

Diablerie  
By Murphi Cook

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## ***DIABLERIE***

### **CHARACTERS**

Circus Hustler – Can't speak. Wears only half a face.

Apollonia – Doesn't have any teeth. Her songs are sprinkled with flat sort of singing.

Lulubell – Adorable.

Mama Dandy – A burnt out prostitute.

Grim – The saddest clown in the world.

She/Mama – Can speak to the bees.

Dirt – A travelling wonder salesman.

The Voiceman – The Circus Hustler's voice.

Paper Man – A man with a chicken.

Little Boy – A spunky sort.

Toothman – A dirty dentist with a bucket of teeth.

Little One – A little girl.

The Projector Operator – Operates an overhead projector.

A Rattling Growling Voice

Doubling is, of course, a possibility.

The devils function as a sort of chorus.

### **TIME**

Today.

### **PLACE**

A vast land of television sets, trailer parks, and coca---cola machines.

*The PROJECTOR OPERATOR stands by the PROJECTOR, motionless.*

SUDDENLY, the PROJECTOR turns on.

*THREE DEVILS saunter out. They stare. A maddening grin spreads across each of their faces.*

*A RATTLING GROWLING VOICE emerges from above.*

RATTLING GROWLING VOICE

Welcome to the Diablerie.

PROJECTOR

THIS IS NOT  
THE DIABLERIE

RATTLING GROWLING VOICE

We're so glad you came to our show.

PROJECTOR

THIS IS NOT A SHOW.  
THIS IS REAL.

RATTLING GROWLING VOICE

We were beginning to think you'd forgotten.

PROJECTOR

REAL LIFE,

RATTLING GROWLING VOICE

But who could forget about the

PROJECTOR

DIABLERIE.

RATTLING GROWLING VOICE

Diablerie.

*A raging note from an unseen orchestra.*

The RATTLING GROWLING VOICE barks a rattling laugh.

*The DEVILS scatter.*

*PROLOGUE*

PROJECTOR

PROLOGUE,  
or SOMETIME BEFORE

*MAMA, THE CIRCUS HUSTLER, and LITTLE ONE  
ride inside an RV. It's terribly bumpy.*

*Wrapped around the LITTLE ONE'S arm is a red  
balloon.*

*Everything is alive. They are happiness. The world  
is electricity.*

LITTLE ONE

And so I said, I said,  
Daddy!  
Listen to what I said.  
Are you listening?  
I said, if you're going to bite the head off of a chicken you gotta you gotta not nibble  
you just gotta ARRGGHH bite it like this.  
Isn't that right?

CIRCUS HUSTLER

That's right sugar pie.  
What else did you say?

LITTLE ONE

I told him if he thought my daddy was going to give him a job when he bit all scared  
like then he had another thing coming.

CIRCUS HUSTLER

And what did he say?

LITTLE ONE

Nothing.

CIRCUS HUSTLER

Nothing?

LITTLE ONE

He couldn't say anything because he had a mouth full of chicken head.

CIRCUS HUSTLER  
That's my girl.

LITTLE ONE  
You think you'll hire him?

CIRCUS HUSTLER  
I s'pose I just might.

LITTLE ONE  
I think you better.  
Where we headed to next, daddy?

CIRCUS HUSTLER  
Not too far, we'll be there before you know it.

LITTLE ONE  
I'm tired of riding in this here RV.

CIRCUS HUSTLER  
What do you propose we ride in then?

LITTLE ONE  
I propose we ride on  
Aer---o---planes!

MAMA  
Time for supper, you two.

LITTLE ONE  
Don't you think daddy ought to hire that scraggly little geek?

MAMA  
Your daddy will do what he wants.

CIRCUS HUSTLER  
That's right, daddy will do just as he wants.

LITTLE ONE  
I didn't think he'd bite off its head but he did, he did real good, I like that. I didn't  
really expect him to do it. I was only talking.  
I ain't never seen that much blood.  
He just bled and bled and bled.  
I feel sort of sorry for that there chicken. Maybe I shouldn'ta made him do that.  
I sure do hope you give him that job, daddy.

MAMA

Come sit down.

LITTLE ONE

But now that I'm thinking about it, it's got me feeling real bad.

MAMA

Sit.

LITTLE ONE

I shoulda had him do something easy, like jump through a fire hoop. Then at least if anything was gonna get hurt it woulda been him and not some poor helpless chicken.

MAMA

I said, sit.

LITTLE ONE

Yes mama.  
I got stung by a bee today, mama.  
You wanna see?

*She holds up her finger. Mama leans forward and kisses it quick.*

PROJECTOR

Bump!

*They all jump.*

*MAMA takes a pair of scissors and snips the string attached to the balloon. It gets sucked out the window.*

LITTLE ONE

PSSSHHPHT!  
Right out the window!

CIRCUS HUSTLER

What'd you fix me for supper, mama?

*He kisses her. They are love.*

MAMA

Chicken.

*MAMA turns on the radio. Opera music comes out of it.*

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER spins her around and kisses her.*

I love you.

CIRCUS HUSTLER

I love you!

MAMA

*She gives him a handkerchief.*

I embroidered this just for you!

MAMA

*He rubs it against his face.*

It smells like the moon.

CIRCUS HUSTLER

Bump!

PROJECTOR

Dirty ole bumpy car.

LITTLE ONE

*They jump.*

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER takes the steering wheel. He drives.*

Can you believe this fine weather we've been having?

CIRCUS HUSTLER

Bump!

PROJECTION

*A DEVIL pokes his head through the window.*

Daddy?  
I think there's something wrong.

LITTLE ONE

*An explosion of light and sound. Everything comes together and makes a symphony of destruction.*

*The LITTLE ONE and MAMA are blown away.*

*The world as they know it is no more.*

*Half of CIRCUS HUSTLER'S face is ripped off. He puts on a new one covering the ripped off half. They don't match.*

*A DEVIL runs by. He hands the CIRCUS HUSTLER a SILVER WHISTLE. He looks at it for only a moment before the steering wheel flies by. He grabs the steering wheel.*

*He can't hold on.*

*It gets sucked out the window, just like the balloon.*

PROJECTOR

FFFFFWWWWWPPPP!!!!

*Sudden silence.*

*THE CIRCUS HUSTLER opens his mouth to scream, but no sound comes out.*

1.

*Circus music surrounds THE CIRCUS HUSTLER.*

*It is some time later.*

PROJECTOR

BEFORE WE BEGIN,  
A BRIEF MOMENT TO INTRODUCE

RATTLING GROWLING VOICE

CHARACTERS

*A terribly brief introduction pageant.*



*THE CIRCUS HUSTLER opens his mouth, says nothing and closes it. He pulls out a whistle and then blows it.*

The VOICEMAN zips out.

VOICEMAN

I'm the Voiceman.

*The VOICEMAN steps behind THE CIRCUS HUSTLER. He makes a rattling growling voice. The CIRCUS HUSTLER moves his lips.*

VOICEMAN

And I am the Circus Hustler.  
Welcome  
To the Diablerie.

*The buzzing of bees. SHE.*

SHE

What's that?  
Oh no I don't care for this one bit either...  
They call me, She.

*The Paper Man.*

PAPER MAN

Wanna make a deal?  
Just ask the Paper Man.

