

The Greatest Show

Year 6 Show 2022

Song - The Greatest Show

(All cast members come on to the stage from the distance. Dancers take centre stage and perform. PT in a central position. Lots of energy and attitude. Different groups of circus performers take on different parts of the song)

Scene 1-

PT Barnum: Hello and Welcome to The Greatest Show. You have just had a brief glimpse of my show, they are all amazing people, but how did this show happen? Where did it come from? And the biggest question of all, why these people? What makes them special? All will become clear my friends. So sit back, and relax while I tell you our story and how my circus was created. It all started back when I was a boy.....

Barnum pointing to Barnum Jr - stood centre stage as Barnum walks away as the music starts. Barnum adult gives Barnum Jr his hat.

Scene 2 –

Towns folk wander on and off, making a busy street scene. A group of these townsfolk make comments about a group of people doing some street entertainment, booing and throwing things at them Some get upset and a few move on to a different place and try again. Barnum Jr waves to his Mother from across the stage and they meet each other CS.

The comments get louder and more deliberate

Towns folk 1: Get off our streets.

Townsfolk 2: We don't you want you around here.

Townsfolk 3: You are spoiling our beautiful town.

The entertainers start to stop and walk away one at a time.

BOY PT: Why are these people being horrible to the entertainers?

MUM: Because they look different to them

BOY PT: Well that's not a very nice thing to do

MUM: No it's not, just because someone is different to us doesn't make them bad or ugly

Towns folk group walk off stage proud of the fact that the performers have stopped and left

(**Heaviest man** walks past them crying)

BOY PT: Why doesn't someone help them?

MUM: Everyone is too busy with their own lives and problems. You can't help everyone.

(Boy stares at the last performer who has just left and thinks for a bit)

BOY PT: Everyone deserves some kindness..... I must find a way to help them.

Song 2 – Million Dreams

Boy PT starts off singing the song, Young PT eventually turns into the older PT near the end of the song).

Dancers on with this song – dreamlike / tent and stars.

Older PT enters and starts singing and takes hat from young PT. Then Charity joins him and dancers.

Finally, two girls join as children of PT and Charity and they dance together.

Narrator 1: Barnum sees an opportunity to give these people fame and fortune. He therefore goes on a hunt for curiosities and oddities.

Barnum, Charity and the two daughters hand out posters to members of the audience

Barnum: Do you want to audition? What about you sir/madam?

Bearded Lady is heard singing a song backstage. Barnum stops what he is doing and searches for the beautiful voice. He goes back to the stage and pretends to look everywhere.

PT Barnum: Who is that singing with an amazing voice?

Triplets: Oh, that's just Lettie.

(PT Barnum pulls the curtain back and gasps as he notices the beard. The bearded lady gets shy and anxious.)

PT Barnum: You are going to be in my show. You'll be a star! Triplets come with me too; you will be famous all over the world. Although, you will only get one wage between you..... *(The triplets look in disgust)* To begin with anyway (with a wink!)

Triplets giggle and look shocked at being chosen, they lure BL away from the laundry

Triplets: Come on Lettie – this is your chance. A chance to be heard.

Lettie: But what if they don't like me?

Triplets: Of course they will. You have to try. Come on we will be with you all the way!

Scene 3

Narrator 2: Barnum hunts far and wide for performers to join in with his show, word begins to spread and people are angry.

Performers are on stage being heckled by townsfolk. Screwed up pieces of paper are thrown at them as they pass by.

Townsfolk 4: Who do you think you are? You should be locked away!

Townsfolk 5: Don't make a fool of yourselves, go home where no one can see you.

Townsfolk 6: I'll make sure they leave our streets! *(Brings back his/her fist as it to hit one of the performers)*

PT BARNUM: *(stepping in front to protect the performer)* How dare you! Who are you to judge this person and throw things at them because they are different to you? These artists have been treated badly for far too long now and I have had enough.

Townsfolk 7: Who are you?

PT BARNUM: I am P.T. Barnum and I am going to help these people. Now go away and leave them alone.

Townsfolk 8: Ha! Good luck then, they need **A LOT** of help!

Townsfolk 9: Don't come crying to us when they all turn against you with their anger and theirweirdness!

(The townsfolk crowd exit just leaving him and the performers on stage)

Dogman: What do you mean you are going to help us?

Heaviest man: Yeah, no one ever helped us before.

PT Barnum: That's because they don't see what I see.

Captain Tom: What do you see? Most people don't see me at all!

