks the wall with her white leather finger-less glove.

VICKI
Let's go! What's taking---?

BOOM! THE CANNON ERUPTS!

CUT BACK TO:

INT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Dead silence. The spotlight follows Vicki as she flies nearly 100 yards through the air.

Midair, Vicki waves to a WONDROUS LITTLE BOY in the front row who waves back. She back-flips and hits the inflated mat perfectly.

WOOOOSH.

The music resumes, the jazzy band mid-note. Vicki lies flat on her back, the air from the bag now deflating.

A faint ringing sound as Vicki stands and bows.

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

INT. ROW D - HOURS LATER

House lights on.

Vicki, hot towel on her neck, road casual clothes, sits at the end of the row, staring down at the stage.

THE CAST AND CREW OF DING DONG'S CIRCUS (around 15 people) do their part in deconstructing the set.

ORVILLE (O.S.)
You missed your cue *Vicki Queen of Mean*.

ORVILLE CARMICHAEL-DING JUNIOR, 20's, stick-like red-head, small wrists, blazer with a sweater, stares at a clipboard.

Vicki continues to stare off into the distance.

ORVILLE
Mom! I said you missed your cue.

There's some resemblance between Vicki and Orville but mostly not.

VICKI
That's because I couldn't hear you, son.

Vicki tries to grab Orville's hand.

ORVILLE
You're not even listening.

Orville leaves towards the stage.

INT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Orville steps on a stool center stage and picks up a megaphone.

ORVILLE
(megaphone)
If you can hear me clap once!

Scattered applause.

HENDRIX, 20's, the BMX rider, still wearing knee pads, carries a neon sign.

HENDRIX

Put it down for a sec.

Bimbo, now in civilian clothes and flip-flops, still has some white make-up on his face, helps carry the sign.

BIMBO

Ha?

GLASS SHATTERS. The neon sign dropped.

HENDRIX

Shoot.

BIMBO

I should not have worn flip-flops.

ON ORVILLE

ORVILLE

Clean it later.

BIMBO

Feel like I'm standing on a landmine.

Orville clears his throat. Puts the loudspeaker down.

ORVILLE

A few housekeeping notes: Ring Master Brandon Starbuck we lost your smile right after intermission and it never came back.

Ringmaster Brandon, now in a leather jacket and a hard hat, stares at his phone, immersed in a stupid game.

RING MASTER BRANDON

A kid died. I was going for a more somber tone.

ORVILLE

The families who came wanted to be cheered up.

ARBAN ABADI, 20s, One half of the trapeze act, large very muscular frame, thick lion-like mane of hair, wears a skimpy tank with pecs flexing out.

ARBAN

Be a Ding-Dong, Starbuck! We're up on that wire working our tails off!

RING MASTER BRANDON

Eat a pile of worms, Arban. You don't even have lines.

Seated next to Arban is ARIANNA ABADI, 20s, the other half of the trapeze act, very petite, very fit, same thick lion-like mane of hair, wears an over-sized graphic tee.

ARIANNA

We risk our lives everyday. While you do crowd work like its hard.

RINGMASTER BRANDON

I'm a Ding-Dong for life, you all know that!

Orville takes out his loud speaker.

ORVILLE

Stop fighting!

RING MASTER BRANDON

I don't like doing shows for empty audiences!

The cast agrees with this assessment, YEAH. Orville pushes out an extremely forced smile.

ORVILLE

Nobody panic. We're gonna have big crowds in Trenton, we always kill in Hartford, plus we're basically hometown heroes in Plymouth.

ARIANNA

Don't forget the greatest city in the world...

ALL CAST AND CREW

The Big Apple!

Orville takes a deep breath, shudders slightly.

ORVILLE

That's the other small thing...

(muttered)

We are no longer going to New York City.

Shock and and confusion from the crowd.

ARIANNA

We made plans with our parents!

ARBAN

It's Christmas! We always do
Christmas in the big apple.

ORVILLE

Unfortunately the fancy-prance Samler
Arena no longer wants our show.

A collective moan.

ARBAN

That's just insanity! We've been
playing Samler for at least 15 years!