*A LITTLE BOY at his heels.*

LITTLE BOY

My pap always said you can't trust a man that says he's got a deal.  
No name, you can just call me Little boy.

*LULUBELL skips out. A little tap dance.*

LULUBELL

Oh, yoohoo!  
The darling Lulubell is here!

*MAMA DANDY turns to her.*

Quit the ruckus, Lulubell.  
Oh hello,  
Mama Dandy. A pleasure.

MAMA DANDY

*She hacks, and coughs.*

*Suddenly, GRIM.*

*GRIM bows.*

*APOLLONIA spies on her.*

Grim! Is that you, Grim?  
*(she notices her audience)*  
Oh hello there  
I'm Apollonia.

APOLLONIA

*A toothless grin.*

*The TOOTHMAN inspects her toothless mouth.*

You want some teeth?  
The toothman'll get some for ya.

TOOTHMAN

I don't think I do.

APOLLONIA

*DIRT brushes off his coat.*

Have you ever wondered what wonder looks like?

DIRT

*The whole world gasps.*

I have...

APOLLONIA

Dirt.

DIRT

*A big wink.*

*APOLLONIA moves to touch him.*

*He is gone.*

*She screams.*

2.

*She keeps on screaming.*

RATTLING GROWLING VOICE

And now we begin.

*Sunset.*

*A Sign with many words on it.*

PROJECTOR

The Diablerie ain't moving no more because that there RV done broke to pieces and spit out our durn wheel. WE ARE CLOSED.

APOLLONIA

Do you ever sometimes just throw your head back and SCREAM?

Scream so loud that maybe

Maybe your vocal box might up and jump out of your mouth just to get away from all the noise?

I do. But it don't feel good at all, it just feels like, it just feels like

Dry gums.

But I 'spect that's 'cause I don't have any teeth.

The VOICEMAN comes out. He slaps another sign on top of the first sign.

PROJECTOR

THE DIABLERIE OPENS IN THREE DAYS.

APOLLONIA

The Diablerie opens in three days?

VOICEMAN

Ah!

APOLLONIA

Is it true?

VOICEMAN

You scared me.

I didn't mean to. APOLLONIA

That's all right. VOICEMAN

But is it true? APOLLONIA

It is. VOICEMAN

*He gets back to hammering.*

APOLLONIA

The Diablerie is back.  
Can it be true?  
It must be true because there's a sign, and before that there sign there was a sign  
that said closed and it was really and truly closed.  
I have waited days and nights for this very fact to come true.  
Oh I might just explode.

What? VOICEMAN

What? APOLLONIA

Were you saying something? VOICEMAN

Only to myself. APOLLONIA

Right. VOICEMAN  
What are you doing here anyway?  
It's late.

Just waiting for Grim. APOLLONIA

Oh. VOICEMAN

APOLLONIA

I really had a feeling she'd come out today.  
I woke up and I said to myself, I said,  
"Apollonia, today is the day you will bump into Grim."

VOICEMAN

And did you?

APOLLONIA

Not yet.  
Did you give her my letter?

VOICEMAN

Yep.

APOLLONIA

And did she read it?

VOICEMAN

I can't be sure.

*APOLLONIA gives him a letter.*

APOLLONIA

Well here's another one.  
And make sure she reads it this time  
Read it to her yourself if it looks like she can't make out the words, okay?

VOICEMAN

Okay.  
... Say  
Apollonia.  
I've been meaning to ask you,  
Would you like to be a part of the Diablerie?

APOLLONIA

Me?

VOICEMAN

You.

APOLLONIA

I think I could just explode right now.

VOICEMAN

Don't do that.

APOLLONIA

I've been planning a number in my head with Grim for years.  
I bet she's just as lonely as me, you know, and if we could dance together  
it would just crush your heart to pieces.  
"The Saddest Clown with the Loneliest Girl"

VOICEMAN

I'm sure it would  
But I was thinking you'd be better suited for another act.

APOLLONIA

What act could be better than Grim's?

VOICEMAN

The Tooth Man.

APOLLONIA

The Tooth Man?  
Who's the Tooth Man?

*A spotlight.*

*The TOOTHMAN in a whole other world.*

RATTLING GROWLING VOICE

May I present to you,  
The Tooth Man.

TOOTHMAN

Inside this bucket I have five hundred and twenty eight single specimens of the  
human tooth. These teeth have come from various members of this society.

Who, you ask? I'll tell you who.

*He unveils a long list.*

TOOTHMAN

Equestrians, vestry members, vagrants, degenerates, hamburger flippers,  
swimmers, explorers, business men, small children, physicists, fat men, artists,  
criminals, the mentally over and the mentally under exposed, wood chippers, wood  
chuckers, dentists, doctors, drivers, archeologists, bankers, tankers, watch makers,  
bakers and even the occasional woman.

Have you had enough?

That's right, ladies and gentleman, I have travelled far and wide just so that you may have the canines of your dreams. They are absolutely DELECTABLE, I can assure you of that. Each of these teeth undergoes a very particular process. This process sucks up each and every ounce of plaque so that you may have a healthy RADIATING smile to shine onto your loved ones.

So why don't you come on up and let me pop one in. Hell, if you're real nice, I might pop a second in at half the price.

*He throws a single tooth out. APOLLONIA catches it.*

*APOLLONIA looks at the tooth, frozen. She looks from the VOICEMAN to the TOOTHMAN.*

*The TOOTHMAN smiles rows of uneven teeth.*

*The spotlight goes black. The TOOTHMAN is gone.*

APOLLONIA

He'd put teeth...  
In my head?

VOICEMAN

That's right Apollonia.

APOLLONIA

Stranger's teeth?

VOICEMAN

They wouldn't be strange at all,  
the Tooth Man gives each and every one of the teeth his sanitation seal.

APOLLONIA

I don't know,  
Having teeth ain't something I've ever given much thought to.

*A whistle blows.*

*The VOICEMAN jumps.*

VOICEMAN

Apollonia?

What? APOLLONIA

It's late. VOICEMAN

It is? APOLLONIA

I have a lot to do before tomorrow. VOICEMAN

You sure you don't want to talk for just a few more minutes?  
I've got an apple. You could eat it. APOLLONIA

Don't forget about those teeth, now. VOICEMAN

If you see Grim tell her I say goodnight. APOLLONIA

*The VOICEMAN runs away.*

*APOLLONIA sticks some rocks in her mouth.*

Hello, look at me I've got teeth. APOLLONIA

*She spits them out.*

I don't think I like that at all. APOLLONIA

*The strumming of a violin.*

*A quarter moon rises as APOLLONIA walks home.  
She pulls the apple out of her pocket. She throws it  
up and down.*

APOLLONIA  
*(singing)*  
If apples were cherries and cherries were grapes.

*She drops it.*



APOLLONIA

Whoops.

*APOLLONIA chases after the apple. She throws it up and down before bringing it to her nose and smelling it deeply.*

APOLLONIA

*(singing)*

If apples were oranges and oranges were pears  
I'd save them all for my baby  
And where will you find me in I don't know when  
Nowhere without my sweetest baby  
Darlin'  
Darlin'

*There is nothing left to sing.*

Darliiiiiiiiiiiiiin

*So she hums.*

*The DIABLIRIE is gone.*

3.

