

Series Concept & Background
by Daniel Knauf

Carnivále – Before the Beginning

Before the Beginning, after the great celestial war that rocked the very foundations of Heaven and Hell, God and Satan established an uneasy truce. Never again would they face each other in direct confrontation. So God created the Earth, inhabiting it with the crafty ape he called Man. And henceforth, to each generation was born a creature of Light and a creature of Darkness, and they would gather to them men of ilk nature and thus, by proxy, carry on the war between Good and Evil.

So it was that on the dawn of the final century of the Second Millenium, two creatures walked among men, more powerful than any that had preceded them. The Dark One was named Lucius Crowe. Through cunning and deceit, he became entrusted by le Blanc, the very One born to destroy him. When the time was right, Lucius struck down his enemy, stealing the greater measure of le Blanc's power to augment his own.

Vastly weakened, grievously wounded, le Blanc dared to unburden himself of his birthright and live as a mortal. His refuge was shattered when he heard Lucius – now known to the world as Brother Justin – preaching his venom through the new medium called radio.

As le Blanc had foolishly neglected his duty, the Dark One had grown strong, amassing a great army of followers. Even when le Blanc was whole and at the peak of his power, such an opponent would be formidable. In his current state, the battle would be lost before it began.

So he sought out his small, brave band of disciples, the cabal that would later become known as Carnivále. For many years they wandered the Heartland as spiritual renegades – helping the helpless, giving hope to the hopeless, cautiously nibbling at the edges of Brother Justin's blossoming darkness. Traveling by night, they were perpetually hunted and harassed, often hungry, cold and tired. Nevertheless, they persevered, praying for the day when the next in the ancient Line of Light would make himself known.

Then they found a boy named Ben Hawkins.

Seventeen years old, Hawkins was born to a bitter woman who shunned him for his power, branding it as something wicked. Repressed, it slumbered within him; long forgotten until the day it was finally awakened by Carnivále. As it uncoiled, so too did his terror and self-loathing.

Thus, the fate of mankind rested on the quivering shoulders of the most reluctant of Saviors.

The final battle began on the blasted landscape of the American Dustbowl between the two Great Wars of the 20th Century. It ended on the day a false sun set the skies ablaze above the Alamogordo desert in New Mexico, and The Bomb was born. And man forever traded away Wonder for Reason.

The Chronicles of the Giant Gabriel
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Carnivále - Character Bios

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: There are a number of individuals who assisted me in compiling the following information, namely Lorne Champlain of the Wichita Museum of Carnivals and Traveling Shows, Sandy Watson of the FBI Archives, Charles K. Gould and my right hand, Diane Winder.

I would particularly like to single out Victoria Villanueva-Chomski. Although I was able to gather some secondary material from printed sources, oral tradition is the nature of the beast, so I was largely dependent on Tori's personal momentos and recollections of her late mother, Lila, the so-called "Bearded Woman of Brussels" (in itself an indication of the slippery nature of a milieu in which alliteration is held in greater esteem than facts - according to Tori, her mother was born in Mexico City).

Though she wasn't graced with her mother's facial hair, Tori is an interesting character in her own right, having traveled the carnival circuit for the bulk of her 62 years. Now retired in Sarasota, Florida, she was kind enough to open her scrapbooks, personal collections and her heart to this writer. For that, he is deeply appreciative.

Benjamin Hawkins

*Joined Carnivále in July, 1930 as a rigger.
Former occupation: farmer.*

It appears Mr. Hawkins found employment with the company quite by accident (in his own words, he was "shanghaied"). According to Lila Villanueva, Mr. Hawkins was a "healer." This talent was apparently suppressed from an early age and only fully revealed itself approximately a year after he joined the company. This writer feels Hawkins' "talent" is vastly overstated - virtually Christ-like in its manifestation, for example:

*(Excerpt from the unpublished memoir of Lila Villanueva)
"... I thought I saw it all but this was truly a wondrous thing to behold. The boy (Hawkins) took Gabriel's neck and put his hands on it and at first we thought he was going to hurt him since it was already broken (his neck, that is) but Sofie told us to stand back and as God is my witness the boy's hands SHINED!!! It was like he was holding the*

sun in his hands and I looked until I couldn't no more (sic). There was spots on my eyes it was so bright and I remember seeing the bones in the boy's hands. Plus there was a HOT WIND and the scent of ROSES. I recall that to this day. Then it was gone. And after, Gabriel's neck was healed. In a couple days he was up and wrestling just like he always did ..."

Obviously, without supporting documentation or testimony, it is likely that this event is an exaggeration if not a complete fabrication on Ms. Villanueva's part. According to her daughter, Lila Villanueva was an inveterate user of hashish. It is doubly dubious in that there is no reference whatsoever of any special healing ability in Hawkins' own journal, although the last entry was made less than a week after this event allegedly occurred.

There are, however, tantalizing – albeit cryptic – allusions to being “marked,” and an incomplete account of an early childhood event in which his mother drowned some kittens that he “brought back.” These might reference the purported healing ability or be manifestations of psychological problems.

Secondary Sources:

(Excerpts from the journal of Ben Hawkins)

(Initial entry dated 02/06/29)

Not much to say so far, really. I'm seventeen. I worked since I can remember. Had some schooling and did good up to the sixth grade when my grampa got the cancer and couldn't work the land so good. After he passed on, it was just my Ma and me. Then it was just Sunday-school down at the Four Square, which doesn't really teach you nothing but how not to go to Hell. I read books when I can get them – mostly Jules Verne and detectives and other fancy stuff. Plus the Bible – we always reading the Bible.

(Entry dated 09/29/29)

I never knew my daddy. My ma says he died in the Great War when I was just a nipper. Two years ago I heard Mrs. Vernor at the seed store talking when she didn't think I was listening and she says “there goes that little Hawkins bastard.” I asked Ma what's a bastard and my God did she beat me blue. Ma's tough as a stale biscuit, and she can be

mean. But she's fair. I know what a bastard is now. I don't see what difference it makes. I'm here, ain't I? Just like anybody else. But lots of people think it makes a big difference and I just say to Hell with them.

(Entry dated 10/15/29)

It's my birthday today and Ma made flapjacks (my favorite, she makes them thin). Plowed all day and by God it was a hot one. I was all fixed to write about the earliest thing I remember, but I don't remember much about being little. I remember I think I had some kittens once. I dream them, sometimes. More later. I'm tired.

(Entry dated 12/24/29)

Mostly I just worked. Ma's been feeling poorly and between tending her and the land and cooking for the both of us I almost forgot it was Christmas coming up. Then the damn Merchant Trust went and reminded me by nailing a Letter of Intent to Foreclose on the door while I was out digging a new irrigation ditch. Merry damn Christmas.

(Entry dated 02/11/30)

Bad night. I fetched Doctor Lawter in town. He says Ma got the stomach cancer just like her Daddy. He didn't ask for money and I didn't have any anyway.

(Entry dated 06/15/30)

Not much time to write. Ma's hardly more than a ghost. The last two days she stares out the window and makes a sound with every breath like a creaky windmill. I hold her hand but she's not there. We got a out pretty good crop but nobody to help me harvest it and it's mostly going to seed.

(Entry dated 07/09/30)

Ma died last night. I was sad, but I was happy she didn't live to see the vultures from the Merchant's Trust take the farm. That would've just broke her heart. I guess you call that a blessing, right?

(Entry dated 07/12/30)

So I got shanghaied by a group of carnies. The boss, Samson, took me on as a rigger. He's a midget hardly comes

up to my belt-buckle, but he's strong as an ox and real smart. Talks like a professor. Half the stuff he says I can't make heads or tails. But it sounds real pretty and I suppose some folks are impressed. The rest of them, they're all right I guess. At first all you're seeing is how odd they are. But pretty soon, they're just people, and nice people mostly. Put their pants on one leg at a time. Except one. The head rigger, Jones, is a gimp and has a mouth on him. Got to admit though, he can back it up. Almost knocked me out with his fist. But when I pitch in, he can be okay. He's always calling me a hayseed and whatnot, but I get the feeling he wasn't born too far from a plow himself.

There's a gypsy-girl named Sofie who I helped and she's real pretty. I don't want to say I'm sweet on her because I'm not. But she's about as nice a girl I ever met. Real pretty, too. I guess I already said that. I'm tired. More later.

(Entry dated 07/12/30)

Samson (not a midget after all, but a dwarf he says - I don't know what the big deal is) offered me a job as rigger until we get to LeMars. The farm's gone and I don't have much to do anyway so I said yes. My Ma'd be like to have a fit if she saw me running with these characters. But when we get to a big enough town, I'll try to find a real job.

Edgar "Samson" Leiber:

Edgar Lieber, or Samson, as he preferred to be called, was in charge of Carnivále for the duration of its existence. Lila Villanueva had worked with him on previous circuits and he was a popular (virtually legendary) figure with other carnies of the era. Although he made repeated reference to personal relationships with a number of illustrious individuals of the era (P.T. Barnum, Will Rogers, Charlie Chaplin, etc.), there is no available documentation supporting his claims. Although, Mr. Leiber insisted that he worked for "Management," it was Lila's contention that Management was a fabrication on Leiber's part and he really "ran the show." Given his diminutive stature, it is possible that Leiber might use such a subterfuge for the dual purpose of lending his orders greater authority plus divesting responsibility in the event his strategies proved unpopular or unsuccessful.

