



37-The Circus (Part 1)

ou, ow, eigh

One fine day Dan and Rat The Cat went to the train station to catch a train out of town.

“We're bound for New York City,” Dan told the man at the ticket counter.

“New York City?” asked the man. “Our train bound for New York City just broke down. The only way I can get you there is on a special freight train.”

“We don't care,” said Dan. “How much?”

Eighty-eight dollars,” said the man. “Plus, we need to weigh that suitcase. We charge by the pound.”

The man weighed the suitcase. “The weight is ten pounds,” he said. “That will be eight more dollars.”

“Ouch!” said Dan. So Dan and Rat paid and got on board the special freight train.

“Let's find a place to sit down,” said Dan. Just then an angry-looking clown walked past them. Dan and Rat turned and stared at the clown.

“Dan, was that a clown?” Rat asked.

“Yes, Rat,” said Dan. “That was a clown. A clown with a frown.”

“Well,” asked Rat, “what is an angry clown doing on our train?” Before Dan could answer

they both heard a loud howl.

“Was that a howl?” asked Rat.

“Yes,” said Dan. Dan was beginning to worry.

“What kind of weird place is this train?” said Rat. “A clown and a howl. What next?”

A kangaroo came hopping down the hallway. The kangaroo grabbed Rat and stuffed Rat into her kangaroo pouch. Then the kangaroo went hopping away. Dan tried to look for Rat, but Rat was not to be found.

The kangaroo took Rat to a freight car and left Rat sitting there next to a big box. As Rat sat there a big, deep growl came from the box.

“”Ohhh!” said Rat. “A growl? Let me out of here! I want off this train!”

“Let ME out!” said a deep voice from the box.

“Who said that?” Rat demanded.

“I did!” said the deep voice from the box. “I am Boris The Dancing Brown Bear.” Now Rat heard a neigh come from across the freight car.

“Who is that?” Rat asked Boris.

“That is Natasha,” said Boris. “She is a show horse.”

“What kind of weirdo train is this?” Rat asked. “I have seen a clown, been kidnapped by a kangaroo, heard a loud howl, heard a neigh, and now I am talking to a dancing brown bear in a box.”

“Let me out and I will tell you,” said Boris. So Rat let Boris out of the box.

“You are on a circus freight train,” said Boris. “The howl you heard was from Lupy. Lupy is a wolf who sings. And the clown you saw is named Bonky.”

“Wow!” said Rat. “A circus train! Can I be in the circus?”

“What can you do?” asked Boris.

“Well, I can shout really loud,” said Rat. Then Rat did his best Tarzan yell.

*“AaaaAAAaaaaAAAAAAAAAAAAaaaaaaaAAAA
AAAAaaaaaaaahhhh!!!”*

“Ouch,” said Boris. “You'll need a better act than that.”

“Like what?” Rat asked.

“Well, like dropping a ten-thousand pound weight on your head, or blowing yourself up. Something good like that.”

“Can't I just dance like you do?” Rat asked.

“No,” said Boris. “We already have dancing animals, singing animals, and show animals. We do not have any exploding animals. You would be a big star!”

“Wow!” said Rat. “A *star!* I'll do it!”

“Okay,” said Boris. “Just sit there a bit while I get you a costume.” Boris left and soon was back.

“I found this behind a couch,” Boris said, holding up a costume shirt with two holes for heads. “I think The Man With Two Heads left it when he quit.”

“Why did he quit?” Rat asked Boris.

“He had two mouths to feed and needed to make more money,” said Boris.

Boris gave the costume to Rat. It fit, but was weird because of the two neck holes. That didn't matter to Rat, for Rat was proud to be in the circus.

Then Boris told Rat, “We have a show in the next town. Sit down on the couch and I'll get you ready.”

Rat sat down and Boris taped some dynamite to him. Then Boris wound tape round and round Rat. When Boris was done Rat stood up, but it was hard. Rat now weighed about twenty extra pounds.

“Now here is what we will do,” said Boris. “I will count down from eight. When I get to one, hold on and look out! Then the whole town will cheer for you!”

“Wow!” said Rat. “Then we can go do it in the next town, and the next, and the next, and the next! I’ll be an even bigger star than that clown Bonky!”

“Uh,” most people only do this trick once,” said Boris.

“Oh,” said Rat.

Boris led Rat into the hallway of the freight train, and there stood Dan, wearing a round

helmet on his head and a fancy costume. Dan was with the kangaroo. Boris and the kangaroo left Dan and Rat in the hallway.

“Rat!” said Dan. “You're not going to believe this, but this is a circus train and I am going to be a star!”

“Me too!” said Rat. Dan went on.

“Kelly Kangaroo has given me a job! I will be shot out of a cannon — straight up into the air!”

“And I am an exploding cat!” said Rat. “Boris will count down from eight and then *BOOM!* I will be a star!”

The train stopped in the town for the show and Dan and Rat heard Boris call out to the crowd, “Come see our two new stars—DEATH DROP DAN AND SHOOTING STAR RAT!”

Dan and Rat looked at each other...

Vocabulary

ow

plow	pow	cow	down
crown	clown	sow	towel
drown	prowl	town	howl
frown	how	growl	fowl
brown	now	prowl	wow

ou

house	ouch	grout	round
mound	cloud	count	proud
snout	pouch	shout	loud
mouth	trout	found	aloud
couch	bout	pound	ground
scout	about	sound	mound

eigh

freight	eighty	weight	weigh	weighty
neighbor	eighteen	neigh	eight	sleigh

Weird Words

helmet	kidnapped	head	dynamite
yourself	demanded	already	charge
weirdo	Natasha	special	dancing
angry	straight	heard	explode
looking	wearing	exploding	don't
kangaroo	ready	explosives	won't

Dictation

Did the clown frown at the brown cow?

The wolf will howl when out on the prowl.

When the king stops, bow to the crown.

Did you hear a growl from down in the hole?

The ape put the crown down on the ground.

Do not frown at the cow or at the clown.

The grouch sat by a goose on the couch.

Rat found a crown on the big, round mound.

Do not shout when you count the pigs.

That pig sure is proud of its snout.

Rat saw a brown trout in the brook.

Do you weight eighty pounds yet?

Is your dog eight or eighteen pounds?

Did Rat hear a loud neigh in the freight car?

My neighbor had a wieght of eighty pounds.

Rat is bound to be a clown.

Rat was in the brown sleigh with Fred.

Fred hit Rat in the mouth with a trout.

Pam wore a gown to the ball.

The round mound of trout made Rat drool.