*APOLLONIA'S HOUSE. That quarter moon is as high as it's going to get.*

APOLLONIA

This whole world is filled with stuff  
Cotton candy  
Trailer parks  
Apple pie  
Hopscotch  
But I got just two things.  
A television set with rabbit ears and  
The saddest clown there ever was.

*APOLLONIA sits in front of a GIANT TV with rabbit ears.*

*She clicks it on. THREE pokes her head inside the set and plays the part of the channels.*

NEWSCASTER

Lana Silver reporting to you, live at five on channel nine.

*And then a sportscaster.*

SPORTSCASTER

And number one is passing up number two, only to be passed by number five, oh oh but here comes number seventeen.

*And then quick switches until words are barely understandable.*

and then  
uh  
we ro---  
shun.

1

2

3

4

*APOLLONIA turns it off.*

APOLLONIA

And there ain't even nothing on.

*THREE is gone.*

*APOLLONIA is asleep.*

4.

*GRIM'S silhouette.*

RATTLING GROWLING VOICE

Ladies and gentlemen...  
Grim.

*One foot appears. And then another attached to the body of a clown. The saddest clown there ever was.*

*She does a heartbreaking dance to music that only grows faster and faster.*

*She falls to the ground. Shot by an invisible arrow.*

*The bees buzz.*

*She gets up, body part by body part.*

*She bows.*

*Nothing.*

5.

*Sunrise.*

*The VOICEMAN hammers the sign, making sure it stays put. TWO DAYS.*

*LULUBELL appears. She has a sucker in one hand and a baby boom box in the other. She sucks and sucks and sucks, getting louder and louder.*

*She clears her throat.*

VOICEMAN

Not now, Apollonia.

*She clears her throat even louder.*

VOICEMAN

Grim's not awake –

*He turns to Lulubell, surprised.*

*She smiles, sweetly, holding out her hand.*

LULUBELL

Lulubell.

VOICEMAN

Well aren't you just adorable.

LULUBELL

Unbelievably so.

*She sets up her baby boom box.*

LULUBELL

I have come to audition for the Diablerie.

*She readies herself.*

LULUBELL

And I've been practicing all night and all day for a million days getting this ready to show you  
And I just know you will think it is just the cutest thing you ever saw.  
My mother says the surest way to melt any miser's heart is to let him see you dance, tehe.

*She pulls a cassette tape out of her underpants and sticks it in.*

VOICEMAN

Wait –

*She turns it on. It crackles as she lipsyncs to a darling little number.*

VOICEMAN

I said wait.

*The music stops.*

LULUBELL

You don't want to see me dance?

VOICEMAN

I do,  
But  
Wait.  
You have to show it to  
Wait.

*He runs away. The CIRCUS HUSTLER returns, the VOICEMAN hidden behind his back.*

*LULUBELL holds out her hand.*

LULUBELL

Lulubell.  
Are you the head honcho around here?

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER nods.*

Yes.

VOICEMAN

Wonderful.

LULUBELL

*The dance begins. It is just the cutest thing you ever saw.*

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER is not charmed. The VOICEMAN is, however, and erupts into a loud clapping.*

Bravo, bravo!

VOICEMAN

*LULUBELL curtsies, and bows, curtsies and bows.*

*She holds out her hand for the CIRCUS HUSTLER to hold.*

I'll start tomorrow.

LULUBELL

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER shakes his head, mouthing the word no.*

Yes.

VOICEMAN

*Again.*

Yes!

VOICEMAN

*Again.*

No?

VOICEMAN

Yes.

Yes! What are you talking about?

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER turns around, revealing the VOICEMAN. He strangles him. He drops him and the VOICEMAN runs away.*

*He turns and glares at LULUBELL. He shakes his head no.*

LULUBELL

No?

*He points to the exit.*

LULUBELL

Did you even watch me dance?  
I'm ruined!  
Ruined by a monster!

*A huge temper tantrum.*

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER covers his ears.*

*LULUBELL snatches a handkerchief out of his pocket. She goes to blow some snot into it when a coin falls out. She examines it. Everything slows down, all the light in the world is on her grubby little hand.*

*She puts it in her pocket, then cries some more.*

LULUBELL

Oh I declare, this is death! Absolute death!  
I'm humiliated.  
I am dead.

*MAMA DANDY charges in wearing a slinky Japanese robe. LULUBELL is on the ground.*

MAMA DANDY

Enough of the screaming!

LULUBELL

Oh mother, he's ruined me.  
He's the ugliest, filthiest, meanest man I ever saw.

He?

MAMA DANDY

*She touches her hair, and rubs her index finger across her teeth real slow.*

*Then back to LULUBELL.*

Get up you little twat.

MAMA DANDY

*MAMA DANDY goes up to the CIRCUS HUSTLER.*

Why hello,  
I don't think we've met.  
Mama Dandy.  
Of Mama Dandy's House of Pleashur.  
Here's my card.

MAMA DANDY

*A big wink.*

*She rips LULUBELL off the ground.*

Why are you so sticky?  
I should have named ya sewer rat.

MAMA DANDY

*She throws LULUBELL over her shoulder.*

I love you mother.

LULUBELL

Quit your squirming.

MAMA DANDY

Can we stop for an ice cream cone on the way home?

LULUBELL

If you say one more word, I'ma rip out your vocal chords.

MAMA DANDY

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER is alone. He looks down at the card.*

*The VOICEMAN comes back, lip all poked out.*

VOICEMAN

I thought she was good.

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER holds up his hand. Silence.*

*The VOICEMAN clears his throat. He steps behind the CIRCUS HUSTLER.*

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER moves his lips.*

VOICEMAN:

THE DIABLERIE OPENS IN TWO DAYS!

RATTLING GROWLING VOICE

THE DIABLERIE OPENS IN TWO DAYS!

6.

*Percussion and accordions.*

*A bit of light buzzing.*

*All in shadows.*

*SHE, before her rehearsal.*

*A few bees buzz around her. She holds her index finger at eye level.*

SHE

Now now my dear you absolutely cannot take things so personally. If you get upset over things that do not matter you will spend your whole life within a stupor of neuroses. And that would be unfortunate wouldn't it? Absolutely, devastatingly unfortunate. So. From now on. If you feel the slightest tinge of upset you must tell me immediately so that we may settle things. Am I clear? Do you understand? You do? So we're clear. Wonderful. Just wonderful. Absolutely so. What's that? A storm, you say?

*A storm.*



*The CIRCUS HUSTLER appears, watching her.*

SHE

Why I do believe you're right. Such a pity.  
There's been such a change in the air these days and I don't like it one bit. I don't like it at all. You either? Oh I'm so glad we've made up...

7.

*APOLLONIA in front of her GIANT TV set.  
THREE'S head pokes through.*

WOMAN

I love you.

MAN

I love you.

APOLLONIA

Blech. I ain't watching no lovey dovey love story unless I'm in a lovey dovey mood and that is a mood I am definitely not in.

*She changes the channel.*

CHEF

The thing about trout is this, you really gotta make 'em sing on the grill if you want them to taste good.  
Can you make your trout sing?

*Click.*

WEATHER

Rain.