(Transcription of interview conducted by Charles K. Gould, author, CARNIES: Freaks and Flim-Flam Artists of the American Midwest, [Scribner & Sons, 1976] at Casa Verdugo Convalescent Home, Glendale, September 9, 1974)

Gould: You're a hard man to find, Mr. Leiber -

Samson: Call me Samson.

G: Of course. Samson. I've heard a lot about you from other folks I've interviewed for my book. If half of it's true -

S: It is. Plus more. You mind if I smoke?

G: Sure, go ahead.

S: You got a cigarette?

G: Afraid not.

S: Damn. So, what do you want to know about? Houdini? Barnum? Buffalo Bill, Chen and Eng? Hell, I met them all.

G: Let's start with your childhood.

S: Okeedoke. I was born in Koln, Germany in 1879 -

G: So that makes you, what ... ?

S: Ninety-five years old. My mother put me up for adoption. She was real young. I never met her, but I met her sister once. I grew up ... (at this point, the subject smiles) ... or, rather, grew older on the streets. Didn't take to the foster homes. Stowed away on a freighter to New York City when I was nine. Didn't speak a word of English but I was a quick learner, especially cursing. I could curse a blue streak two days off the boat. Live in Hell's Kitchen running numbers for what was left of the Dusters. Shamus Callahan ran the joint. You know Shamus Callahan?

G: I'm sorry. I don't.

S: You're kidding. And you're writing a book? Hell, boy. You better start doing some research. Anyhow, the Micks liked me all right. Used to set me up on the bar and pay me to sing. You know, the typical Mickey Irish crap, (sings) *Oh Danny boy* ... I'd set them all crying in their whiskey and throwing coin. Course, back then I had a real sweet tenor, not this old bullfrog croak. You sure you don't have a cigarette?

G: Sorry.

S: Ahh. It's a nasty habit. But it's the last one I got. Where was I?

G: Running numbers for the Irish gangs.

S: Yeah. Right. That took me up to eighty-nine or so. Got in a few scrapes. Then I went to work for hizzoner Phineas Taylor Barnum. He was getting on and he fancied me his next General - as in General Tom Thumb. You do know who *that* is?

G: Yes.

S: That's good, because if you didn't, by God, this interview'd be over real quick. Anyhow, them was sweet days, yes sir. Traveled through Europe and the east part of Russia. Then Mr. Barnum passed on in '91. I didn't get along so well with his partner. Jim Bailey could squeeze a nickel so tight the buffalo'd shit. Most of the headliners moved on after that.

G: What about you?

S: I worked the Wild West Show for a while. Mostly clowning until it got thin in the teens. Sat out a few years. Started drinking a bit. Got in a few scrapes. Got married but she was a tramp so I moved on. Worked different circuits. Mostly Hyde & Teller, on and off. Florida in the winter, up through Boston and Chicago. Worked my way out of the tents and into the trailer. I had a good head for numbers. *(At this point, a woman (Shelley M.) enters.)*

Shelley: Hey, Daddy.

S: Hey, Shel. You're early.

Shelley: Traded shifts with Geneva. What's up?

S: This fella's Mr. Gould. He's writing a book about me.

G: Hi. Is this your daughter?

(Laughter)

S: Aww, Hell no. She just calls me -

Shelley: - Daddy.

(Laughter)

Shelley: Am I interrupting?

S: No, as long as you brought me smokes.

Shelley: (to author) One lung and half a brain. You didn't give him any, did you?

G: No.

Shelley: That's good, because then I'd have to kick both your asses.

S: She would. She's a tough little monkey, this one. Where were we?

G: You were working the mid-west circuit. At what point did you hook up with Carnivále?

(Long silence)

S: I never worked with them.

G: Your name is Edgar Leiber, right? Nickname Samson?

S: Yeah, that's me. So what?

G: I have a number of sources that say you ran Carnivále from 1928 through the winter of 1939.

S: What sources?

G: A newspaper article. A few other people I interviewed. Lila Villanueva.

S: Never heard of her.

G: Bearded lady. She says she worked with you for years.

S: I said I never heard of her.

G: What can you tell me about the owner of Carnivále. I've been getting conflicting stories and I'd really like to set it straight.

S: (angry) Get this (unintelligible) out of here.

Shelley: I think you should leave now, Mr. Gould.

G: I'm sorry. I didn't mean to upset -

Shelley: It's okay. We can do this later, right baby?

(End of Interview)

Mr. Gould subsequently notes that though a second session was scheduled, Mr. Leiber was unable to attend due to health conditions. He passed away on his birthday, May 1, 1975, at the age of ninety-six.

The following documents present a very different picture of Mr. Leiber.

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Kansas City Police Department

Name:	LEIBER, EDGAR	Sex/Race:	MALE/CAUC
D.O.B.:	5/1/79	Hgt/Wgt:	5'9"/175 lb.
Hair:	BRN.	Scars/Marks/Tattoos:	TATTOO ON RT..
Eyes:	BRN.		BICEP/CELTIC CROSS

SUSPECT WAS OBSERVED IN A STATE OF INTOXICATION AT THE CORNER OF TAPT AND MAIN ST. WEDNESDAY NIGHT. HE HAD BEEN POLITELY EJECTED FROM THE LUCKY SEVEN, AN ESTABLISHMENT OF ILL REPUT. SUSPECT THREW A BRICK THROUGH THE FRONT WINDOW AND ENGAGED IN A VERBAL ABUSATION WITH THE PROPRIETOR, MARTIN GERALD TWOOXY, FOLLOWED BY ASSAULT UPON HIS PERSON. WHEN QUESTIONED BY OFFICERS, MR. LEIBER INSISTED THAT MR. TWOOXY WAS HOLDING A CERTAIN FEMALE AGAINST HER WILL AND FORCING HER TO ENGAGE IN SEXUAL ACTS WITH PERSONS UNKNOWN. MR. TWOOXY HAS BEEN PREVIOUSLY ARRESTED FOR PANDERING AND, WHEN QUESTIONED, DENIED WRONG-DOING. THE FEMALE WAS SUBSEQUENTLY QUESTIONED AND STATED THAT MR. LEIBER WAS A "BOYFRIEND" AND THAT HE WAS "NUTTY." SHE DENIED MR. LEIBER'S ALLEGATIONS AND STATED THAT SHE WAS AN EMPLOYEE OF MR. TWOOXY'S. SHE DISPLAYED NO UNDUER DURESS.

MR. LEIBER WAS CHARGED WITH ASSAULT, PUBLIC DRUNKENNESS AND MALICIOUS MISCHIEF. HE WAS LATER RELEASED WHEN CHARGES WERE DROPPED BY MR. TWOOXY.

(Excerpt of newspaper article, Jonestown Courier-Gazette, 07/02/28)

(Excerpt of articles by Theodore Watson, Kansas City Star, "Woman found Dead," 07/05/19 and

victim was identified as Sarah Jane Parker, 19, a native of Mobile, AL.

Miss Parker allegedly was employed as a hostess at The Lucky Seven, a local club. Her employer, Martin Gerakl Twooey, was seen in the area of the body by an unnamed parks employee. He was questioned and released by police pending further investigation.

in a ... by two Boy Scout. on a hike Saturday morning has been identified as Marta Gerakl Twooey, a prime suspect in the murders of a local prostitute and Ruben Torres, an employee of the Kansas City Department of Parks and Recreation. Cause of death was reportedly strangulation.

Also allegedly found adjacent to the body was a ledger. Though the contents have not been released pending investigation, sources say it was a "black book," listing names of prominent City Hall officials and law enforcement personnel who have received payment and other favors by the victim. Chief of Police, Denton Beck, denies *(cont'd on Back Page - BLACK BOOK)*

Carnival Joins Local Fair

By Silas Cooper

They say it takes a big man to run a big show, and Samson couldn't agree more, even though he stands just over three feet. "Big is as big does" he says, demonstrating his strength by swinging a sledge as heavy as he is.

"I got my start with P.T. Barnum in New York City. Treated me like his son. Taught me the ropes and how to put on a real show. We performed for Her Royal Majesty, the Queen of England and The Kaiser. I shook hands with princes and presidents. Even rode in Buffalo Bill's show for a spell. Rubbed shoulders with

Geronimo and Annie Oakley. I was grand."

Though this reporter has had occasion to visit Mr. Barnum's illustrious museum of oddities in New York as well as excursions to Buffalo Bill's Wild West extravaganza, when it was pointed out to Samson that I didn't recall his name on either card, the little fellow was nonplused and suggested I check my facts (I have since, to no avail).

Nevertheless, Carnivale (that's right, with an accent on the "a" and an "e" at the end) promises to deliver a touch of exotica to our Independence Day Fair with games of chance, human oddities, fortune-telling and a large Ferris Wheel appropriately dubbed "Colossus," which is sure to provide a thrill to adults and children alike.

(Carnivale runs concurrently with the Innesoven Fair, Friday, July 3rd through Sunday, July 5th.)

