Lucy's Origin Story

By Maccabee Griffin

We all know that everyone's life has a beginning, middle, and end. But what if you can only remember parts of the story and nothing more. Relying on others to open doors in your mind by telling your story through their eyes. Well, that's how my journey's been for some time now. As confusing as that may sound now, I promise it'll clear up as we travel together down this strange and wonderous road I call my life. And yet, I wouldn't change a thing about it because it's given me something no one else can ever have…eternal friends. Friends that no matter what I'm going through, internally or externally, will make sure that I see the dawn of a new day…no matter the cost. But it wasn't always this way; I grew up like most little girls. Except I had more than one mom and dad. In fact, I had a whole village of moms and dads, brothers and sisters. I was a part of the most extraordinary family in the world, Madame Kidd's Aurora Carnival, and I was one of her nightly stars.

My birth mother, Lady Olwenna Buell-dan, was a beautiful actress and singer. My father, Maelon Buell-dan, was an animal trainer. They were wonderfully loving parents, and like all parents, they wanted nothing but the best for me, but I guess I was a stubborn child and thought their best wasn't good enough. As I grew older, I became more rebellious with those around me, taking a chance after chance to steal the show and prove to everyone that I was the star. As a result, my family became more distant from me, resenting me. I paid no mind to it until one night when one of the centaurs about dropped me on my head during a show. Thankfully, I recovered and proved once again that I was the greatest performer of all time. After the show, I decided to talk with Madame Kidd about what happened and ensure that that centaur was let go. As I approached her living quarters, I noticed two strange men standing outside the wagon, unmoving and expressionless. Their eyes were glazed over as if they were in a trance. Inside I could hear an argument between Madame Kidd and what sounded like a deep strange voice. I cautiously walked between the unmoving men, knocked on the wagon door, and waited to be let in. If only one thing was drilled into my head, it was never to walk into Madame Kidd's wagon without permission. I did that once and about lost my head. Finally, the argument subsided, and I could hear the locks being unlatched. The door creaked open just enough to partial reveal the halfling face of Madame Kidd. As she raised her voice at me, asking me what I wanted, I nervously explained my thoughts and feelings to her. She agreed that it shouldn't have happened and that she would have a talk with him. I thanked her, backing away slowly until I felt safe enough to turn and walk quickly to my tent.

As expected, Madame Kidd was talking to the centaur about last night's performance the following day. I don't know why she didn't just fire him on the spot as I asked, but I'm glad she didn't. Because that night after the show, something felt off. The evening air felt heavy in the night sky as I took my evening stroll next to the river that ran past our campsite. I feel very safe most of the time because everyone is so near and can hear me call out if I am ever in danger. But this night was different. This time I felt that someone's ghostly eyes were following me, staring through me to my very soul. My eyes frantically wondered anytime I heard a restless sound in the void of the night. My heart was pounding out of my chest as I began to worry about my safety. Finally, I decided to start back towards the campsite until I heard the sounds of deathly screams shrieking through the night sky. As I came to the clearing where my family lay to rest, I saw people running around trying to put out the flames devouring everything in sight. All the while, my carnival family was being set ablaze and murdered to the delight of some evil forms. Some were even thrown into the caged wagons with the wild animals still in them so that they may have revenge on their captives.

As fear began to fill me and tears streaming down my eyes, a hand was pressed upon my mouth, and I was lifted off my feet. I tried desperately to get free as I was being dragged further away into the darkness by this unknown person. Terror washed over me until I heard a familiar voice whisper in my ear to be still and not say a word. Then, as the grip around me began to loosen and I could turn my head to meet the gaze of the one holding me, I realized who it was. It was the centaur I wanted to be fired from the show. It seems Madame Kidd had informed him of my whereabouts and that he needed to get me out of danger as quickly as possible. Scared and confused, I didn't have time to process the situation correctly and decided to believe him. He lifted me up on his back as we had done many times during the show and galloped as quickly as he could along the river banks. We traveled through the night for what seemed like hours. We finally came to the gates to an abandoned outpost of some sort out in the middle of nowhere. Exhausted and barely awake, he tried to open the gates, but they were locked. He shouted across the large wooden walls to see if someone was there and to let us in. Again, no one answered. About to give up and move on to another location, we heard footsteps behind the gate and then the rustling of a large beam being removed. Then the gates began to open, and two men in uniforms I barely recognized asked what our business was. As the centaur started to tell the tale of our ordeal, another familiar voice called out behind them, telling them to let us pass. We were let to the familiar voice in what looked like a holding area. As I was helped down from the centaur's back and carried to a bed of some sort, I remember the feeling of something not being right. My eyes were heavy, and I struggled to keep them open to see what was going on. I do remember seeing a bag of coins thrown to the centaur and him smiling. Then these creatures began jumping on his back and stabbing him with what looked like tiny daggers. Darkness began to creep across my vision as his body collapsed to the cobblestone floor. The creatures continued to rip at his flesh as a large, balding man with a scar across his eye picked up the bag of coins, turned, and calmly walked towards me. Before the darkness completely took hold of me, I remember him saying to me, "Remember this. This is what happens to those who cross me." And then darkness.

I don't remember anything else except waking up in excruciating pain and a bright light surrounding me. I turned my head to see an auburn-haired dwarven woman with an ashy braid of hair holding my hand and telling me that everything would be alright. And then darkness fell over me again. I woke up sometime later, still a bit weak and covered in scars. When the woman came to check on me, I was sitting up in bed looking out the window at a beautiful sunrise thanking the gods that I was safe and well. As I asked her where I was and who she was, I was told to call her Mama Ashbraid and that all questions would be answered in due time, but first, I had to rest and get my strength back. After she left, I felt a bit strange, like I wasn't alone in the room, and as I looked around, I noticed two leather books on the table next to me. One had Lady Arwain burned on the cover, and the other said Lady Tariana. Those names felt familiar to me, but I couldn't remember where. So, with an undaunting curiosity, I picked up the book entitled Lady Arwain and began to read it.

This is what it said…