*Click.*

*DIRT appears. HE is in a whole other world.*

*As he talks, THREE slowly disappears.*

DIRT

Have you ever wondered what wonder looks like?  
Now I'm not talking about trains  
Or planes

Or automobiles  
I'm talking about genuine wonder, the kind that sends a special shiver down your spine.  
Call me, and I'll show you wonder.

*He unveils his WONDER BOX.*

*APOLLONIA picks up a phone.*

*DIRT answers.*

Hello?

DIRT

You can't just box up wonder.

APOLLONIA

I can.

DIRT

It ain't possible.  
And I was just calling to tell you that.

APOLLONIA

It is most certainly possible  
Apollonia.

DIRT

...

APOLLONIA

...

DIRT

Show me then.

APOLLONIA

*He is gone.*

*A loud knock at the door.*

*B.*

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER eats soup from a can.*

*A slight dribble oozes down his chin.*

*He wipes it with his hand.*

PROJECTION

Not good enough.

*He reaches for his handkerchief.*

*A change.*

*Everything moves slowly as the CIRCUS  
HUSTLER pulls nothing out of his pocket.*

PROJECTION

His handkerchief is gone.

*He looks away toward the outside. He looks  
back, realizing.*

PROJECTION

Lulubell.

*Everything snaps back to normal.*

*He runs out.*

9.

RATTLING GROWLING VOICE

And now, the Paper Man.

*The PAPER MAN.*

*As he speaks, APOLLONIA and DIRT meet.  
The WONDERBOX is between them.*

PAPER MAN

You want to know what a deal is? A deal is an agreement between two individuals: said individual a and said individual b. These said individuals say that they will do something for the other. What that something is is generally defined in verbal or paper terms, and more frequently than not these said deals amongst these said individuals can last for any said amount of time – there is no specific length in which every deal must profligate. That wasn't the word I was looking for.

So, what is their deal?

*A chicken runs by.*

BOCK, BOCK, BEGOCK

PROJECTOR

I'm sorry. That's my chicken.

PAPER MAN

*The PAPER MAN runs after the chicken.*

Ain't it funny?

APOLLONIA

What's that?

DIRT

How just a few minutes ago you was inside my tv,  
But now you're standing right here  
In my house.

APOLLONIA

Call it a feeling.

DIRT

What?

APOLLONIA

A feeling you'd call.

DIRT

*Canned laughter.*

You knew I was gonna call you?

APOLLONIA

I sure did.

DIRT

Your eyes look like hypnotics.

APOLLONIA

I'm Dirt.

DIRT

Apollonia.

APOLLONIA

Nice to meet you  
Apollonia.

DIRT

Well.  
You gonna show me that wonder or not?

APOLLONIA

Certainly, certainly,  
Just place your face here  
And turn this crank  
Here  
And

DIRT

*APOLLONIA puts her face to the WONDER  
BOX.*

*A sort of pop music.*

*Everything spins. They are disorienting.  
They are the entire world.*

*GRIM emerges from inside it.*

*It stops.*

I ain't never.

APOLLONIA

*She puts her head back to the box.  
Everything goes back to disorientation.*

*It stops.*

That really is wonder.  
...  
Are you planning to stay?  
I don't get many visitors so things are  
things  
But  
You can stay here.

APOLLONIA

*DIRT flashes a wild smile.*

10.

*LULUBELL sucks her sucker in the front yard. In her hair is a bow crafted from the handkerchief she stole. She twirls and curtsies.*

LULUBELL

I've never been so furious in all my life.  
That detestable excuse for a man has all but ruined me  
Oh!  
I swoon!  
How will I ever recover?  
How will I, mother?  
Mother!

MAMA DANDY

(unseen)

I'm busy!

LULUBELL

Don't be silly, mother.  
Come watch your Lulubell show that chump just what he's missing.

*She presses the button on her baby boombox. A free show for all that want to watch.*

*As she does this, MAMA DANDY appears. She is in her room. She can't see LULUBELL and LULUBELL can't see her.*

MAMA DANDY

That there is the only mistake I ever made. As soon as she was outta my she---hole I knew she was the devil hisself. I swear her eyes glowed red the first time I looked at 'em straight. I been weary of her ever since and I been careful not to make the same mistake twice.

You ever felt like you was some kind of dirt in your own eyeball?

*She lets out a hacking cough.*

MAMA DANDY

I used to smoke fourteen and a half cigarettes a day. That was before I met Roger. He's got just one leg, but he certainly knows how to use it. Now I smoke twenty---

eight a day and I could smoke forty---five if I wanted because Roger's get it for me if I asked. All I gotta do is ask. He even brought me a watermelon yesterday.

*Hacking cough.*

MAMA DANDY

The twit had even picked all the seeds out himself. O'course I sent it right back home with him when I found out he had got his grubby hands all over my watermelon but that's not the point.

*Cough.*

MAMA DANDY

The point is, is this...  
The point is...  
My point.

*Cough. A cough so bad she just may fall over dead.*

MAMA DANDY

What am I doing servicing a man who only brings me cigarettes and watermelon? I need a man who's got more than a cherry red Buick to his name. I need a man who's got a patch of watermelon and not just a hunk.

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER appears next to LULUBELL.*

*LULUBELL stops dancing.*

LULUBELL

I knew you'd have cotton candy dreams after seeing me dance.  
I forgive you for how poorly you treated me yesterday.  
Partners?

*She curtsies and sticks out her hand.*

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER reaches out his hand and yanks the handkerchief bow out of LULUBELL'S hair.*

MAMA DANDY

I need a man who's gonna make me the queen of something. The queen of...

*LULUBELL screams.*

You monster!  
He's here, mother!  
He's back!

LULUBELL

*He rips a flower up out of the garden.*

He?  
The Circus Hustler!  
That's what I'll be,  
Mama Diablerie.

MAMA DANDY

*She runs outside, her robe hanging open.*

Why hello!

MAMA DANDY

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER is gone.*

I'll never forget this for as long as I live.

LULUBELL

Come back, darling!  
Special nights are my specialty!  
Come back!

MAMA DANDY

*(To LULUBELL.)*

You did this  
You  
You made him leave!

11.

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER, alone. In his hands  
is the freshly plucked flower.*

*He brings it to his nose and inhales a deep,  
deep breath.*

*The flower wilts at his touch.*

12.

*APOLLONIA watches DIRT sleep.*



*She throws her apple up and down.*

APOLLONIA

*(singing)*

If apples were oranges and oranges were pears  
I'd save them all for my baby  
And where will you find me in I don't know when  
Nowhere without my sweetest baby

*DIRT wakes up.*

APOLLONIA

Mornin'

DIRT

Good morning.

APOLLONIA

Things look different today.  
Inside that box, I mean.

DIRT

Your idea of wonder is different this morning than it was last night  
Apollonia.

APOLLONIA

How come you knew my name?

DIRT

You told me.

APOLLONIA

I'm not talking about that  
I mean in the television set  
Before I ever saw you, you said my name.  
You said "Apollonia" just like that.

DIRT

Oh.

*Canned laughter.*

DIRT

Well  
Apollonia.

The reason I knew your name is quite simple  
And quite funny  
One day I was outside peddling something and bam it hit me.

APOLLONIA

What hit you?