PT Barnum: I see a brilliant show.

Tattooed Man: A what?

PT Barnum: A Show. (pause) We put together a performance and celebrate your talents to show everyone that being different is not so terrible.

Anne: So everyone can continue to laugh at us?

PT Barnum: Yes, but this time they will laugh with us because we will be very funny, beautiful and amazing.

Lion Tamer: I like it!

Mime artist: (actions she/he likes it too! Thumbs up at the crowd)

Tallest Man: I think that means she likes it!

PT Barnum: But first I need to see what is special about all of you...

Dogman: No problem, Come on guys.... Let's go!

(Up- beat music - playing in the background as the acts perform one by one. The acts go on briefly and perform and then exit the stage. The other performers clap and encourage each other – create a real buzz)

Anne: Well... What do you think?

(Long pause)

PT BARNUM: I think with a little work this show is going to be fantastic.

ALL Cheer and celebrate

PT BARNUM: Ok, ok now let's all go and get some sleep we have a big day tomorrow

Captain Tom: Why? What's going on?

PT BARNUM: Tomorrow.... we start rehearsals!

ALL Cheer – cast exit stage.

Scene 4

In the circus tent everyone is busy rehearsing, music is playing quietly in the background. We see the gymnasts practising their act. One act hurts the other one and they start arguing.

Triplet 1: Ow, why did you hit me?

Triplet 2: Me?..... You hit me first!

Triplet 3: No I didn't.

Triplets: Yes, you did. That's it, I've had enough I'm not working with you ever AGAIN!

(PT BARNUM walks past)

PT Barnum: What is going on? Honestly, it's like working with a group of Year 6 children!

Triplets: ALL SPEAK AT ONCE (ad lib!)

PT Barnum: That's enough! I want to see all of you in my office in 5 minutes..... GO!

(They leave, Tattoo Man enters the stage - in the background we see the mime artist practising and talking away)

PT Barnum: AhhMr Lion Tamer, Howie, how are thing's going with the lions?

Lion Tamer: Terrible actually. Look at my arms.... And legs..... And now I've only got 7 toes.

PT Barnum: Oh no. mmmmmm, well you don't need all your toes do you? (joking!)

Lion Tamer: Arrgh! The lions won't listen to me and keep biting me, I don't know what to do anymore.

PT Barnum: I have an idea. Just give me 5 minutes

Lion Tamer: Ok - but this can't go on much longer.

PT walks off and grabs a muzzle for The Lion Tamer to use. However, Lion Tamer doesn't look convinced.

Lion Tamer leaves, exasperated and in walks Bearded Lady. In the background we see the mime talking

Lettie : I can't..... I just can't do it.... I'm not strong enough.

PT Barnum: What do you mean – of course you can?

Lettie: No, I'm really weak and I can't be the strong, confident woman you need.

PT Barnum: It's ok, let me think about it, maybe I can help you and we can help each other.

The performers are all still practising and getting things wrong on stage. PT calls them together in a semi-circle around him.

PT Barnum: Right, everyone come here please..... Come on, everyone here where I can see you.

(Everyone gathers around)

PT Barnum: So.... everything isn't really going to plan right now, but I have some ideas to help you. First, Bearded Lady, I think you're not hairy enough look... (draws an extra-long beard on the poster). No one needs to know, just make it look good.

Lettie: *(COMBS HER BEARD)* Wow, that's great. Thank you

PT Barnum: Heaviest man, you say that you weigh 100 pounds. Now you weigh 500!

PT stuffs more pillows up the man's jumper.

Anne: What a great idea!

Everyone oh and aww - gasps

PT Barnum: Next is you, Anne. The rope we have is too thin so we make it bigger. Try it now.

Anne- Amazing, thanks

PT Barnum: Triplets, let's talk about your problems so you can all work together. Go and wait for me in my office and Mime..... where is the Mime? Come to me a moment, please.

Gets out the duct tape and tapes the mouth closed

To stop you talking you must wear this during rehearsals, mimes don't talk!

Mime artist tries to talk but just shakes head in the end.

PT Barnum: *(PT sighs with relief)* Ahhh it's all coming together. Tomorrow, people, we will knock their socks off with the talent and curiosity from across the World. So much so, they will tell their friends and family about us. Hundreds will flood through our doors.

(Instrumental as they exit the stage).

Scene 5

Narrator 3: All did not go quite to plan; they never knew if it would work or not...

Narrator 4: After the show, the performers meet together to discuss the show.