Solomon steps out from one of the wings. Everyone focuses on
him, he's the real director of this show.

SOLOMON

We don't have a choice Arban. It's a
business.

ARBAN

It's tradition!

SOLOMON

Schlick Entertainment said no. We
aren't filling seats. If that's not
obvious. Even without the dead kid,
we never put up numbers in the
Harmony Center.

A cold quiet beat. Orville remembers it's his meeting.

ORVILLE

On to Sun National Arena in Trenton!

RING MASTER BRANDON

What are we going to do Solomon?

BIMBO (O.S.)

Can someone help me with this glass?

SOLOMON

I don't know.

EXT. CIRCUS TRAIN - EARLY MORNING

Chugga... Chugga... Chugga...Chugga.

A SLOW LONG LOUD RUSTY PASSENGER TRAIN limps on an
interstate track.

The circus train has been on the tracks for nearly 100 years, it's been updated twice since it started running. It's falling apart.

INT. CIRCUS TRAIN - SOLOMON'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

A messy small room with a California-king mattress. The mattress takes up over half of the space.

The light from the rising sun pierces in through the hatch. Vicki is sound asleep. Solomon lies on his back, fully awake.

SOLOMON
(whispered)
I just don't know!

Solomon turns to Vicki.

SOLOMON (cont'd)
Vicki. Baby.

Solomon stares at her, he starts to cry.

SOLOMON (cont'd)
We're gonna have to shut down. It's not my choice. The show isn't sustainable, profitable, or enjoyable for anyone anymore.

Solomon rolls out of bed. Starts getting dressed.

SOLOMON (cont'd)
I'm gonna call that brat Schlick and his Olympic-sized ego, tell him the tour ends after Trenton.

Vicki lies completely asleep.

SOLOMON (cont'd)
We're toast. I'm screwed. It's done.

Solomon wipes a tear.

SOLOMON (cont'd)
Wake up.

Vicki might be dead.

SOLOMON (cont'd)
Vicki, Baby. Wake up!

Solomon shakes the bed, Vicki lurches awake. Grabs her ears, quickly puts her hand down.

VICKI
Stop ringing!

SOLOMON
What?

VICKI
Do you hear that?

SOLOMON
The train...?

VICKI
It's like a ringing sound. Like an alarm.

Vicki takes off her night cap, walks to the sink to brush her teeth.

VICKI (cont'd)
I'm fine.

SOLOMON
Night terror?

VICKI
Just one of those blank dreams.

SOLOMON
I used to get those all the time.

Vicki senses something is off. She sits up.

VICKI
I know you're worried about the show. We're gonna be fine. Trenton is so fun. I have so many military friends there. Great veteran town.

Solomon looks out the window.

SOLOMON
That's nice.

She pulls him back onto the bed, kisses him deeply.

SOLOMON (cont'd)
Schlick says we need to sell more tickets.

VICKI
Schlick's a prick.

SOLOMON
It's a serious problem.

VICKI
We always get through slow patches on
tour.

SOLOMON
This is by far the slowest and
biggest patch we've ever had.

Vicki smiles.

VICKI
(jokingly)
We could bring back the animals.

SOUND EFFECT: A WHIP CRACKS, a LION ROARS, followed by a
very large applause. Solomon really likes this idea.

VICKI (cont'd)
I'm joking.

Solomon jumps out of bed.

SOLOMON
You're a genius.

VICKI
Obviously. We can't do that.

SOLOMON
Everyone loved when the the Ding-Dong
Circus had animals!

VICKI
I'm glad we don't have the big cats
anymore. It was cruel.

SOLOMON
It wasn't cruel, it was entertaining.

A stern KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK, on the door.

CUT TO:

INT. CIRCUS TRAIN - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Orville in a Ding-Dong Circus 2011 tour shirt.

ORVILLE
Solomon, is my mom in there with you?

CUT BACK TO:

INT. CIRCUS TRAIN - SOLOMON'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Vicki and Solomon look at each other, damn it.

VICKI
I've been shacking up with Solomon.
You know this!