*He pulls out a steering wheel.*

DIRT

This.

APOLLONIA

This hit you?

DIRT

Yes and then I commenced to having the most vivid dream I've ever had.  
And in this dream I saw wonder.  
And I saw you.  
And I knew one day I would sell wonder  
And meet you.

APOLLONIA

You dreamed about me?  
Really?

DIRT

I sure did.

APOLLONIA

I feel like my face is inside a fire pit.

*The DIABLERIE comes to life in the distance.*

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER'S loud whistle blows.*

*Her CALENDAR. TODAY IS THE DAY.*

APOLLONIA

I almost forgot!  
How could I forget?  
Come on! We gotta get going the Diablerie is about to start.

*She drags him towards the ruckus.*

13.

*A LITTLE BOY waiting in line by the  
DIABLERIE sign. He chomps on gum as he  
talks to an invisible somebody we can't see.*

LITTLE BOY

My pap's a doctor so I know all about heartbeats and stuff, and I know that if you don't got a heartbeat then you don't got a life to live. Now this circus has a heartbeat and when I was little I used to think that it was a weak beat, like maybe it was almost dead, like one of them old ladies up in the cemetery there.

But now that I'm older I see that this circus has got a heartbeat that beats real strong and fast even when it looks like its dead. Because the people ain't dead, and as long as they're alive, the heart will beat. It just might take a good listener like me and my pap to be able to find it.

But doesn't it just look like everything in the whole world has been thrown into this one spot?

*Chew. Chew. Chew. He moves up in the line.*

Who am I here for?

Can't you tell?

Well then you better get yourself a new pair of spectacles because the way I see it, and I didn't always think like this before, but I know it now, the way I see it is this: She's what makes this circus beat like a firecracker. When she sings to the bees she makes me want to cry or scream or eat a whole bucket of fried chicken and and and I ain't felt like that since my mam died.

You know. I heard my pap say one time that She used to be married to the Circus Hustler, 'cept when the big bump came along she forgot all about him. But I wouldn't begrudge her that one bit because he's just about the ugliest feller I ever saw.

*He moves up in line.*

Finally. I thought we wasn't ever going to get to things.

*He sticks his gum on a trashcan and  
disappears inside.*

14.

RATTLING GROWLING VOICE

She,

Our beautiful  
Buzzing  
Bee  
Prophetess

*A lonely beehive. A swarm of black bees  
emerge.*

*SHE steps out. She sings an opera of glottal  
stops.*

*As SHE does this, the bees circle her. She  
holds up her hands and they land on her  
fingertips. She brings her fingertips to her  
ears. She listens. She sings. She listens.*

SHE

My friends. Hello. Thank you so very much for joining me and my lovelies on this inaugural evening. We are very pleased that you could make it out. Now, I'm sure you all have a great many questions to ask us so rather than bask in pleasantries let's get right to the business of things, who's first now?

*The AUDIENCE is made up of a bunch of  
DEVILS.*

Yes. You in the grey.

GREY

You think I'ma live to be one hundred?

*SHE purrs to the bees. She listens intently.*

SHE

No.  
And you there, in the front.

FRONT

I haven't passed a bowel in days. You think I'm going to explode?

*Purr.*

SHE

Only time will tell.  
And you sir?

SIR

You 'spect I'm gon' win da LOTto?

*She purrs.*

SHE

It's very unlikely.  
The blonde, next.

BLONDE

Do your bees think we going to have a winter harsh as the last?

*The bees buzz loudly.*

*The lights fade.*

SHE

It's okay my babies.  
I can't hear you when you're all talking at once.  
Shh shh.

*(to the blonde)*

Look what you did!  
Why would you ever ask them about the weather?

*Her voice turns to nothing.*

*The buzzing bees cover all the light. Black.*

15.

*A chicken runs through. The PAPER MAN  
chases after it.*

PAPER MAN

Now I certainly did not mean for this to happen.  
I am not supposed to be in this part.  
This is a mistake.  
Please squint your eyes and bask in the Moroccan winds.  
No,  
that wasn't right.

16.

*Just outside MAMA DANDY'S HOUSE OF  
PLEASHUR.*

*You can still hear the Diablerie.*

*LULUBELL jumps on a jump rope. .*

LULUBELL

Skip.  
Skip.  
Skip. To. Me. Loo.  
I can't hear you.  
No. I. Can't.

*The bee lands on her arm.  
LULUBELL looks at it.*

LULUBELL

Why hello there Mr. Bee.  
A real pleasure to meet you.  
My name's Lulubell.  
Don't you think that's a horribly pretty name?  
I thought you did.  
Mr. Bee I wonder, how come you want to buzz on me?

*She picks the bee up and lets him crawl  
around her hands.*

*SHE in her tent far away watches a bee  
crawl around her hands. SHE is content.*

LULUBELL

Did you come all this way just to be friends with lovely little Lulubell? I bet you did. I would travel far away just to be friends with me, too.

But

you know,

you've got a stinger, and that makes me feel a little upset inside my tummy.

I don't too much care for things that might snap back and bite me.

You wouldn't bite me now, would you Mr. Bee?

No I didn't think you would. Who would ever want to hurt Lulubell? She's such a darling.

It's a crying shame I can't trust you because you came from that stupid, boring, no good bee lady and she comes from that

STUPID

BORING

NO GOOD DIABLERIE.

I would surely love to trust you though.

But

Some things just make my loving little heart crack to bits.

*LULUBELL squeezes the bee. Puts him on her arm, making him sting her.*

PROJECTOR

STING!

*The moment the bee stings LULUBELL. SHE lets out a gasp. She looks out into the distance, perplexed.*

*SHE disappears.*

LULUBELL

Ow! You're a mean little devil.

*She swallows the bee.*

PROJECTOR

GULP!

*She musters up some tears.*

LULUBELL

Mother, mother! He stung me mother!  
A dirty ole bee stung your poor little Lulubell!  
Save me mother!

*The DIABLERIE is so very loud.*

LULUBELL

Shut up!  
Shut up! Shut up! Shut up!  
I'll eat a whole chocolate cake the day you finally burn down. What's the point of seeing a show if I'm not in it?  
Mother! Mother, my arm!

*MAMA DANDY doesn't come.*

LULUBELL

Maybe I should burn it down.

...  
Yes. Maybe I should.

*LULUBELL picks up her jump rope. She jumps.*

17.

What I'm about to show you will  
Amaze  
Fascinate  
Tantalize  
Titillate  
Your senses  
Your eyes will  
EXPLODE  
With the  
WONDER  
From within.

DIRT

*A puff of smoke.*

Oh you give me the shivers!

APOLLONIA

*A rumbling inside the tent.*

Shh, shh! This might be Grim!

APOLLONIA

Toothman...

RATTLING GROWLING VOICE

*APOLLONIA peeks inside the tent.*

*The TOOTH MAN holds up a tooth.*

TOOTH MAN

You know how long this little critter'll last ya? Well well well I can't count high enough to tell you the days and I doubt that you could either, but I can guarantee that this ole chap will be white and shiny long after you're all rotted up under the ground.

The way I do it is simple.

I open your mouth. Take out some of my super tight tooth puddy, put in just a dab (because that's all it takes!) then I just eee---ooh eee---ooh screw the tooth right into its place and by golly you've got yourself a brand new pearly white.