Clayton Jones

One of seven children born to Gerald and Louise Jones in 1897, Clayton, the youngest, demonstrated no interest in following his father and four brothers into farming, leaning more toward athletics – specifically baseball. He was drafted by the White Sox in 1914 (see newspaper articles, next page) and within two years rapidly established himself as starting pitcher, his career culminating in the pennant drive of 1916.

In 1917, he joined the Army and was assigned to the 115th Infantry and received a crippling leg-wound in France taking a German machine-gun nest. He was subsequently awarded the Medal of Honor in 1919 but was unable to return to his first love, baseball. Subsequent to the war, he drifted to California.

(Excerpt of article, "Jones to Play for White Sox" by Chick Barkley, Niles Tribune, 11/22/14)

(U.S. Army Center of Military History: Full-text Listings of Medal of Honor Citations)

Jones, Clayton T.

Rank and organization: Private, U.S. Army, Company H, 115th Infantry, 29th Division. Place and date: Near Bois-de-Consenvoye, France, 8 October 1918. Entered service at: Chicago, IL. Birth: Niles, IL. G.O. No.: 34, W.D., 1919. Citation: When the advance of his platoon had been held up by machinegun fire and a request was made for an automatic rifle team to charge the nest, Pvt. Jones was the first to volunteer. Advancing with his team under terrific fire of enemy artillery, machineguns, and trench mortars, he continued after all his comrades had become casualties and he himself had been seriously wounded. He then advanced alone for about 30 yards in the face of intense fire and attacked the nest. With his bayonet he killed 5 of the enemy and, when it was broken, used the butt of his rifle, capturing 15 prisoners. Pvt. Jones operated his rifle until he collapsed. His act resulted in the capture of about 100 prisoners and several machineguns.

(Excerpt of story, "Jonesy, Say it Ain't So" by Ring W. Lardner, Sr., *The Saturday Evening Post*, 4/17/17)

Jonesy, Say it Ain't So!

by Ring W. Lardner

Comiskey's wearin' black, today. The old boy turned out to tell us that young Clayton Jones went and got himself enlisted in the U.S. Army. God help us this summer in Chi without Jonesy and his high-tickin' sidearm. Sure, he was wild sometimes but the left-hander had the smoke and he was corrin' up fine.

The Sox need Jonesy more'n Woodrow Wilson. What's the boy gone to lob hand grenades at the Huns when I hear they got no sticks to knock 'em back with? I asked him why, oh Jonesy, why? And he places one big paw over his ticker and says God, Country and Day. Don't he understand he got a duty to Chi-town? Granted, ain't much country left on the South Side and the Lord's beet's turning a blind eye the



last few seasons, but Jonesy, say it ain't so!

I hear Comiskey's fit to take on Kaiser Wilhelm himself if a feather comes to harm on his bird's head. And I don't doubt he could lick the old Knut, especially after he saw the spitters Jonesy was busting against Frisco last season, not to mention all those bases he stole. Not often a nineteen-year-old rookie has enough control to put 'em over on the old boys. It ain't fit for trenches, that's for sure.

So please, Uncle Sam, take care of our Brother Clayton. There's not much between the cans, but you got heart to spare and a phantom left arm. We'll be missin' you dearly while you

throw the high fast ones over the line and we do our best to pull through '17. I hear Comiskey's even ready to hand over ten-percent of the gate to the Red Cross to keep an eye on you. Just be sure to ease up on the Huns and save some smoke for when you come home.

"Murder Suspect Strangled" 07/09/19)

Chick's Tips Jones to Play for White Sox

by Chick Barkley

Charles Comiskey has scoured the West for his left-arm "missing link," as he has so often in the past. To his surprise, The Old Roman located his man in his own back yard here in Niles, playing for the Tigers club of the N.C.L. So, with the arrival of Clyde "Jonesy" Jones, 17, the final piece of the White Sox puzzle is finally in place. Jones, a precocious southpaw with a high-ticking fastball, dazzled local fans with no less than four no-hitters, a record for the big cats at Owens

Field.

The normally tight-fisted Comiskey had to sweeten the deal by offering Jonesy some serious bucks, according to Chuck Gillespie, manager and head coach of the Tigers. "Comiskey came to Jones, offered him a contract. Jones says no dice. He really likes the rest of the boys and didn't want to let them down. We practically had to kick him off the team. I mean, I'm all for loyalty, but not when it's coming out of your back pocket."

On a more serious note, Gillespie admitted that Jones's departure would hit the team hard. "He's not just a great pitcher, but a natural-born leader." Fans may recall the stunning upset against the Apaches in which Jones rallied the team to a 4-3 play-off victory despite the broken wing he sustained in a crash-up on his Indian-8 motorcycle that prematurely ended his season. Grumbles the grizzled manager, "I hope Comiskey has more luck getting him off that blasted motor-bike than I did."

Perhaps that's what The Old Man has in mind. Jones's lanky reports that a spanking new Ford magically appeared in the yard of

Although there are documented arrest reports (i.e. vagrancy, drunk and disorderly, assault) little is documented for the period covering 1920 through 1929. By his own account, Jones smuggled gin up from Ensenada and was employed as a bouncer in an offshore speakeasy/casino for "Spats" O'Shea off the coast of San Diego. This relationship continued until O'Shea was shot to death in the lobby of the Hotel Raymond in Pasadena in 1927.

He was hired as a rigger by Hyde & Teller's American Amusements in early 1928. It was probably while in their employ that he met "Samson" Leiber. The two subsequently struck up a friendship, albeit a contentious one, that continued for decades. Little else is documented regarding Jones, who, according to Victoria Villanueva-Chomski, died of lung cancer in 1963.

Sofie Agnesh Bojakshiya

While little is known about Sofie Bojakshiya, her mother, Sophia, was revered by the Roma as the "Queen of the Gypsies." Unlike most of the inflated claims made by carnies denizens, it appears Sophia was a celebrated figure in her time. She read cards for a number of East Coast socialites at the turn of the century, including two First Ladies, Frances Folsom Cleveland and Ellen Louise Axson Wilson.

In 1913, during childbirth or soon thereafter (reports vary), Sophia suffered a series of devastating seizure that left her paralyzed and catatonic. She was subsequently cared for by her sister, Anash, and later by her daughter, Sofie the Younger.

A single photograph has survived, although there is some question whether it is an image of Miss Bojakshiya or her mother. Given the fact that it is a daguerreotype, it's the writer's opinion that the photo is of Sofie's mother as a young woman. In any case, by all accounts, Sofie was, as Lila Villanueva states in her memoirs, "... the spitting image of Sophia, only more so." If so, she must have been a striking young woman.



According to Victoria Villanueva-Chomski, Sofie purportedly did not possess the ability to read the Tarot. Rather, she did so through a powerful telepathic link with her catatonic mother, who lay in the rear of her trailer.

Allegedly, when mother and daughter were separated, Sofie's ability as a seer was virtually nil.

It should be noted that this alleged symbiosis between prophet and telepath, though unique in concept, is only a matter of conjecture based largely on anecdotes related years later by Lila Villanueva.

NOTE: A full LEXIS/NEXIS search failed to retrieve any public records pertaining to Sofie Bojakshiya.

Brother Justin

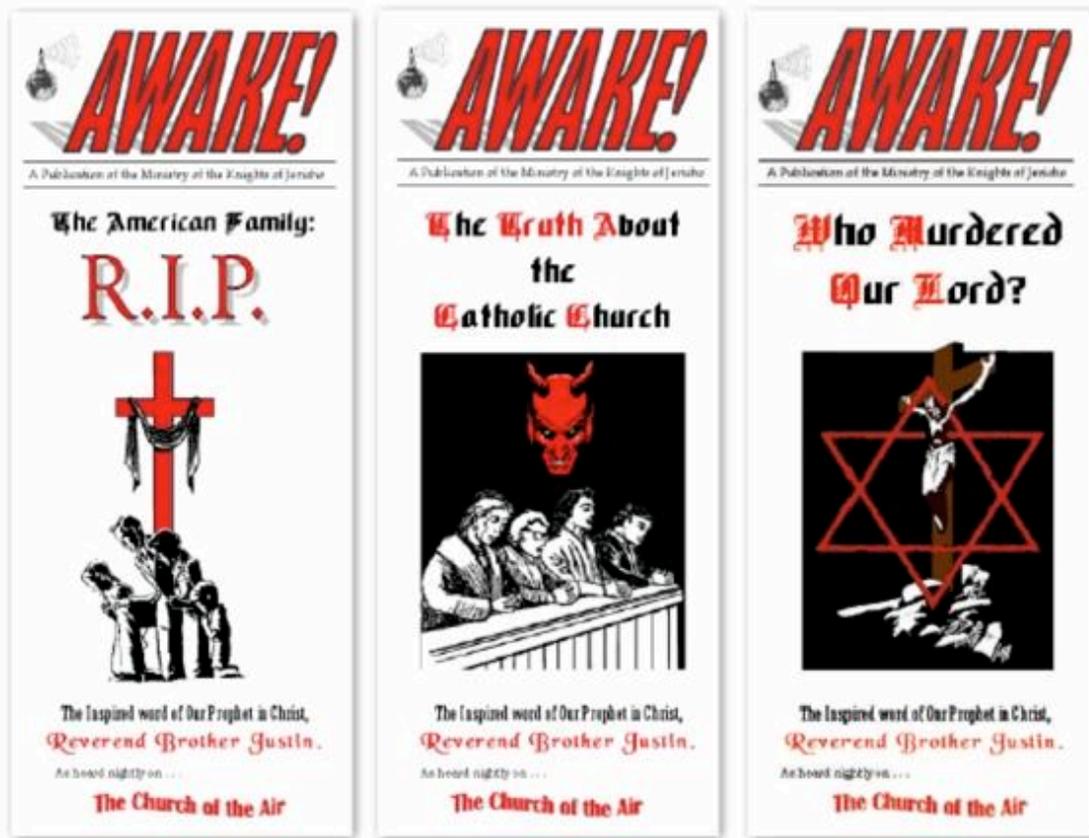


Although "Brother Justin" was one of the most powerful evangelical ministers of the thirties (his radio broadcast, "The Church of the Air," dominated its time-slot in every market in which it was syndicated), little biographical material is currently available. Unlike his more gregarious colleagues, it appears Brother Justin preferred to keep a low profile, exercising his power by proxy.