ORVILLE (O.S.)
You forgot what today is, didn't you.

She forgot.

VICKI
Of course not.

ORVILLE (O.S.)
And to make it worse you're sleeping
with the man who was his work partner
and best friend.

This enrages Solomon.

SOLOMON
There's no need for that talk Orville
Junior!

ORVILLE (O.S.)
You're not my dad, Solomon!

Orville opens the door.

CUT TO:

INT. CIRCUS TRAIN - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

ORVILLE
It's my real dad's birthday.

Awkward silence.

SOLOMON
Right.

ORVILLE
He specifically stated he didn't want
you guys together.

VICKI
He never said that.

SOLOMON
(to Vicki)
He did, he told me.
(to Orville)
But he's in a better place now.

ORVILLE
It's wrong, it's gross.

INT. CIRCUS TRAIN - PIE CAR - MOMENTS LATER

A diner-like setting in a train car. A very well-lived in space, a faint yellow bacon-grease has penetrated every where. Vintage circus photos and memorabilia decorate the walls.

Vicki and Orville sit at a booth, steak-and-eggs on their plates.

ORVILLE
Tell me your favorite thing about my
dad.

VICKI
Junior.

ORVILLE
Please.

Vicki squirms.

VICKI
He loved the circus.

ORVILLE
I know that.

VICKI
He loved you.

Vicki stares out the window. The ringing in her ears quietly returns.

VICKI (cont'd)
And had there been a larger pool of
suitors, I don't think we would've
ended up together.

ORVILLE
He was a good dad. I remember.

Awkward beat.

VICKI
Junior, you're old enough to know he
was a deadbeat drunk.

ORVILLE
You're overreacting.

VICKI
He drank himself to death.

ORVILLE
I don't blame him!

The ringing in her ear spikes. Vicki falls out of her chair,
grabbing her ears.

VICKI
Please, quieter!

Orville rushes to her aid.

ORVILLE
Mom?!

Disoriented, Vicki chokes backs tears.

VICKI
I can't hear you! I can't hear
anything!

INT. CIRCUS TRAIN - SOLOMON'S CAR - LATER

Solomon lies on his bed stares at his phone. He scrolls to a
contact:

GILL SEXY, 40's, not Joe Exotic from Tiger King. Rubbery
skin covered with tattoos, pink cheetah-print camouflage
wearing a tattered hunting hat, poses next to a zebra.

Solomon calls, then hangs up before connecting.

SOLOMON
No. Definitely not.

Phone vibrates. A facetime from Gill. Another facetime call?
Yes another facetime call.

SOLOMON (cont'd)
Hello, Gill?

ADD SPLIT SCREEN -

EXT. WILDLIFE PRESERVE - NORTHERN FLORIDA - SIMULTANEOUS

Gill lounges on a sun chair, sipping a Shirley Temple, a golden AK-47 on his lap.

A wooden tiki sign in the background reads GILL SEXY'S
SAFARI BIG ANIMALS RANCH

THE FAINT SOUNDS OF LARGE ANIMALS FIGHTING in the
background.

SEXY
This is Sexy.

SOLOMON
Gill!

SEXY
Solomon Dong?! Holy Heck! Let me get
my glasses

Sexy takes out a pair of reading Oakley's.

SOLOMON
My old friend--

SEXY
I didn't have your number in my
number book, came up as *potential*
spam. Crazy man!

SOLOMON
Yeah crazy, listen:-

SEXY
I figured I was about to chat with a
scammer for a bit.

Sexy winks.

SEXY (cont'd)

Here's my life update: been better.
IRS on me again.

SOLOMON

Sorry.

SEXY

And PETA scum are stepping on my
tail, but life's good. Started
watching Gilmore Girls again. Got my
titties re-pierced last Wednesday.

He takes off his shirt, revealing a brightly colored dragon
tattoo, and double bull ring nipple piercings.

SOLOMON

Nice, listen, you still got the
zebras?

SEXY

You mean these zebras?

A DILAPIDATED ANIMAL ENCLOSURE, inside you can see the
silhouettes, black and white tails of zebras. They make that
weird piercing zebra sound.