*Applause.*



*A sign appears. Wonder 25 cents. DIRT hammers it into the ground.*

APOLLONIA

Blegh  
I don't want no stranger's teeth, that's for sure.  
I wonder when Grim's coming out. When she comes you have to promise me you'll watch, okay? Because you ain't lived until you've felt your heart break.

...

What are you doing?

DIRT

Making a sign.

APOLLONIA

I see that  
But  
I mean, I thought, I mean I didn't know you wanted anybody 'sides me to see that wonder.

DIRT

Don't you think everybody deserves wonder?

APOLLONIA

Of course I think that  
But I thought maybe everybody else could just see it from their tvs or radios or diablerie or something.  
I wasn't saying that I thought that nobody should...

...

I was just wondering about it  
Ain't I allowed to wonder about stuff, uh uh  
YOUWANNAHEARASECRET?

DIRT

What?

APOLLONIA

It's something I ain't never said aloud before.  
I just been keeping it inside and sitting on it all these years.  
But I should probably just let it out 'cause I think I trust you so here goes,  
Grim's my mama.

*The saddest notes you've ever heard.*

APOLLONIA

I mean, she ain't never said that or anything, but sometimes you just know when you see your mama that she's your mama, and I ain't never had a mama before, but when she looks at me I can feel the crack in her heart that she gets from missin' her baby girl and I just know that that baby girl is me.

The first time I saw her I knew this was true. And I stopped doing anything besides waiting for the next time I might see her again so that she might remember.

Sometimes I feel like I'm the loneliest person in the whole world, and then I see her and know that she's the loneliest, too.

*An uncomfortable smile.*

*APOLLONIA quickly drops a quarter in the WONDER BOX and turns the crank.*

*GRIM'S shadow dances along the walls.*

APOLLONIA

It's different this time, too.

She's almost here, I think.

You think you're gonna stay for a long while?

DIRT

I expect I just might.

APOLLONIA

In my living room?

DIRT

If you'll have me.

APOLLONIA

'Cause you came here just for me.

You like tv?

DIRT

That's where I came from, isn't it?

APOLLONIA

You'll watch it with me?

Every night?

DIRT

Every night.

APOLLONIA

And I'll sell wonder with you every day?

*Toothy grin, wink, canned laughter.*

18.

*A buzzing.*

*SHE sits at tea with her bees.*

SHE

A bit of honey?  
Oh don't mind if I do.  
You taste so sweet this time of year.

*SHE sucks the remnants off of each finger.*

*SHE stops.*

SHE

Now.  
I think we should talk about what happened in the show.  
Don't fret, my darlings, Mama isn't mad, she's just  
Concerned.  
What were you trying to tell me?  
What was it?  
What?  
Who?  
Who's upsetting you?  
I see.

*SHE speaks loudly to an unseen person.*

SHE

There's no use standing in the shadows,  
Show yourself.

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER appears.*

SHE

Well.  
What is it?  
Is this in reference to today's show?  
I thought it went fine.  
That audience got exactly what they paid for.  
A show.

We gave them a show.

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER shakes his head no.*

SHE

Oh.

You know I hate it when you stand there like that without saying anything, what is it?

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER shakes his head no.*

SHE

Oh.

You know I hate it when you stand there like that without saying anything, spit it out.

*He only stares at her.*

*SHE looks behind him.*

SHE

Where's the man with your voice?

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER gives her the handkerchief.*

*SHE does not take it.*

SHE

What's that?

*He takes the handkerchief and tries to show it to her.*

SHE

Stop it.  
Stop.

*He shows her one last time.*

SHE

I don't know what it is you're trying to say.  
But,  
I expect it's nothing at all

*SHE turns.*

SHE

Now leave us be.  
And don't come back until you actually have a voice.

*He leaves.*

*SHE checks to make sure he is gone.*

SHE

You can't fool me my darlings, I know when something is wrong.  
Please tell mama what's bothering you.

*She brings her finger to her ear.*

*She laughs.*

SHE

Oh you're too much, just too much.  
But  
you're going to have to tell me one day.

*The swarm circles her in a tight hug.*

19.

*Dawn.*

PROJECTOR

COCK A DOODLE DOO!

*MAMA DANDY slowly dresses herself in  
mourning wear.*

*There's nothing but nubs of cigarette's left  
that she sucks the life out of.*

MAMA DANDY

Roger ain't been by in who knows when.

*The saddest face you've ever seen.*

My Roger. Boohoo.

When I first saw him, I thought to myself, "He surely ain't a good for nothing like the rest of 'em. He would never hurt my insides and be just one of them masses of expectation. That's not my Roger."

I ain't seen him in one,  
two,

two whole days. But he never misses an appointment.

He ain't been here ever since that hunk of a Circus Hustler left. I'm sure that Circus Hustler left my house and then went and chopped him in two.

Poor Roger, killed by another soon---to---be lover's hand.

One time I was washing my silk underpants and he told me I'd never have to wash 'em again. He said he'd always buy me new pairs and just keep my drawers filled with the silkiest underpants he could find.

But Roger couldn't keep me in silky drawers and instead started buying me the god damn fruit of the loom.

*Hack.*

*She remembers her infinite sadness.*

Roger.

Dead.

Dead.

Now I'm just an ungodly woman with no clientele to my name.

And now he's dead. Dead. Dead.

Rest in peace, Roger.

Lucky for me there's nothing more attractive than a widow.

*She peeks out her window. Diablerie.*

20.

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER looks out his window and listens to SHE'S glottal opera under the moonlight.*

*He turns on the radio. The same opera mama played in the beginning drowns SHE out.*

PROJECTION

And now, the Circus Hustler tries to wrangle  
The moon.

*He throws a rope out the window toward the sky, wrangling the moon. As he pulls, he mouths the words, closing his eyes tight.*

*He stands for some time, singing and pulling before the VOICEMAN enters. The VOICEMAN turns down the opera's volume. The CIRCUS HUSTLER'S incoherent wails sing along to the music.*

*The VOICEMAN turns off the music.*

VOICEMAN

She ain't never gonna remember you no matter how hard you try to make her. Her brain just ain't meant for that sort of remembering after it's misremembered so much.

*He pokes his head out the window, following the rope's path with his eyes.*

VOICEMAN

And that's not gonna work.

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER grabs VOICEMAN by the ear. He drags him outside.*

21.

VOICEMAN

Why are you so preoccupied with her all of a sudden?  
You used to be content just watching her.

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER and the VOICEMAN watch SHE'S silhouette.*

*The bees buzz all around her.*

SHE

Are you sure?  
You can feel it?  
No, no, no I don't doubt you, it's only –  
You think it's the end?

VOICEMAN

What?

SHE

The end  
Of everything?  
The weather tells you so?

This it'nt right, Mr. C,  
I just knew something was in the air.

Who's there?

You!

Get out of here you freak  
You filthy mongrel!  
Get out!  
And don't you ever bother me again!  
Just leave me be!

22.

Do you know what it's like having a hundred thoughts in your head but only saying somebody else's words outloud?