Virtually nothing is known of his life prior to "answering the call" and joining The Order of the Knights of Jericho (KoJ). In the bio attached to the Church's tracts (hardly a dependable source for accurate information), Justin lived a "life of corruption and degradation" prior to his conversion.

The KOJ was founded in Arkansas in 1867 as a "religious fraternity" composed of individuals fiercely dedicated to "the fine traditions of America." Unlike their more vicious counterpart, The Ku Klux Klan, the KoJ limited its activities to social gatherings, prayer meetings and the support of segregation laws. Accounts vary, but it can be ascertained that the man who would come to call himself "Brother Justin" joined the KoJ sometime between 1921 and 1923. Soon afterwards, the character of the KoJ took a sharp, virulent turn, scapegoating Jews and Catholics with increasingly toxic rhetoric in their infamous "AWAKE" series of religious tracts (see below). It is hard to say whether this was due to Brother Justin's meteoric rise

through the Order's ranks or the vast influx of immigration from Eastern Europe. Most likely, it was a combination of the two.



Three KoJ "AWAKE" tracts typical of the hyperbolic racist rhetoric distributed by the church during the 1930's. (From the collection of John and Dorothy Brunner)

In 1926, Brother Justin ascended to the head of the church through what may be characterized as a "palace coup." The KoJ's previous leader, The Most Reverend Brother Charles Hennessey, was excommunicated for "sins of the flesh" for seducing a church-member. The young woman at the heart of the scandal, Hannah Jean Lynch, though described as a "fair, chaste flower" by Brother Justin in the formal complaint, was actually a prostitute with a long list of arrests in New Orleans and Charleston.

At the height of its influence, the KoJ's net worth was estimated to be in the tens of millions; Brother Justin had a lock on politics in the Midwest and the eastern seaboard and a business empire run through half-a-dozen shell corporations.

In the summer of 1928, construction was completed on the "Temple of Jericho" in the desolate Nebraska Badlands, a massive compound housing clerical staff, hierarchy and the main cathedral. Soon, a sprawling shantytown rose up at its foundation, the effect analogous to a medieval village built in the shadow of the lord's castle. The Temple itself was an Art Deco monstrosity, described by Eleanor Roosevelt as "a great, vulgar headless jackal" (see photo, below).



Curiously, though the KoJ could be described as a cult driven by ethnic hatred, Brother Justin held even greater contempt for the Romani (or "Gypsies") and carnival folk. He regarded them as "subhuman manifestations of the beast."

Today, it strikes one as odd – or even absurd – that someone would heap such scorn on practitioners of what is a fairly passive profession. But at the time it was no laughing matter. Tents we set ablaze by KoJ mobs, their rides and equipment sabotaged. Although usually subjected to the tar and feathers (a practice that sound almost quaint in retrospect, but in reality resulted in serious burns and even death), between 1932 and 1938 it was not uncommon to come across the sad tableau of a lynched family of Gypsies – mother, father and children.

It is pure conjecture on the writer's part, but it is hard to imagine Brother Justin harboring such rage at the carnival subculture without having been involved himself earlier in life. Perhaps that is what he is alluding to in his veiled references to his early years as rife with "corruption and degradation."

Brother Justin's fall was, if anything, even more mysterious than his rise. Though ample references to the KoJ are made through 1938, it seems that he and his church dropped off the face of the planet. There are no records of its demise – no references to the scandals, corruption or economic problems that typically destroy a sect or cult. They simply ceased to exist. It's as if the KoJ spontaneously collapsed, its followers and leadership disbanded and forgotten. As for Brother Justin, his whereabouts and fate are unknown to this day, and his name has faded into obscurity.

Ernst Lodz

Born 1858 in Warsaw Poland. Blind since birth. Mother killed by Cossacks. Demonstrated an apparent facility for "mind-reading" (mentalism) at the age of three. By all accounts, his ability was extraordinary. Traveled with his father through Eastern Europe. Part of his act was navigating his way flawlessly through "obstacle courses" arbitrarily assembled by audience members. Repeated this feat in the Great Maze in the garden of Prince Leopold Van der Wyk of Luxemborg. Lodz's father died in a Paris hotel fire in 1875. By then he had established himself in French Society. Performed for private parties, his fees growing stratospheric as his clientele grew more exclusive.

In 1881, an affair with the Countess du Loc led to a pistol-duel with her husband, in which he shot and killed the Count. While the fact that du Loc was outperformed by a blind man entertained the bourgeoisie, the authorities were unamused. He was subsequently arrested and sentenced to the guillotine.

Apparently, his contacts in high places (and his intimate knowledge of their darkest secrets) saved him from the blade. After four years languishing in prison, he was released on the condition he leave France. True to his word, he disembarked on a German freighter to the United States, his passage paid by his paramour, the Widow du Loc.

Penniless, he traveled south, reestablishing himself with the French expatriate communities in Mobile and New Orleans. Little is known regarding this period in his life. It is rumored he married and lost his wife and a daughter in a tragic accident, the details of which are vague and conflicting. Ms. Villanueva-Chomski was told by her mother that the two lost their lives when the RMS Lusitania was torpedoed in 1915. Charles Gould's research indicated they had died of asphyxiation due to a pressure-leak in their townhouse gas-line.

In 1917, Lodz returned to the entertainment circuit, albeit under circumstances far less affluent than in the salad-days in Paris. He met Edgar "Samson" Leiber while working for the Hyde-Teller Company. The two subsequently continuing their friendship through a number of circuits, including the Carnivale Company.

Mr. Lodz died in 1946 of a brain embolism.

Lila Villanueva

The so-called "Bearded Lady of Brussels" was born in Mexico City to a circus family in 1890. Given their genetic predisposition, the hirsute family performed under the stage name "Villalobos" (literally, "House of Wolves").

Lila, her two brothers, Oscar and Raoul, and her parents traveled throughout Mexico, spurning the freakshow tents for the high-wire. Their appearance alone – particularly the boys, with their thick, black locks of silky hair from head to toe – was enough to gain them fame, but by all accounts, the family's high-wire act was incomparable. The "Flying Villalobos" were soon signed with the Ringling Brothers Circus, traveling the international circuit for five years before Oscar fell to his death in Copenhagen in 1905, a tragedy from which the family never recovered. Her father, shattered by the loss of his eldest son, committed suicide three years later.

At sixteen, already graced with a thick, silky beard, Lila married for the first time to a ventriloquist, Paco Soza. In her own words, "Paco was beautiful, but that fucking dummy, Gordito, drove me nuts." After less than six weeks, the marriage was annulled. Over the next fifty years, until her death, Lila was married over nineteen times, "twenty if you count Gordito."

By her own account, Lila had a voracious appetite for sex and an unending line of paramours, even when she was tipping the scales at over three-hundred pounds. Although her daughter denies her mother engaged in prostitution, Lila proudly admits it no less than nineteen separate times in her memoirs. Especially notable is her claim that she once fellated Henry Ford for a thousand dollars and "... he was so happy he threw in a Model-T."

Although Lila only traveled four years with the Carnivale Company, she was an avid correspondent, acting as a one-woman clearing house for all the gossip and news among the carnies she worked with over the years via the mail. She lived to the grand age of 101, dying quietly in her sleep April 1, 1992.

Alexandria and Caledonia Potter (The Potter Twins)

Banff, Canada, 5/12/08 – Alexandria and Caledonia Potter were born out of wedlock and adopted by a local midwife, Mabel Potter, and her husband, Tom. Unlike the more famous Hilton Sisters, they had a wonderful childhood, attending the local school and, with the help of the community, avoiding the glare of the spotlight.

In 1928, their stepfather, Tom, was injured in a hunting accident which left him paralyzed below the waist. Over his and their mother's objections, the sisters left for New York and were soon charming audiences with their musical ability. Because they did not have the scandalous background and natural showmanship of the Hiltons, they were never quite as successful. However, according to reviews at the time, the Potters were splendid pianists and sang a beautiful close harmony. Furthermore, they were both extremely charming, Alexandria the more outgoing of the two while Caledonia possessed a dry, sophisticated wit.