SEXY (cont'd)

Course I still got my ladies. They've
been hecking bored now that we're off
the tour.

SOLOMON

I can imagine that is hard for them.

SEXY

(yelled at one of the
Zebras)

Keep it down back there Cleo, for I
come with the vinegar!

(back to Solomon)

They're just brutes. So, King
Solomon, what can I do you for today.

Sexy fires his gun in the air.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. CIRCUS TRAIN - ORVILLE'S CAR

An extremely organized tasteful room with a desk, lots of books in a neat little library.

Vicki sits on the perfectly made twin sized bed.

Orville lounges on the bean bag couch, phone in hand.

ORVILLE

To confirm: tomorrow at noon,
correct? Dr. Stacy Jangles at the VA
hospital in Trenton. She's an ear
doctor. Yes. Thank You.

Orville hangs up.

ORVILLE (cont'd)

Hear that mom? TO-MORROW AT NOON.

VICKI

I hear you. I'm hearing better now.

ORVILLE

You still have to go. I'm making you
go to the doctor.

VICKI

They're gonna think I'm a liar if I
show up with no hearing problems.

ORVILLE

They may think you're a liar for
other reasons too.

VICKI

What's that supposed to mean?

Orville grits his teeth.

ORVILLE

How long did you cheat on my dad with
Solomon? Just tell me.

Vicki sighs a deep sigh.

VICKI

You're father, Orville Senior, was a
rageful man. He was an absolute
hothead with a mean temper.

(MORE)

VICKI (cont'd)
 He was simply a bad person. I'll
 leave it at that.

Orville goes to leave.

VICKI (cont'd)
 That doesn't mean you're not a good
 person.

ORVILLE
 It means you're the bad person!

VICKI
 He's dead, it doesn't matter what he
 thinks.

ORVILLE
 I care about legacy! I care about who
 I can trust! It was all a lie! Our
 family was a lie!

Vicki hugs Orville.

VICKI
 I love you always, junior. It's a
 different kind of love with you--

Orville breaks from the hug.

ORVILLE
 I'm gonna give Solomon a piece of my
 mind!

VICKI
 Seriously Junior, do not do that!

Orville storms off towards Solomon's car.

INTERCUT - INT. CIRCUS TRAIN/EXT. GILL'S NATURE PRESERVE -
 MOMENTS LATER

Solomon is still on facetime with Sexy. They chuckle over an
 old story, smoke a cigarette.

SOLOMON
 ---I was completely covered in pig
 scat. And Senior comes in and he's
 all like *YOU BOOT-LICKING TRADER, YOU
 SON OF A DOG!*

Solomon and Sexy both laugh, Sexy laughs too hard.

SEXY

Brother, I miss you. We had the most epic times. Let's bring back the glory days!

Sexy sips another Shirley Temple.

SEXY (cont'd)

I prayed for this to happen. I really did King Solomon. I asked the lord, I said god, please let him forgive me for all my past wrongdoings.

SOLOMON

The cast is going to be so happy you're back. This move makes sense.

A happy pause.

SOLOMON (cont'd)

The zebra act, your act, is gonna be different.

SEXY

How you mean?

SOLOMON

I want an emphasis on *wild life preservation* now. Save the animals, that type of thing.

Sexy's face turns sour.

SOLOMON (cont'd)

Still zebras doing tricks but you don't need to ride 'em anymore, seems like they hate that.

KNOCK! KNOCK! Solomon's door opens, it's Orville, ready to fight, the angriest look on his face.

ORVILLE

I don't want you speaking to my mother anymore!

SOLOMON

Calm down.

Sexy notices Orville through the phone.

SEXY (O.S.)

Orville Junior?!

Orville grabs the phone from Solomon

ORVILLE
Uncle Sexy?

ORVILLE (cont'd)
(to Solomon; Confused)
My goodness, Solomon, are you
planning on bringing back...the
animals?!

SOUND EFFECT: (the same) WHIP CRACKS, a LION ROARS, followed
by a very large applause. Orville loves this idea.

