

## **Old Clown Day at the Circus**

by David Raffin, part of Rhyme or Treason: (the hard fought illusion of choice)

### **I am not one of those people who will use the tired phrase, “Some of my best friends are clowns.”**

I do not know Justin well. All I know is that he is old. Older, even, than the late Jack Benny. I have met him in the past. Justin, not Jack Benny. He was younger then. At that time he had not yet chosen to be old.

Don't be fooled. This is a choice. Jack Benny lived more than seventy years while famously never reaching the age of forty. That's clean living. That's determination. That's the power of the will. Perhaps even a triumph of the will.

Justin is better known as Jusby the Clown, as he has made himself available as a practitioner of the sciences. Often he appears without being in whiteface. I applaud this as a blow against whiteface. Accentuating the paleness of people who lack melanin, albinos, is not funny. Whiteface- stop the hate. Still he wears a red nose, mocking alcoholics and Irishmen. Sometimes he wears light whiteface, mocking half-breed albino alcoholic irishmen. Enlightenment is a path.

### **Many people are afraid of clowns.**

Why not? There have been Killer Klowns From Outer Space, Killer clowns not from outer space, and, if I am to believe Jerry Lewis, a clown who was a pawn of the Nazis. And why would Jerry Lewis lie to me?

Whatever the reason, fear of clowns is a common phobia. The technical name is Coulrophobia. Who would choose to scare children as a vocation? Someone who, in the past, was traumatized by children. Is there a name for a child phobia? Indeed there is. Fear of children is called Pediophobia. It is the leading cause of Adultism.

Think of how horrible it would be to have a phobia of children when you are elementary school aged. This is the future clown. This is the clown past, present, and future- the true clown.

### **This is why clowns are obsessed with violence.**

The pie in the face. The squirting seltzer bottle. The squirting fake flower in the lapel. The gun that unrolls the flag that says “bang.” The old plank or ladder upside the head gag. Ultimate Clown Fighting.

This explains the derogatory use of the word “clown” in the English language; for example, “That guy is nothing but a clown!” “Who? That clown?” “What are yous guys doin’ over there? Clowning around again?” “I’ll have the clown fish and a side salad.”

I would not be able tell a young clown from an old clown except for the fact that old clowns live in homes for aged clowns. Clown rest homes.

There the pies are vitamin enriched and the ladders or planks they smack one another with are made of foam. The gun, when fired, unrolls a large flag which says “BANG!” in extra large type.

Ultimate clown fighting is prohibited.  
Is that any kind of life?

### **Occasionally circuses will participate in a charity event known as “Old Clown Day.”**

This is a day, usually occurring during what is known in the industry as “the slow season,” when participating circuses raffle off old clowns. Winners leave with an elderly clown. They are then responsible for the care and feeding of the retired clown.

OCD is often seen as the industry’s way of copping out on a retirement fund, leaving the clown at the mercy of the public. Critics charge that OCD is just the method circus bureaucrats use to wash their hands of aged and less productive clowns.

Statistical data shows that while winners, especially small children, are initially enthused by their new family companion, it is commonly a matter of weeks before the clown gets less attention, is walked seldomly, and is often left to its own amusement. You can sometimes see these clowns staring out of the window of a house. When they are left in the backyard too long they similarly stand outside the house, staring in through the window.

So sad, clown.