They continued on the circuit until 1937, at which time they had saved enough money to provide their parents and themselves a meager pension, returning to their family farm in Canada. Caledonia achieved subsequent success as a novelist under the pen-name of Janus Bunker (no doubt a wry reference to her famous predecessors, Chang and Eng Bunker, the original Siamese Twins). Alexandria was twice married briefly, once to a local grocer, a second time to Jasper Middleton, a rigger with the Carnivale Company, with whom she had a stillborn daughter. Caledonia remained single until the twins' premature death due to complications of pneumonia in 1943.

Additional Characters:

Gecko The Amazing: Early twenties. A "Lizard Man," his body covered with thick scales, possessing a vestigial tail. Extremely egotistical. Truly believes that, without him, the show would not go on.

Shoton: Mid-fifties. A full blooded Hopi medicine man – serves as the company's resident medic, sells potions and elixirs.

Ruthie: Mid-fifties. A wizened snake-handler and part-time preacher.

Gabriel: Ruthie's son. Early-twenties. A mildly retarded strong-man with the face of an angel. His act consists of feats of strength plus winner-take-all wrestling, all comers at ten to one – five dollars will win you fifty if you lick him. He's only lost twice.

Floater: Mid-thirties, Irish. Congenital deformity – bisected at the waist. Wicked sense of humor. Moves around by "walking" with his hands.

Carnivále – Backstory and Mythology

I. BELYAKOV

Lucius Belyakov, an Avatar of Light, remained unaware of his abilities until the birth of his son, Justin (Alexei). A Russian aristocrat and officer in the Czar's army, he was plagued by dreams and premonitions of Alexei's true nature and destiny as an Avatar of Darkness. When Alexei was two, Belykov attempted to kill him, stopped by his wife, Plemina, and daughter, Iris.

After his wife and children fled Russia in terror, Belyakov suffered a complete nervous breakdown and was isolated by his family to their ancestral estate outside Minsk, tended by private nurses and a psychiatrist.

As is common with mothers of Avatars, the final trimester of Plemina's pregnancy saw the onset of mental illness that plagued her for the rest of her life – in her case, chronic paranoid schizophrenia. Her condition was exacerbated by the attack on her son and their subsequent escape.

She indoctrinated Iris to believe that her father had an army of assassins tracking them down with the sole intent of killing Justin.

It would fall to Iris to protect her brother and nurture him to fulfill his destiny as a great warrior and leader of men.

Plemina brought her children to America, never staying in one place longer than a few months, living off the proceeds from the sale of jewelry she secreted away when they fled.

When Justin was four, the family was en-route to California when, during a storm, a trestle was washed away and their train plunged into a river, killing all aboard except for Justin and Iris. Convinced the tragedy was a deliberate act by her father's "assassins," Iris led Justin downstream through the wilderness, careful to hide by day, hoping they would be rescued by the "Man of God" her mother predicted would protect them.

There, they stumbled across an injured man, the only other survivor of the train-crash. Thinking him to be one of their father's agents (her erroneous assumption bolstered by the man's fluency in Russian), they held him captive, questioning him to assess the threat and proximity of his "confederates." When the man overpowered Iris and threatened her, Justin used his incipient power to snap the man's neck, the first and only time he asserted his will as an Avatar until the beginning of our story in 1934. Subsequently, this traumatic event was sublimated and forgotten by Justin, but not by Iris.

The children were later rescued by a young Methodist minister, Rev. Norman Balthus, and raised under his care in a church orphanage.

PART II. SCUDDER

Meanwhile, their father, Lucius Belyakov, slowly recovered from his breakdown, piecing his former life together and returning to his post in the army. Eventually, he received word that Plemina and his two children had perished in a train-crash in faraway America. Never remarrying, he devoted himself to his duties as an officer. Popular among his men, he was one of the few commanders who weathered the revolution, retaining a post under the Red Star of Leninist Russia, albeit with a reduction in rank and the loss of his family's lands and possessions.

At the commencement of WWI, while entrenched in the battlefields of Eastern Europe, Lucius again began suffering from visions and dark hallucinations manifested by the proximity of his spiritual nemesis, a young American expatriate, Henry (Hack) Scudder.

A habitual petty criminal, Scudder had joined the French Foreign Legion to escape prosecution in the United States. Expecting a post in North Africa during a period of relative peace and prosperity, Scudder found himself, to his horror, assigned to a unit in the trenches of the Eastern Front. There he focused his energy on shirking his duty, avoiding the front lines, plundering casualties (enemy and friendly alike) and evading detection by his superiors.

Prompted by obsession, Lucius deserted his post to seek out his enemy and kill him. As others fought the temporal war, so Lucius took it upon himself to stalk and destroy the Dark Avatar who haunted his dreams and visions, the man named Henry Scudder. He finally found him cowering in a trench outside Lemsberg. As he raised his rifle, he heard a roar and was surprised by an escaped circus-bear feeding on the dead nearby. He was savagely attacked while Scudder made his escape.

Stumbling through no-man's land, Scudder ran into Ernst Lodz, a carnival-performer, searching for his bear, Bruno. The troupe had inadvertently wandered afield and found itself flanked between opposing armies. They made their way back to the caravan, where Scudder stripped off his uniform and finally made good his desertion from the Legion.

As an Avatar (even one as errant and cowardly as himself), Scudder demonstrated a number of undeveloped supernatural abilities, among which was the capacity to peer into other's minds and pluck their darkest secrets. He was also able on occasion to bend others to his will.

Lodz recognized and cultivated Scudder's talent, and they left the troupe to travel together as a team, performing in the decadent salons of war-torn Europe, soaking their prized marks through chicanery and blackmail.

PART III. THE AVATARA

Meanwhile, Lucius Belyakov slowly recovered. His wounds were terrible – the loss of both legs and an arm as well as severe disfigurement as a result of the attack. If he had been a mere mortal, he would've died from his injuries, but as an Avatar, he was able to direct his formidable will and abilities toward sustaining himself on this plane, obsessed with the righting of his failure. He devoted himself to the study of arcane and forbidden manuscripts, bent on learning everything he could about his true nature and destiny.

His studies taught him that, to each generation, there was born two Avatars (literal translation: "God made flesh"), one whose nature was evil, the other, good. This base

nature was informed – and sometimes mitigated – by human free will.

If an Avatar was dedicated to developing and mastering his power, he could direct it with the precision of a scalpel. Such was the case with many of the Prophets, with Buddha, Jesus and Mohammed, with Caligula and Vlad Dracul.

However, it was far more common for the Avatar to live in ignorance and fear of his abilities, to never realize his potential.

Such a man would move through life, the unwitting instrument of evil or good, depending on his nature. Great fortune or misfortune would follow him and those he loved or touched.

Undirected, aimless, their powers would grow fallow and atrophy. Such men often led lives of desperation and madness, haunted by dreams and vision of a destiny denied.

Blood plays a role in the creation of an Avatar. The infamous Borgias are but one example. The mantle usually passes from father to first-born son. The psychic trauma of carrying such a creature to term always resulted in severe physical or mental damage to the mother, sometimes both, often death.

Finally, though Avatara beget Avatara, the base nature of each is determined at random. A creature of Darkness may father a creature of Light and vice-versa.

Whether their power is realized or unrealized, the lives of most Avatars are short and brutal, usually ending in violence at the hands of their fellow men. Because of their true nature, they are recognized as "other," and this xenophobic fear often results in their destruction. Therefore, it is not uncommon for Avatara bloodlines to see abrupt annihilation. When this occurs, the mantle is passed on in what appears to be random selection. A child is born with the mark, good or evil, and a new bloodline is begun.

Like talent, the powers of an Avatar vary. Some may be able to transmute matter, some manipulate life-force, some can see into the souls of other men and bend them to his will,

some may be able break free of their prisons of flesh, their spirits traveling great distances. Some manifest more than one of these abilities. And, again like talent, the strength of an Avatar's power can be extensive or limited. In other words, each Avatar is an individual, some strong, some weak, some focused, some scattered.

Though their powers vary, there is one point they have in common: all Avatars have visions of the past, present and future, sometimes literal, sometimes symbolic. This is a plane of pure truth, accessible by birthright to the Avatars, and, on a limited and imperfect basis, to a few enlightened mortals through rigorous study and practice.

A fully developed Avatar can read the entirety of man's existence, from beginning to end, as easily as a mortal man would read a novel. He can transmit these visions to others through dreams. Though he has access to the whole truth, he can selectively choose, edit and twist the content to manipulate mortals to do his bidding.

Though Avatars have access to great wisdom, all share a common blindness: unless in close physical proximity, an Avatar cannot detect or identify his opposite beyond sensing his existence. The Avatar reveals himself to his opposite when he draws upon his power. This is evidenced by physical weakening or pain and a powerful feeling of dread, and may be accompanied by visions or dreams of the opposing Avatar.