ORVILLE (cont'd)
I prayed about this!

SEXY (O.S.)
ME TOO!

Orville is completely over the moon. He hugs Solomon, who
hugs him back.

SOLOMON
Please don't tell Vicki, I mean your
mother, just yet. I want to surprise
the rest of the cast.

ORVILLE
I swear to secrecy. THE ANIMALS ARE
COMING BACK!

SOLOMON
Quiet!

ORVILLE
See you soon Uncle Sexy!

Orville skips away.

SEXY
Is he gay?

SOLOMON
I don't know. But he really loves his
mom.

SEXY
I love Vicki too. At least I used to!

Solomon nods. Sexy laughs.

SEXY (cont'd)
I'll leave after this cigarette.

SOLOMON
Hold your zebras, brother. Are you
sure you're okay to perform?

SEXY
You can't leave me high and dry like
this! If I am driving from Pensacola
to Trenton with 40 Imperial Zebras, I
need an answer.

Solomon thinks long and hard, spots a faded photo of him
Vicki, and baby Orville Jr on a Zebra.

SOLOMON
You got a deal, brother.

SOUND EFFECT: zebras crying and galloping.

EXT. CIRCUS TRAIN - EARLY THE NEXT MORNING

The circus train pulls into New Jersey.

A sign reads: YOU'RE ENTERING SCENIC TRENTON, NJ

The train blows its whistle thrice.

INT. DOCTORS OFFICE - TRENTON - MORNING

A stale doctor's office at the Trenton VA hospital.

Vicki is very jittery on the cold table.

DR. JANGLES, 40's, examines Vicki's ears, does not look
hopeful.

DR. JANGLES
You have tinnitus.

VICKI
No I don't.

DR. JANGLES
You just told me you have persistent
ringing in your ears, the medical
term is tinnitus.

VICKI
It's not so bad.

DR. JANGLES

It is bad, you may become deaf.

VICKI

Say again?

DR. JANGLES

It is my urgent recommendation that you never get shot out of a cannon, ever again.

Vicki does her best to stay positive.

VICKI

Let me sleep on it.

EXT. THE SUN NATIONAL INSURANCE ARENA - TRENTON - LATER

A small arena (7k capacity).

A jumbo screen reads: *The Ding-Dong Circus playing tonight!*

It's load-in time. The cast and crew carry pieces of the set, lighting, and props into the new arena. Bimbo and Hendrix carry a new neon sign.

Solomon waits anxiously, chucks a cigarette.

SOLOMON

He's not coming.

A massive pick-up truck with a large trailer screeches to a halt. Gill Sexy jumps out the truck.

SEXY

My man!

They hug. Sexy won't let go.

SOLOMON

Gill, thank you/

Solomon pushes him off.

SEXY

I got the goods!

Sexy takes Solomon to the back of his trailer.

SEXY (cont'd)

Take a peek.

Orville is standing behind them. Sexy drops Solomon.

SEXY

Little man!

Sexy and Orville bear hug. Solomon wipes himself off.

ORVILLE

Smells horrible in here.

Sexy throws a mop in Orville's direction.

SEXY

I was just telling you're step-dad
we're gonna clean the habitat. Make
it nice for the show tonight.

ORVILLE

He's not my step-dad.

Orville smiles at Solomon, takes a stack of papers out of his backpack.

ORVILLE (cont'd)

I made these. I know I wasn't
supposed to tell anyone yet, but---

A flier with zebras on it: *THE DING DONG CIRCUS HAS ANIMALS AGAIN, COME SEE US AT SUN NATIONAL INSURANCE ARENA TONIGHT!*

ORVILLE (cont'd)

I got so pumped up, I hung a few in
the park.

Sexy grins widely.

SEXY

These are as cute as a funion Junior.
Don't you think, King Solomon.

SOLOMON

They are great.

Sexy grabs the fliers and thrusts them towards Solomon.

SEXY

Go hang a few of these up while OJ
and I sterilize the the habitat-cage.

EXT. LOCAL PARK - TRENTON - LATER

A local park in front of a shopping center. Vicki steps out of her VA doctor's office, she is clearly depressed. She sits at a park bench. She spots Orville's flier.