In the background we hear a lot of booing.

Anne: Well, that was terrible (she cries)

Lettie: Yeah, they hated us (she cries)

PT Barnum: Don't worry, it will get better

Mime Artist: *(thumbs down, sad face)*

Dogman: But they will still hate us.

PT Barnum: Don't worry, it will get better. Soon they will love you – I promise.

Mr Bennett: *(Walking past and sneering at PT Barnum)* - You really thought you could make a go of this didn't you?! I must admit, I came for a laugh, but oh my word, I was astounded by your audacity to believe you could make these creatures into a famous show! Ha-ha- you are the joke Barnum!

Mr Bennett looks at the group of performers as he leaves and stifles a laugh.

PT Barnum: *shouting at Mr Bennett as he leaves*

We're not over yet, we have many talented people- as you can obviously see...I just need someone who knows people...someone who has some money to help a struggling business.

Carlisle walks across the stage. Barnum notices him.

PT Barnum: Hey aren't you Mr Carlisle?

Carlisle: Yes, I am.

PT Barnum: The famous producer?

Carlisle: That depends. If you like the play that is on stage tonight, then yes. If you hated it, then no!

PT Barnum: Allow me to introduce myself. I am PT Barnum, owner of the best, most fantastical show around here and I need a partner. I hear you are the one who can introduce me to more highbrow audience members and sell more tickets?

Carlisle: Well that is correct. But why should I come and join you?

PT Barnum: Come on, don't you want to take a risk?

IF SONG ADDED IN (THE OTHER SIDE)?

THEN LEAVE SCENE HERE – IF SONG NOT IN THEN A BIT OF ACTING TO ADD IN.

SONG: Come Alive

The performers do part of the show again, dancers and singers join in. An audience (with Charity, daughters and Mr Bennett) begins to watch and gather round again. They are encouraged to give a standing ovation as the song reaches the end.

Lion Tamer: Yes! They love us

Tattoo man: I don't think it's just the audience either (*indicates Carlisle as he is smiling/grinning*).

Mime Artist: (nods her head)

Bearded Lady: That was great!

PT Barnum: You see, I told you one day they would see what I see. A beautiful group of people and my family (acknowledges his family)

Charity: It was a fantastic show – well done everyone.

Daughters: We loved it!

Narrator 5: Carlisle soon begins to see how great these people are and begins to have romantic feelings for Anne.

Carlisle: What if we rewrite the stars? Say you were meant to be mine? Nothing can keep us apart you are the one I was meant to find.

Song: Rewrite the Stars

Scene 6

Narrator 1: Carlisle decides that Barnum's show needs to be more upper class. They go to the opera to hear the beautiful Jenny Lind singing.

Carlisle and Barnum and circus acts are sat in the audience with some theatre binoculars discussing ways to get more people to the circus. Jenny comes on stage to a rapturous applause and cheers.

Song: Never Enough

Barnum: We need her! She sounds amazing and looks..... beautiful. She'd definitely draw the crowds in! (*he moves over to where Carlisle is sitting*) Carlisle, you must introduce her to me, get us backstage at the end of the show.

Carlisle: Ok, we can go and join the party. It's full of all the big wigs- MP's, prime ministers and royalty. I can set that up. Anne and I will have to go back to the circus; I'm not sure if we locked up as we left.

Barnum escorts Jenny off the stage. The performers leave too and Charity is left on her own looking sad.

Scene 7

*People are enjoying a party, eating, drinking and dancing in the background (townsfolk)
Lettie is seen peeping her head round the corner, Barnum notices her and rushes overlooking
panicked.*

Barnum: What on earth are you doing here? These people will laugh at you - you're not welcome here, look at the people who are here at this party; this isn't the place for you.

Lettie looks hurt and as if she's about to cry, she turns to face her friends then straightens up, looks determined. Barnum turns his back on her in a specific move.

Lettie: I thought he wanted us; I thought he felt we were family; This is not how you treat family; he should be proud of us despite our differences. C'mon, we'll show them what amazing talented people we are.

Song: This is me

Scene 8

(As the song finishes, Charity is on the stage with her daughters)

Daughters: When is Daddy going to return to us. He has been away for so long.

Charity: I know. We all miss him. But being on tour with Jenny is very important for him and the show.

Daughters: I miss his laughter and joking around. I miss watching me in my ballet shows.

Charity: I understand. I will write to him and see if he can come back earlier.

The daughters leave and Charity sits as if to write a letter.