He can, however, detect the existence of an Avatar of like kind, and is capable of locating him over great distances with an astonishing degree of accuracy. When an Avatar exercises his power his opposite can sense it, often manifesting itself as physical or psychological distress.

The duty of the Avatar is to acknowledge and submit to his nature, to develop his power(s) to the best of his ability and to use it to realize his destiny as a link in the chain to mankind's Nirvana or Armageddon.

This may involve the detection and destruction of his opposite, as in the case of Lucius Belyakov. More often, however, it entails inspiring others to rise up and embrace or repel the evil that is man's true nature.

PART IV. PURSUIT

Belyakov's studies led him to realize not only what he was, but also how thoroughly fate had compromised him. Only through an iron will and every fiber of his Avataric powers had he survived the bear attack. His body was a frail, misshapen cage. He was subject to the ceaseless pull of the light beyond the veil of mortal existence. As a man fights the inexorable current of the tide, so had he battled death's relentless pull. And like that man, he knew that his efforts would eventually be vain, that he would inevitably weaken and die.

Consequently, over the next decade, Belyakov was able to do little more than track Scudder's movements. To destroy him or – more importantly – to use him to identify any other living Avatars of Darkness, would necessitate the assistance of another Avatar. His predecessor (the mad monk, Rasputin), had been murdered years prior, and Belyakov's own son was long dead. Therefore, the ascendant Avatar would not be born by sanguinity, but by random, and his presence had thus far not been revealed.

So it was that Belyakov, using private investigators and his contacts in the Russian émigré community, tracked Lodz and Scudder as they made their larcenous tour of Europe, fleecing and extorting the rich, the famous and the well-born. Well acquainted with the arcane arts, Lodz had trained Scudder, helping him develop his abilities as a mentalist and healer. It didn't take him long to realize that he and Scudder had only begun to scratch the surface. Why, after all, play to Kings when they could be the Kings.

Meanwhile, Scudder gradually became aware of his adversary's pursuit, suffering dreams and disturbing visions whenever Lodz drew close. He insisted on remaining in hiding, fleeing cities just as they were beginning to establish themselves. To quell his paranoia, he turned to chemicals, cloaking his fearsome visions behind a thick blanket of alcohol and morphine.

Soon, Lodz became impatient with Scudder, angry at his "eccentricities." When Scudder finally decided to end their partnership and flee to America, Lodz exploded. "You fool," he roared, shaking his drunken partner like a rag-doll,

"What I wouldn't give for only a small measure of the power you possess!"

In that one heated moment, Scudder gifted Lodz with his mind-reading ability, taking in exchange his sense of sight.

Several months later, in a dank Venetian alley, Belyakov located the once proud, handsome Professor Lodz: blind, broken-down and acutely absinthe-addicted. The exchange of sight for inner-sight had forged a bond between Lodz and Scudder, a bond that gave Lodz a unique ability: to intuitively track Scudder from afar. Lucius, in desperate need of such a human bloodhound, promised to restore Lodz's sight if he helped find Scudder. And so the two formed an uneasy alliance to track down and destroy the devil who was, even at that moment, settling into contented domestic bliss on a small Oklahoma farm.

PART V. JUSTIN AND IRIS

Raised in a church orphanage, Justin demonstrated an uncanny talent for memorizing and interpreting scripture. At 17, with the encouragement and financial support of his surrogate parents, Rev. Norman Balthus and his wife, Clara, he left to attend seminary in Kansas City, MO, accompanied by his sister, Iris, who took a job in a the typing pool at H.K. Sloan & Co, a local manufacturing concern.

In his first year, Clara Balthus was diagnosed with stomach cancer and Iris returned to assist Norman in caring for her during her protracted illness. Separated from his sister for the first (and only) time in his life, depressed by his foster-mother's illness and stressed by academic demands, Justin began skipping classes, spending ever more time exploring the tenderloin district. There, he was vicariously excited by the tawdry pleasures available to "sporting men" – liquor, gambling and rampant prostitution.

Upon word of Clara Balthus' death, Justin began sampling these pleasures himself, his brief, manic fall from grace culminating in a month-long binge. One night, drunk, seething with anger and lonely for company, he was drawn to a sign outside a row of tenements advertising "Palmistry

and Fortunes Told." He entered the brownstone and there met Apollonia, a young Gypsy. Enchanted by her beauty, he agreed to a sitting, hoping the stories he'd heard of loose Gypsy trollops was true.

PART VI. APOLLONIA AND SOFIE

For her part, Apollonia found the seminarian attractive, flirting with him as she drew his Tarot cards, ultimately seducing him into her bed. An inebriated Justin later staggered out into the night, continuing his binge until a week later – sleeping in a gutter, battered and stripped of his valuables – he was found by his sister, Iris. Together, they returned to California where Justin resumed his studies at the Woolson Seminary in Oakland.

Apollonia, meanwhile, is pregnant with Justin's child. In the final trimester, she begins suffering from hallucinations and visions. Her health fails, and the trauma of the birth renders her catatonic. The baby is a girl – the first female Avatar, the prophesied Omega, the Destroyer, sometimes called the antichrist.

Apollonia names her Sofie.

She commits herself to avert her daughter's destiny. A psychic bond was forged between mother and child during the pregnancy, and Apollonia will use it to shield her daughter from self-knowledge. She will build a psychic fortress around her precious child, impenetrable by evil, keeping the demons at bay with every ounce of her power.

PART VII. SCUDDER AND FLORA HAWKINS

Upon his arrival in America, Scudder had set out West, intent on escaping the nightmare existence he left behind in Europe. He found himself in Milfay, Oklahoma, where he met a local girl, Flora Hawkins. The two fell in love and married, Scudder using the last of his ill-gotten fortune to purchase a small piece of land the young couple christened "Big Sky Farms." For an all-too-brief period,

Scudder experienced the joy of simple love and the fruits of honest labor. Flora soon became pregnant with their first child, a boy to be called Ben.

As is common in women who carry an Avatar to term, Flora began to slowly lose her mind, her delusions manifesting in a twisted obsession with Christian theology. She became convinced that her husband was in league with Satan, and that the child she bore would, without fervent prayer and discipline, grow up to become the antichrist. Scudder watched helplessly as the bright, healthy, clever woman he married slowly shriveled into a fearful, ranting hag. Again, he turned to drink, letting their fields go untended, the crops withering under a relentless sun.

Bad turned to worse when he began again feeling the cold shadow of pursuit, the sickening presence of the unnamed nemesis he'd evaded in Europe. One night, without as much as leaving a note, he fled his mad wife and their infant son, abandoned his rotting fields to escape his pursuer. For, indeed, Belyakov and Lodz had arrived in America, and were even then scouring the cities and towns for a man named Scudder.

For his part, Scudder traveled aimlessly throughout the country, misfortune hard on his heels. As he descended into chronic alcoholism, he lost the small measure of control over his power he'd attained under Lodz's tutelage. Tragedies, small and large, seemed to dog anyone he came in contact with, culminating in the cave-in at the Esmeralda Lode in Babylon, Texas, and the strange curse that lay upon the land and those who died there.

As noted before, the Avatar in control of his power can wield it with surgical precision while the one who lacks discipline is doomed to discharge it with the random fury of a bomb. Such was the case with Scudder.

PART VIII. CARNIVÁLE

Seeking the familiar anonymity afforded by the life of an itinerant carny, Scudder joined the Hyde & Teller Company, a small carnival working the southeastern circuit. There he came in brief contact with Samson and a handful of our

regulars, including Clayton Jones and Possum, Lila, Ruthie and Gabriel.

After traveling under their banner as a sideshow geek for just under a year, he sensed danger and once more fled, again for good reason, for even then Lucius Belyakov had located him through Lodz and was negotiating the purchase of the Hyde & Teller Company from their owners back east.

Scudder was long-gone by the time Lodz and Belyakov arrived to assume control of the show. Lucius assumed the title of "Management," shuttered inside a trailer away from prying eyes, using Lodz as a go-between to deliver his orders to the troupe. It was an odd arrangement to be sure, but carnies are used to such eccentricities. Changing the name of the troupe to "Carnivále," they prospered even as they provided a cover for Lucius to travel and pursue Scudder in anonymity.

By now, Lucius sensed the arrival of his Ascendant with the birth of Ben Hawkins. Never having learned to fully trust Lodz, Lucius kept this knowledge a secret, biding his time until the boy attained adulthood.

In the meantime, they continued their pursuit of Scudder, who they finally located in St. Louis. Lucius dispatched Lodz and a handful of hired thugs to apprehend him, but Lodz failed, allowing Scudder to be spirited away by agents of the Order Templar.

IX. THE ORDER TEMPLAR

The Templars, a fraternity of fellow travelers, are a contemporary offshoot of an ancient order of warrior-monks originally charged by the Roman Catholic Church with locating and aiding the Avatara. At the end of the 14th century, the order was unjustly accused en masse of heresy, most of its members arrested, tortured and burned at the stake. The few survivors of the inquisition went into hiding, bonding together as a secret society, their safety assured by blood-oaths, cemented by arcane rituals.