VICKI

Biscuits.

Vicki approaches the sign, disturbed by the realization.

A hoard of Trenton teens walk by. One TEEN notices her.

TEEN

Hey! You're the lady from the circus!

VICKI

Always glad to meet a fan.

TEEN

The the human cannon-ball! I go to the Ding-Dong's show in Trenton every year!

VICKI

Let's do a selfie then!

An awkward pause.

TEEN

I want you to know that getting rid of the animals was the right move.

OTHER TEEN

We hate animal cruelty!

Pause. Vicki stands in front of the flier, blocking their view.

VICKI

I actually agree. No, I really agree.

TEEN

Still a great show without an animal chained up.

Vicki nervously smiles.

TEEN (cont'd)

I'll be at the show tomorrow!

VICKI
See you then!

Vicki turns to leave.

TEEN
Wait.

Vicki's heart stops.

TEEN
The selfie.

They do a selfie.

Vicki fast-walks away. The teens notice the flier with the animals on it.

END OF ACT 2

ACT 3

INT. SUN NATIONAL INSURANCE ARENA - STAGE - THAT AFTERNOON

A dress rehearsal. It's the trapeze act. A high wire Ringmaster Brandon stands on a platform on the stage below.

RING MASTER BRANDON

For our next act, boys and girls, we present to you high in the sky, it's the *Flying Abadis!*

ON THE TRAPEZE: Arianna and Arban wave to no one.

INT. BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Solomon nervously paces, takes out his phone, looks around, quickly dials a number.

SOLOMON

(phone)

Hi, animal control. I'd like to make an anonymous abuse report...There's a trailer...Outside the Sun National Insurance Arena, it's got 40 Imperial zebras in it...

Vicki, in her full costume, spots Solly from a distance. Solomon talks faster.

SOLOMON (cont'd)

And they're being mistreated, come quickly.

Solomon hangs up, smiles at Vicki.

VICKI

(pointing to the
shit-covered trailer)

I told you this was a bad idea.

SOLOMON

I know.

VICKI

You never listen to me.

SOLOMON

Not true, in Huntsville-

VICKI
Where is my son?

SOLOMON
He's with Sexy.

VICKI
You left my son alone with Gill Sexy?

INT. GILL'S ZEBRA TRAILER - MOMENTS LATER

Orville mops, Sexy power-hoses the enclosure.

ORVILLE
The last time I saw you...

SEXY
You were just a baby.

ORVILLE
That must have been twenty years ago.
With my dad! My first memory!

SPLASH, Sexy squirts Orville in the face.

ORVILLE (cont'd)
STOP!

Sexy keeps hosing Orville.

ORVILLE (cont'd)
STOP SQUIRTING ME!

Orville slips, Sexy stops.

SEXY
Your dad and I, we used to get really
drunk and play this game with you,
when you were asleep we used to put
your hand in warm water and you'd wet
the bed.

ORVILLE
That was you?

SEXY
And your father. Good times. I miss
him.

Orville realizes some things about who his father really
was.

SEXY (cont'd)
 You were such a little freak, crying
 and snot everywhere. Cute though.

OUTSIDE A LARGE CROWD has assembled in the parking lot. The group of teens from before has become A PICKET LINE of animal rights protesters. They hold anti-circus signs and flags.

PROTESTERS
 Not for entertainment!
 Not for entertainment!
 Not for entertainment!

Orville looks nervous. Sexy looks angry.

SEXY
 Cowards.

ORVILLE
 Just ignore them

Sexy rolls up his sleeves, pokes his head out of the trailer spits in the direction of the crowd.

SEXY
 Hey pussy cat, over here! Say it to
 my face!

PROTESTER (O.S.)
 That's Gill Sexy!

ANOTHER PROTESTER (O.S.)
 Get him!

Orville and Sexy are swarmed.

INT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Vicki desperately facetimes Orville Jr.

VICKI
 Pick up! Pick up please!

Straight to voicemail.

VICKI (cont'd)
 Dangnabit! Lord knows what trouble
 they're in right now.