VOICEMAN

SHE

*The VOICEMAN runs away. The CIRCUS HUSTLER does not notice.*

*SHE opens her tent.*

SHE

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER looks behind him, notices the VOICEMAN'S absence.*

*He tries to speak, but no real sounds come out.*

*He blows his whistle.*

*No one comes.*

SHE

*The VOICEMAN is alone under the full moon. A rope, wrapped around its middle.*

*Elsewhere DIRT and APOLLONIA slowly, very slowly, sell their wonder.*

VOICEMAN



DIRT

Have you ever wondered what wonder looks like?

VOICEMAN

I used to be something, you know. Something like brave but I wouldn't call it that. Something like if you dared me to do something I'da done it before you even finished just what you were trying to say. I didn't care what it was. I only cared about the after feeling of triumph or excitement or happy or something. It was something. I haven't put a head in my mouth since before we was stuck. And now, and now, everything's about to end.

DIRT

It's something you must see to believe.

VOICEMAN

This is the end.

DIRT

This is wonder.

VOICEMAN

Nobody's asked me to do it and it and it don't seem right to just go on and take off somebody's head without somebody else asking you to first. Without somebody wanting you to first. You can't do things just because you want to because that don't make much sense.

*DIRT slowly gets down on one knee. As the VOICEMAN talks, he produces a cracker jack ring.*

VOICEMAN

But sometimes, just sometimes, I get this craving, this this hankering for the crunch of the beak.

You know what sound a chicken makes just before it's head is bit off?

You ever rubbed your fingernails on the outside of a balloon? It's like that. Except instead of a pop it's more of a crunch smooch once you break the surface.

You probably wouldn't really crave it unless you've done it before. It's something. It's just...

You can't blame me for wanting to eat one.

*A chicken appears.*

It can't be.

VOICEMAN

BOCK  
BOCK  
BEGOCK!

PROJECTOR

I wonder if I...

VOICEMAN

BOCK!

PROJECTOR

*In a swoop the VOICEMAN grabs the chicken. As he bites down on the chicken's head, there is the squeaking sound of a balloon twisting. There is a crunch. It's been squeezed too hard.*

*APOLLONIA swoons.*

I ain't never been so happy in all my life.

APOLLONIA

23.

*In the distance, the DIABLERIE looms.*

*LULUBELL sucks on her sucker.*

*All around her is dynamite.*

*She still carries her baby boombox.*

*As she sings, a GROUP OF DEVILS comes out and dances a hoedown along side of her.*

LULUBELL

*(singing)*

Ohhh I have  
pieces of dy---no-  
--mite  
Dy---NO---mite

Gonna blow up that  
'cause it just ain't right  
just ain't right  
They treated me so bad so bad so bad  
When all I ever wanted was to  
Be  
Their  
Darlin'.  
I have pieces of dy---no---mite  
Dy---NO---mite.  
Tehe.

*She stops singing.*

LULUBELL

This is for all the little girls whose hearts you broke when you treated them badly  
But mostly  
This is for me, because I'm the one who deserves to be in the Diablerie more than  
anybody else.  
You gonna curse the day you ever begrudged the lovely  
The darling  
Lulubell.

*LULUBELL bends to turn on the boombox.*

24.

*Big door slam.*

*APOLLONIA is slipping on a wedding dress.*

APOLLONIA

Now you just stay right there,  
You can turn on one of them lovey dovey shows on the tv set.  
If things get fuzzy you just scratch those rabbit ears, and that'll make everything  
clear.  
I gotta go talk to Grim, I mean, mama.  
And when I get through with talking to her I'ma come right back here and I hope  
she'll be with me and then me and you are gonna be married.

25.

*The PAPER MAN carries a chicken with its  
head cut off in his arms.*

PAPER MAN

This was not the deal.  
I did not agree to anybody harming my poor little beautiful darling.

She didn't do a thing to a soul. All she did was lay golden eggs for me to enjoy. You know there's no greater gift to a man than a lovely hen? The chicken sexer trains for years and years to intuitively know with just a squeeze whether a chick is a hen or a rooster. And with just a squeeze I was given this lovely girl.

She was so beautiful.

She was my everything.

A dream.

This was not the deal.

*He places his chicken on the ground in a tiny chicken funeral.*

*He crosses himself.*

*He is gone.*

*The LITTLE BOY comes in, still chomping the same old gum.*

*He notices the chicken funeral.*

*He kneels down to pray, before realizing he is at a chicken funeral and that is not what you do at chicken funerals.*

*He picks up the bird and presses his ear to its headless body.*

LITTLE BOY

A weak beat. You've got a weak beat, Misser.

Things just ain't the same around here no more. I felt it even before my Pap heard it. You gotta get yourself up off the ground, Misser. Laying around like a puss ain't going to do much to help this situation, now is it?

*He squeezes the chicken. An egg pops out.*

*He bites into it.*

LITTLE BOY

Hard boiled.

*Thunder.*

*APOLLONIA outside GRIM'S tent. Suddenly, everything feels so much darker. Almost like it's the coldest place in the bleakest corner of the world.*

APOLLONIA

Grim?  
Grim?  
You in there, Grim?

APOLLONIA

It's me.  
Apollonia. Your baby girl you done forgot about all that time ago. But I didn't forget about you, mama. I always remembered. I been remembering since the day I was born.

I'm about to get married, mama. I found him inside the tv, and this here is the first time I left him since that night.

You remember that time you danced all cold and slow and sad---like? That's how I feel every time I go to sleep and you don't give me no kiss goodnight.

You listening, Grim?  
Grim?

Do you ever wonder what wonder looks like?

Every time you look in the box it's just a little bit different, but mine always looks like some version of this. You come out of this tent and look at me with your big gray eyes and say "Apollonia" and you know just what Apollonia means. Then you take my hand and we go and watch the shows on my beat up old tv, just you 'n me ' n Dirt.

Oh, and you don't feel like the saddest clown in the world no more, you feel like the happiest.

*GRIM'S shadow. It feels so big but so far.*

APOLLONIA

Mama?

*The VOICEMAN walks by, dazed. There's chicken blood all over his mouth.*

*GRIM'S shadow is gone.*

APOLLONIA

You scared me.  
I was just looking for Grim.  
You seen her?  
I'm getting married today, and there's nothing more I'd like than her by my side.

*He stops and looks at her.*

VOICEMAN

She ain't never gonna be there for you.

*He keeps on going.*

*APOLLONIA looks inside. There's nothing there but a cement wall. On that wall is a clown with a wonder box next to it.*

27.

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER stands by his window tugging on the rope. He stops, and dips his hands in a pot of honey, hopefully this will make for better traction on the rope.*

*The buzzing of bees in the distance.*

*He pauses.*

*MAMA DANDY barges in.*

MAMA DANDY

Why hello there.  
What's that you're doing?

*She pokes her head out the window.*

MAMA DANDY

Is that for Mama Dandy?

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER looks at her. He shakes his head.*

MAMA DANDY

That's all right.

There are no expectations, handsome.  
May I sit?

*She sits.*

MAMA DANDY

My Roger died. It's all very tragic. He was a very special man to me.  
Did you do it?

*He shakes his head no.*

MAMA DANDY

Of course you did it.  
You don't mean imply that I did it, now do ya?  
HA!  
I'm left all alone.  
And I know you are a very lonely man. And you look like you might be a very special man, too. So, I've stopped by to give you an offer I don't think you can refuse.