Over the centuries the Order Templar gradually evolved into a Fraternal Lodge, its holy mission forgotten by all but a

select few. By the time of our story, the organization was largely a social club devoted to "community service," its "Temples" providing its members – mostly middle-class merchants and businessmen – with an open bar, companionship, card-games and a welcome respite from their wives and children.

However, there still existed in its membership an inner-circle – powerful industrialists, politicians and intellectuals – that covertly carried on the original mission of the Order, seeking out and identifying latter-day Avatars, ascertaining their base nature, aiding those of Light and opposing those of Darkness. But no matter how rich, how powerful, how enlightened, the inner circle of the Order Templar is made up of mere men, each subject to his own ignorance and prejudices.

Over the years, more often than not, they have failed to arrive at a consensus, quarreling among themselves over who is and who is not an Avatar, which is Dark and which is Light. As often as not, they have thrown the full weight of their support behind charlatans and pretenders and, on the rare occasions they have actually succeeded in identifying a true Avatar, they were as likely to lend aid to those of Darkness as those of Light.

These mistakes have haunted them over the years and, as a result, by the beginning of the 20th Century, the inner-circle has become over-cautious and slow to act, seriously compromising their mandate, rendering themselves impotent and irrelevant. It was only by the virtue of a handful of enlightened members that they located Scudder in St. Louis. Since then, he has been imprisoned in isolation until The Order can arrive at a consensus as to his true nature.

PART X. SAMSON

Furious that Lodz had failed, Lucius banished him from his trailer, choosing Samson as his confidant and right hand. The partnership is far from ideal – for his own and Samson's safety, Lucius keeps him on a need-to-know basis, sharing precious few secrets. Despite this, over the years, "Management" (as Samson knows him) has consistently helped

the troupe find prosperity and avoid disaster, earning Samson's absolute dedication, discretion and loyalty.

Over the years, the Carnivále plied its trade, taking on new acts such as Sofie and her mother, Apollonia, the Potter Twins, Gecko the Lizard Man, The Dreifus Family, assorted sword-swallowers, fire-eaters and giants. Samson ran the show, counseled by Management, assisted by Jones. And embittered Lodz, the prodigal son, patiently awaited the day when Lucius would once again recognize him as an invaluable ally and restore him to his former position. So it was as a score of years passed, and the day came when Management decided the time was ripe to collect Ben Hawkins, the Ascendant Avatar of Light.

PART XI. BEN HAWKINS

As a child, Ben grew up under the care of his mentally unstable mother, Flora, the two eking out a meager living at Big Sky Farms. At four years of age, Ben became attached to a stray kitten. When it died, he was inconsolable. His mother buried it in the yard and put the boy to work. Three days later, Flora found him on the kitchen floor, cradling the kitten's carcass. Horrified, she took it away from him, only to find the animal had been miraculously revived. Convinced her son was a tool of the devil, she drowned the kitten, and from that day forward refused to touch the boy or allow him to touch her.

Resurrecting the kitten resulted in the withering of their meager crops. The land became dry and barren. Flora was reduced to taking in laundry for neighbors. Mother and son lived in abject poverty, their home little more than a shack, broiling hot in the summer, freezing cold in the winter. Ben grew up loathed by his mother, subjected to hateful rants from his mother punctuated by scripture-readings that would sometimes last for days at a time.

At 16, Ben left his home in Milfay, moving to Houston, Texas, where he fell into a life of petty theft and burglary. While there, he befriended another young transient, Robert "Bobo" Chinaski. An inept attempt at a bank robbery resulted in their capture and conviction to 20 years in the state prison-farm, serving on a chain-gang.

Ben received a visit from a former neighbor, who informed him of his mother's plight. She had fallen into destitution and was dying from dust-pneumonia. Unable to secure a release, he grew uncooperative and combative toward the guards and fellow convicts. His belligerence only served to earn him a long stretch in solitary confinement. Focused on escape at any cost, Ben changed tactics and toed the line, passively following the rules until he was accepted as a "trusty" on the chain-gang, ladling water to his fellow inmates and acting as the guards' gofer.

Ben accompanied a prison-guard, Emmett Johansson, on a run into town to secure gravel. While on the road, Ben attacked him, forcing him to veer the truck into a ditch. Dazed, Johansson managed to draw his service revolver, but before he could subdue his prisoner, Ben turned the gun on him, killing him with three shots to the abdomen. He then made good his escape, determined to return to his family farm to help his mother.

Carnivále – First Season Storylines

YEAR 1 – STORY ARC

1.01

Ben arrives at his family farm to find Flora in the final stages of dust pneumonia. As she draws her last breath, he attempts to touch her but she recoils, cursing him until she finally dies. While burying her, he's interrupted by a work-crew. The bank has repossessed the farm and they're there to demolish it, ordering him off the property. A stand-off ensues which is interrupted by the arrival of Carnivále. The carnies help him bury Flora. He passes out from hunger. Noting the imminent arrival of the police, Samson pities the boy and allows the others to load him into Lila's trailer, and he's spirited away.

That night, at Lila's urging, Lodz "reads" the young stranger's dreams – a nightmare of running from a tattooed man interspersed with images of trench warfare. Lodz recognizes a soldier as Scudder. Shocked and drained, he breaks away and collapses. He later confronts Samson, telling him "the boy's dangerous." Samson tells him that Management wants to take Ben on full-time. Lodz is troubled.

Ben, meanwhile, has no intention of staying with the odd group of freaks and leaves. On the road, he passes a migrant camp. A mourning father urges him to help him retrieve his dead son from his grief-stricken wife. She refuses to believe her baby is dead. Ben approaches and a brief exchange ensues, less said than unsaid, which results in the mother's epiphany that her child is dead. Ben gives the baby to its father, moving on toward town.

In town, two men attempt to rape Sofie. Ben rescues her and the two drive back to the carnival, where Samson offers him a job. That night, Ben wanders through the midway, amazed and curious. Later, he's approached by Sofie, who offers to read his cards. He declines.

The next day, after helping the others break down the carnival, Sofie repeats her offer. This time, Ben accepts.

In the card reading, Ben is confronted by a pivotal incident from his long-repressed past: the resurrection of the kitten. This is followed by a frightening image of Brother Justin roaring "Tell me!" He flees the trailer.

As the carnies get ready to set off, a crippled little girl confronts Ben. More in defiance of his mother's judgment that "he's marked" than any sense of pity, he lays hands on her, healing her legs. As he does, the crops begin to wither and die. Exhausted, he runs across the field, catching up with the convoy and climbing up on the truck.

- The carnies know Ben is a fugitive from the law
- Samson and Jones know Ben "was expected."
- Lodz knows Ben is connected to Scudder.
- Samson knows that Lodz feels Ben is "dangerous."
- Apollonia knows that Ben is an Avatar of Light.
- Ben knows he can heal with the laying-on of hands.

1.02

Ben shares a cryptic dream with Brother Justin. He finds a photograph of his mother in "the trailer that ain't there." The watchful fetus hints at Management's presence in the trailer. When Ben shows the photo to Samson, Samson tells him he's never seen her before. Likewise, Ben feigns ignorance as to the woman's identity. Later, Samson reveals an identical photograph in Management's trailer, wonders what his boss is "up to."

Sofie begs Ben to visit Apollonia. Troubled by the last reading, he refuses, offending Sofie. Later that night, Apollonia wills herself to walk, approaching Ben and telling him he's "the one" before collapsing unconscious. Ben is roughed up by the others until Samson stops them.

Ruthie checks Ben's injuries. He shows her the photo. Ruthie identifies it as "Scudder's sweetie." She tells him Scudder loved Flora. Ben reveals that the woman in the photo was his mother. Ruthie tells him that Scudder was a drunk and a carny-geek with Carnivále long ago. She gives him a photo of Scudder, attired in the tuxedo he was wearing in Ben's dream.

- Ben has seen Brother Justin and would know him by sight.
- Ben knows his mother was involved with Scudder, the soldier in his dreams.
- Ben suspects Scudder may be his father.
- Ben knows Scudder worked for Carnivále as a geek.
- Ben knows Scudder was a "rummy."
- Ruthie knows there's something odd going on involving Ben.
- Ben knows that his past and his destiny are somehow entangled with Carnivále.
- Management lives unseen behind a curtain in a locked trailer.

- Only Samson speaks to Management.
- Apollonia believes that Ben is "the one."
- Ben knows his dreams are rooted in real events, evidenced by the photo of Scudder and the bear's cap and vest.

1.03

Ben sees the Big Sky truck pictured in the background of the photograph of Flora. He is recognized as the man who healed the crippled girl in episode 1.1 and mobbed. When Samson learns of this, he writes the towns reaction to Ben off to superstition and ignorance. Forbidden from opening a "carnivalshow" by a local sheriff, Samson decides to exploit the gullible townies by putting on a tent-revival, featuring Ben as a "healer." Members of the troupe are used as shills in false "healings" to fool the crowd. Lodz arranges for Ben to be costumed in Scudder's tuxedo. Ruthie and Samson subsequently remark upon his uncanny resemblance to Hack Scudder. The venture is very successful.

Ben goes into town to investigate who owns the Big Sky truck and finds out it belongs to Becca Donovan, an old woman whose wealthy family has fallen into poverty and is now dying of dust pneumonia.