SONG: Tightrope

Scene 9

Jenny: Barnum, I think you need to go home to your family. Being part of this show isn't for me.

PT stops and ponders what he should do.

Barnum: Perhaps you are right. I have chased the lights and fame, but that's not what I set out to do. My friends and family need me. Not hanging around with the upper class, sipping champagne and pretending to be someone I'm not. *(He gives her a hug and Jenny walks off the stage).*

Barnum walks around as if he is thinking (music in background? Or narrator?)

Barnum sees Lettie and goes to her.

Barnum: I'm so sorry... I never meant for this to happen. I don't know why I treated you like that, we are family and I am so proud every single one of you.

Charity enters

Charity: You are back.

Barnum: Yes, please forgive me.

They embrace

All exit stage.

Narrator 2: I think he's learnt his lesson! Let's carry on with the action.

Narrator 3: We re-join the show as they head back to the museum.

Scene 10

Two of the angry mob sneak into the circus and use torches to burn the tent down to the ground. Carlisle is caught up in the fire and nearly dies. The theatre is burnt down to the ground. Smoke machine in the background. Flame blow machines near the building.

The angry mob is outside the theatre laughing and shouting horrible names at the cast. Sounds effects of burning wood and crackling in the background.

Townfolk 1: You freaks need to go home before someone else gets hurt. When will you get it, no one wants you here! (Real angry look on his face).

Fireman: Out of the way. Fire! - Hurry, it's coming from the circus.

PT Barnum: Come, quickly. Everyone! Stay close. Is everyone out? Is everyone okay?

Carlisle: Where is Anne?

PT Barnum: Where is Anne? No, Carlisle. No..... Stop. You cannot go inside. Look!

Carlisle runs towards the building.

Anne: Carlisle!

But before he hears her voice to tell him that she was safe, Carlisle is already too far into the burning building.

Barnum heads in after him and is seen dragging Carlisle out. They both cough and splutter due to the smoke.

Barnum: He has taken a lot of smoke. He's still breathing. Let's get him on a stretcher and get him to hospital.

Carlisle is carried off stage.

Scene 11

The Fireman and Barnum stand outside the burnt down rubble.

Fireman: They caught the thugs who started the fire. I thought you'd like to know. I never liked your show. But I always thought the people did.

PT Barnum: They do?

Fireman: Well, I wouldn't call it art. But... putting folks of all kinds on stage. All colours, shapes, sizes. Presenting them as equals. Another critic might have even called it 'a celebration of humanity'.

Barnum: I would have liked that.

Fireman: Well, I hope you'll rebuild.

Townfolk 2: Ha-ha. Look at the freak's faces. Why don't you all just go home and stop trying to be something you aren't.

The bearded lady and the others ignore the mob and start to walk off. They look at PT for inspiration and support. PT is pre-occupied, however. They are hanging all of their hopes on him. All slowly walk off stage looking down and miserable, as the mob shout abuse at them.

Scene 12

All of the characters are stood by the rubble. Back stage it's covered over with black sheets. Barnum gets home with his head in his hands. Barnum is in the bar with his head down drinking whiskey.

Lettie: Figured you'd end up here. Feeling sorry for yourself?

P T Barnum: Folks if you have come to get paid, the money's gone. All of it. Nothing left to give...

Lettie: Shut up, Barnum. You just don't get it. Our own mothers were ashamed of us. Hid us our whole lives. Then you pull us out of the shadows. And now you are giving upon us too. Maybe you are fraud. Maybe it was just about making a buck. But you gave us a real family. And the circus... That was our home. We want our home back.

Song: From now on

Scene 12

Narrator 3: The show goes on with the help of funds raised from the audience and public.

Music in the background as the main cast go around and lift each cast member to their feet. Planks on the stage are lifted up. They mimic rebuilding the stage inch by inch with the help of others. The angry mob are gobsmacked by what's happening. They try to stop people but people push past them. They give them evils and help too.

Song / Finale – Greatest Showman

Cast List:

PT Barnum –

Charity Barnum -

Bearded Lady –

Tattooed man

Lion tamer-

Dogman

Carlisle –

Jenny –

Anne (Tightrope) -

Mr Bennett

Mum to young P.T Barnum-

Tallest man –

Boy P.T Barnum Jr-

Mime Artist –

Heaviest man –

Captain Tom –

Triplets (x 3)

Daughters of PT Barnum (x2)

Narrators (x5)

Ensemble

Circus troupe

Town people

Musicians

Tech People ?