SOLOMON
 This day couldn't get any worse.

Jack Schlick, the young corporate stooge suddenly appears, wearing a pinstripe suit.

SCHLICK
Mr. Dong! Mrs. Carmichael!

SOLOMON
Oh Schlick.

SCHLICK
I've come to inspect my investment,
and hold you accountable to the 715
tickets... We sold 715 tickets right?

SOLOMON
We're gonna reach that goal Mr.
Schlick, no problem, sir.

Schlick puts his arm around Solomon in a patronizing creepy way.

SCHLICK
There is no try, only do Solomon, r2-
d2 says that.

Schlick notices the zebras-are-back flier, not mad as one may think.

SCHLICK (cont'd)
No shit.

SCHLICK (cont'd)
You really tried to bring the animals
back didn't you.

SOLOMON
People love the animals. I-

Vicki holds Solomon back.

VICKI
I did. The animals were my idea. If
anyone should be fired it's me.

An awkward pause. Schlick tries to process this information.

SCHLICK
Fired?! Not at all! You're a genius.

WEE-000 WEE-000 WEE-000, a siren approaches from outside the arena.

The garage door opens An animal control van pulls on to the floor. An ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER steps out.

ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER
We got an anonymous report of animal abuse? Who is responsible for this animal trailer?

Vicki and Solomon point to Schlick.

SCHLICK
I have nothing to do with this.

ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER
Are you Jack Schlick of Schlick entertainment?

SCHLICK
Yes.

ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER
It says here that Schlick entertainment is legally responsible for all damages from the Ding-Dong circus. Come with me.

The Animal Control Officer handcuffs Schlick.

SCHLICK
This is an outrage!

The Animal Control Officer manhandles Schlick. Vicki and Solomon look on with glee.

EXT. GILL'S ZEBRA TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Orville and Sexy are outnumbered by the mob, they're shoved back and fourth.

SEXY
You messed with the wrong one today!

BOING! Sexy uppercuts a protester, he is swallowed by the mob.

SEXY (cont'd)
Never take me and fur babies alive!

Orville is cornered.

ORVILLE
Please don't come any closer! I am
warning you.

Orville takes out a pen, starts stabbing in their direction.
The protesters start laughing.

POP! BOOM! POW! The mob is tossed to the side by Vicki.

VICKI
Out of the way dickweeds! Where's my
man-child son.

Orville hugs her.

ORVILLE
Mom! You saved me!

VICKI
I always do.

Solomon looks on with pride.

INT. STAGE - LATER - SHOWTIME

Spotlight center stage. The opening number from the top.

Ring Master Brandon is in his usual spot.

RING MASTER BRANDON
Ladies and gentleman, boys and girls
of all ages... It's time for the one,
the only: Ding-Dong Circus!

The full cast appears, perform the opening number.

ALL CAST
(SUNG)
Ding Dong's Circus Ding Dong Hoe-Hum!
We Like To-Have Fun!

The cast smiles genuinely, there is more life to this
performance.

The crowd is only slightly more occupied than before.

ON SOLOMON, watches from the audience, nods with pride.

Vicki's cannon is rolled out onto the floor.

RING MASTER BRANDON
Five, Four, Three, Two, One!

BANG!

Vicki, once again floats through the air. Midair, waves to a new WONDROUS CHILD again.

WOOSH! Landing perfectly, like always.

She takes a bow and jogs off, waving. The ringing in her ears continues.

INT. BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Vicki takes out an iPod, turns on a playlist titled:
Tinnitus Relief Sound Therapy: it's a babbling brook. The ringing subsides. She smiles.

Solomon approaches her. She doesn't take off her headphones. He gives her a thumbs up and says something encouraging that she doesn't hear.

END OF ACT 3

TAG

INT. TRENTON COUNTY JAIL - LATER

A filthy holding cell. Sexy, sits on the bench, nurses a black-eye with a disgusting rag.

The cell doors open.

Schlick is tossed inside the cell, landing with a thud.

SEXY

First time in the can?

FADE TO BLACK

END OF PILOT