

# Wild Billy's Circus Story

Bruce Springsteen

The machinist climbs his Ferris wheel like a braid  
And the fire-eater's lyin' in a pool of sweat, victim of the heat wave  
Behind the tent, the hired hand tightens his legs on the sword  
swallower's blade  
Circus town's on the shortwave

Well, the runway lies ahead like a great false dawn  
Fat lady, big mama, Missy Bimbo sits in her chair and yawns  
And the man-beast lies in his cage sniffin' popcorn  
And the midget licks his fingers and suffers Missy Bimbo's scorn  
Circus town's been born

And a press roll drummer go, ballerina to-and-fro,  
cartwheelin' up on that tightrope  
With a cannon blast, lightnin' flash, movin' fast through the tent,  
Mars-bent  
He's gonna miss his fall, oh, God save the human cannonball  
And the flyin' Zambinis watch Margarita do her neck twist  
And the ringmaster gets the crowd to count along: 95, 96, 97

A ragged suitcase in his hand, he steals silently away from the  
circus grounds  
And the highway's haunted by the carnival sounds  
They dance like a great greasepaint ghost on the wind  
A man in baggy pants, a lonely face, a crazy grin  
Runnin' home to some small Ohio town  
Jesus, send some sweet women to save all your clowns

And Circus Boy dances like a monkey on barbed wire  
And the barker romances with a junkie, she's got a flat tire  
And now the elephants dance real funky and the band plays like  
a jungle fire  
Circus town's on the live wire

And the strong man Samson lifts the midget, little Tiny Tim, up  
on his shoulders, way up  
And carries him on down the midway, past the kids, past the sailors,  
to his dimly lit trailer  
And the Ferris wheel turns and turns like it ain't ever gonna stop  
And the circus boss leans over and whispers into the little boy's ear  
"Hey, son, you want to try the big top?  
All aboard, Nebraska's our next stop"