*She takes his sticky fingers in hers. She sucks the honey off of them.*

MAMA DANDY

Mmmm. Sweet.  
I came by to tell you, you can have me if you want me.

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER only stares at her.*

MAMA DANDY

Mama Diablerie's got such a nice ring to it.  
You think about what I said now.

*He returns to his rope and gives it one final tug.*

28.

*SHE gets ready for her show, one last time.*

*APOLLONIA is tearing everything up looking for DIRT.*

*LULUBELL does a slow motion ditty, dancing with a stick of dynamite.*

SHE

They see  
And I tell  
Together we predict everything.

*A few notes of the glottal opera.*

APOLLONIA

Dirt?  
Dirt?  
I told you to stay put, silly.

SHE

They will not tell me how it will happen exactly  
But  
...  
It feels like the moon has fell out the sky.

APOLLONIA

Dirt please, this ain't funny anymore.  
Where are you?

SHE

I think that at one time I was someone else.

*APOLLONIA looks at the big television with  
rabbit ears.*

*There's just a lonely steering wheel inside.*

APOLLONIA

Dirt?

*He's gone.*

*LULUBELL brings the dynamite closer and  
closer to her mouth.*

SHE

But none of that matters.  
This world is going to end  
And that is my final prophesy.

LULUBELL bites off the tip.

29.



*The CIRCUS HUSTLER holds a special something very near his chest.*

*He walks toward SHE'S tent.*

*SHE sings the saddest glottal opera there ever was.*

*He leaves the moon on her doorstep.*

30.

*APOLLONIA sits in a heap, crying on the ground.*

*The TOOTHMAN stares at her.*

TOOTH MAN

Tissue?

*A TISSUE appears.*

*APOLLONIA takes the tissue and blows her nose.*

APOLLONIA

Everything's just like it was before  
I done looked everywhere for him and he's disappeared  
He  
Left me.

TOOTH MAN

Look at me.  
You want my honest opinion?

APOLLONIA

Yes.

TOOTH MAN

He probably left you because he couldn't find a single tooth in your gums.  
Gentleman rarely look to a defect when hoping to mingle their genetic pools.

*He gives APOLLONIA another tissue.*

*APOLLONIA cries and cries. She blows her nose and a tooth pops out of the tissue.*

TOOTH MAN

Now remember, men can always be tricked and one tooth is just as good as the next.

*She looks at the tooth. He is gone.*

*She has an idea.*

*She pulls a quarter out of her pocket. She dumps it in the WONDER BOX.*

*She cranks and watches.*

*APOLLONIA looks back into the wonder box.*

APOLLONIA

It ain't nothing but black.

31.

*The cemetery at the top of the hill.*

*Everything is dead.*

*The grave of LITTLE ONE. Claydog's collar hangs to its side.*

PROJECTOR

*RIP LITTLE ONE  
AND CLAYDOG*

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER stands in front of it.*

*He kneels.*

*He weeps a silent weep.*

*At the DIABLERIE, APOLLONIA walks a mourning march. With every step she gets slower and slower.*

*The hive buzzes.*

*A bee lands on top of the LITTLE ONE'S grave.*

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER smooshes it with his hand. He pulls the stinger out of his palm.*

32.

*The dynamite pops all around LULUBELL.*

*The patriotic little ditty continues to blast out of the baby boombox.*

*It feels like the fourth of July.*

*LULUBELL is trapped.*

*The DEVILS clap with the pops.*

PROJECTOR

POP!  
POP!  
POP!

LULUBELL

Mother!  
Mother!  
Save me mother!

*LULUBELL looks at the DEVILS.*

LULUBELL

Save me please!

*The popping gets closer and closer to the DIABLERIE.*

LULUBELL

Mother?

PROJECTOR

POP!

33.

RATTLING GROWLING VOICE

And now  
The Toothman inserts the teeth.

*The TOOTHMAN stands next to APOLLONIA. She remains underneath the death shroud.*

TOOTHMAN

Ladies and Gentlemen, gentlemen and ladies. Have you ever wondered what it would be like to never ever shove your teeth into a big juicy hunk of meat? Or if you are so inclined, to chip away on a crisp carrot, complementing a lovely chipped ham sandwich? What I mean to say, is this: have you ever, and I mean ever, gummed your food unable to serrate or chomp or chew?

No.

I didn't think so.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, may I present to YOU:

APOLLONIA!

PROJECTOR

WAIT!

RATTLING GROWLING VOICE

Don't!

*The TOOTHMAN rips off the sheet and unveils APOLLONIA.*

*She smiles rows of mismatched teeth.*

APOLLONIA

Can I just say one thing?

Just one thing?

I

I

I never wanted no teeth before this day.

Come back.

*Then, suddenly, a slight sneeze.*

PROJECTOR

Pop!

*34.*

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER stands in the front yard.*

MAMA DANDY

I knew you'd come to your senses about us.  
You can't much fight fate.  
Why don't you come on inside. Mama's got something real special to show you.

*They are in a whole other world.*

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER stands in front of  
MAMA DANDY*

*MAMA DANDY'S robe slips off her shoulder.*

*Meanwhile,*

*SHE dances among the bees. She sings a  
tragic glottal opera.*

MAMA DANDY

You're gonna give mama all the goodness in the world.

*She smashes her lips against his.*

*A deafening scream. The bees swallow SHE  
up.*

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER looks. The  
DIABLERIE sizzles in the distance.*

PROJECTOR

Pop!  
Pop!  
Pop!

SHE

My babies!  
My babies!  
Who keeps making that sound?  
You're scaring them!  
You're hurting me!  
What are you  
What are you

*The buzzing is too loud. You can't hear her.*

MAMA DANDY

What are you waiting for?  
Kiss me again.

*MAMA DANDY throws herself on top of him, but its not what she expected. She pulls away with a mouth covered in blood.*

35.

*APOLLONIA sneezes violently and tries to rip the teeth out of her mouth.*

*The TOOTHMAN tries to catch them but the DEVILS catch them instead.*

TOOTH MAN

I guess what they say is true.  
Not everybody is meant to have teeth.  
Not everybody's body wants teeth.

*APOLLONIA sputters.  
She falls to the ground.*

*Apples rain from the sky.*

36.

*The dynamite's pops have turned to fire.*

*DEVILS are hunched over SHE'S bee--covered body. They eat her innards.*

*GRIM waits in the shadows.*

*The CIRCUS HUSTLER throws himself on top of SHE.*

*The bees and the DEVILS eat him, too.*

*The bee song is louder than any before it.  
So loud your ears might explode.*

*And then,*

*The cool whistling of wind after a storm.*

*Tumbleweeds blow across the floor.*

*GRIM waits in the shadows. She steps out from behind the curtain, body part by body part.*

*She sways to the wind's noise.*

*GRIM comes out of the wall, moving her head to the sounds of the bees. She lifts her arms up, and down, swaying to the rhythm.*

*She walks over the WONDER BOX. She looks inside.*

*A white blinding light.*

*Black.*

PROJECTOR

RATTLING GROWLING VOICE

*End.*

FINIS.

You may now leave the  
DIABLERIE.