On his way back, Ben is violently accosted by townies desperate for his healing touch, giving him a clear idea of what life would hold for him should his secret get out.

After the show, Sofie agrees to give him a ride out to Becca Donovan's house. She recognizes him, tells him he has "his eyes." Sofie is then dismissed, and Becca tells him that she and Scudder were close, that he loved Flora, and that Ben has "the gift." She also indicates that he speaks to her in dreams, and that he has likewise been communicating with Ben. Becca warns him that there are rules to his power. If he gives life, he must take it from something else. Her son, the town sheriff, arrives and throws Ben out of the house before she can tell him more.

On the ride back, Sofie questions Ben about his relationship to Becca and her reference "You got his eyes, boy." Ben refuses to answer her and they have a brief stand-off.

Meanwhile, in the absence of Ben, Samson recruits another carny to pose as the healer. The sheriff, who insists that they heal his mother, Becca, interrupts the service. Ben arrives. Desperate for answers, he moves to heal Becca, but

she refuses his touch. He asks her where Scudder went. She tells him "Babylon."

After the show, Samson is furious that Ben would be stupid enough to risk exposing their scam. He assigns him to latrine duty. "No more shows for you." Samson joins Jones in the lead truck and tells him that their destination is Babylon.

- Ben knows Scudder was his father.
- Samson and Ruthie suspect Scudder was Ben's father.
- Lodz verifies that Scudder was Ben's father.
- Ben briefly experiences admiration and acceptance from the carnies.
- Ben realizes that exposure of his power will turn him into a freak in the public eye.
- Ben finds out the destructive cost of his power.
- Ben's move to heal Becca confirms Lodz's suspicions that Ben has a measure of Scudder's power.
- Ben finds out his father went to Babylon.
- The Carnivále seems to be following Scudder's footsteps.

1.04

Ben accompanies Lodz to a shack where they are trapped by a dust-storm. Lodz manipulates Ben into a powerful demonstration of his powers. Ben briefly stops the storm, which resumes as soon as he expresses disbelief in his own hand in the miracle. Lodz then burns him with a fireplace poker. Ben instinctively heals himself. Lodz tells him about Scudder, that he was a coward and tried to deny his destiny. Lodz reveals that he sacrificed his sight for a small measure of that power. He urges Ben to use his power in order to master it.

Meanwhile, Jones enters Management's trailer, only to find that the alcove behind the curtain is empty, raising the possibility that Management doesn't exist, and that Samson is actually the one calling the shots.

Ben ultimately spurns Lodz, refusing to trust him and suspicious of the blind man's motives. Lodz tells Lila they "have much work to do."

- Ben learns his powers are even more extensive than he'd thought.
- Lodz conclusively proves that Ben is endowed with supernatural powers.
- Ben learns he can heal himself.
- Ben learns his father was likewise endowed with supernatural abilities.
- Ben learns that Lodz knew of Scudder's powers.
- Ben suspects Lodz had a hand in helping Scudder develop his abilities.
- Ben learns that Scudder was a coward, that he ran from his destiny.
- Ben learns that to control it, he must use it.

- Ben is told that if he refuses to follow his destiny, people he loves will die (like Flora).

1.05 – 1.06

Ben gets drunk with the rest of the Carnies in Babylon. He awakes to find himself trapped deep in a mineshaft. He runs into Scudder, who simply walks past him. When Ben indicates he recognizes him, Scudder responds, "Yes, but do you know what that means?" He follows Scudder down the shaft and stumbles across the body of a man murdered with a pick-axe. Written on the beams of the shaft is the word AVATARAVATARAVATARA... He writes it down on his arm. Ben continues through the shaft until he hears explosions. He's suddenly transported to the trenches of Lemberg, where he becomes a proxy for Scudder. His assassin, Lucius, takes aim and is attacked by a bear. Ben flees, only to run into a younger Lodz (eyes intact), who doesn't seem to recognize him. An explosion propels him back to the present, where Lodz is patiently waiting for him outside the mine. He questions Ben, who refuses to answer his questions.

Samson later learns that Scudder had killed the man Ben found in the mine and had somehow been responsible for a cave-in that took the lives of the entire company. A curse was subsequently laid on the land leaving the town a prison for the souls of all who die there.

- Ben learns that Lodz knew Scudder long before Scudder met Flora.
- Ben suspects Scudder was somehow involved in a tragedy in the mine, or at least one murder.
- Ben suspects that Scudder may have something to do with the unlucky reputation Babylon has among the carnies.
- Ben is exposed to the word AVATARA, an important clue to the source of his power and ultimate destiny. Ben suspects that something is leading him in his father's footsteps.
- Samson finds out that Scudder was instrumental in the curse on Babylon that claimed the life of Dora Mae Dreifus.
- Samson realizes for the first time that Management's mysterious agenda supercedes the welfare of the troupe.

1.07

Ben and Ruthie hunt snakes. Ben learns that Scudder once saved Ruthie's life from a venomous snake-bite. Ben reveals that physical contact was rare in his household (read non-existent) and that his mother used to read scripture aloud constantly. He then allows Ruthie to caress his cheek, dropping his guard and deciding to trust her.

Lodz subsequently tells Ben that Ruthie rewarded Scudder's help with sex. Angry, Ben confronts Ruthie. An argument ensues, culminating in a short scuffle in which Ben breaks Gabriel's arm. Ben later apologizes to Ruthie for his jealousy and for Gabe's injury. Ruthie is still cold.

Contrite, desperate to make things "right," Ben leads Gabriel away from the carnival into the middle of a pond. Swearing Gabe to secrecy, Ben heals his broken arm, consequently killing all the fish in the pond. Lila witnesses Gabriel's miraculous recovery and informs Lodz, gloating that the boy doesn't seem to need Lodz's help. Furious, Lodz beats Lila with his cane.

- Ben takes a small step toward learning to trust his new "family."
- Ben learns that Ruthie and Scudder were lovers.
- Ben takes the first deliberate step in controlling the consequences of his power.
- Ben learns that, no matter what kinds of precautions he takes to exercise his healing powers, the loss of life is inevitable.
- Ben risks exposure to help Gabriel.
- Lodz is enraged that Ben has decided to proceed without his help.

1.08

Ben's nightmares become more frightening. He sees the fate of the soldier who was stalking Scudder, awakes to find his limbs torn off. Lodz patiently informs him of the inevitable truth: the dreams will continue to worsen if he doesn't seek Lodz's help.

Ben is sent away by Samson to locate and recruit a "scorpion boy." Ben is led astray by a competing freak-finder, Phineas Boffo. From a local gas-station attendant, he finds out that the fabled "scorpion boy" is actually a "lobster gal." Ben finally arrives to find that Boffo has beaten him to the punch, placing the lobster-girl under contract with a competing show.

Meanwhile, Lodz is shocked to find out that Samson entrusted Ben, an escaped convict, with a car and fifty dollars cash. It becomes apparent that the errand was devised by Samson primarily to confirm Lodz's interest in the boy. Lodz tells Samson he's "made a huge mistake."

Rather than facing Samson, Ben briefly contemplates stealing the money and the truck. His reverie is broken by Boffo, who tells him he and Samson are old friends. Boffo insists on shaking Ben's hand to show "no hard feelings."

When they shake hands, Ben experiences a powerful series of visions of Medieval knights practicing rituals, fighting, burning at the stake. The source of the visions is Boffo's lodge-ring. Ben pulls it from his finger and, still dazed, drives off, leaving behind a furious Boffo.

Later, Ben helps out a desperate migrant at the gas-station over the objections of the attendant. After he leaves, the migrant spies a wanted-poster offering a reward for Ben's capture. His crime: murder.

Ben tells Samson he failed, that he was fooled by "some weasel." Boffo approaches, asks for his ring back. Samson is curious. Boffo told him about the incident. Why would Ben have a fit over a ring. He examines it, recognizes the symbol on it. When Samson inquires, Boffo tells him he's a member of the Order Templar. He takes the ring and stalks off.

When Samson returns to Management's trailer, he finds Lodz inside, talking to Management. Management tells him to "get out." Samson realizes Lodz was right. He had made a huge miscalculation in sending the boy off. Lodz is reassuming the position of Management's main confidante. As he stands outside, Samson pulls a watch-fob from his pocket. The symbol on it is identical to the one on Boffo's ring. He flips it over, revealing the initials H.S.

- Ben's dreams are getting worse.
- Ben again sees Brother Justin.
- Lodz tips his hand to Samson over Ben's importance.
- Ben realizes that he has some connection to a medieval order of knights.
- Introduction of the Order Templar.
- Ben is wanted for murder.
- Samson's curiosity is piqued by the incident with Boffo's ring.
- Samson is in possession of a Templar watch-fob that bears Henry Scudder's initials.

1.09

Ben attempts to elude his dreams by forcing himself to stay awake. He's watched closely by Lodz and Lila. Samson shows Ben the watch-fob. Ben is afraid to touch it, doesn't want a repeat of the frightening visions he experienced with Boffo's ring. Samson tells him the fob belonged to Ben's "daddy," and is now rightfully his. Ben doesn't want it. Samson asks Ben to meet him later, implying that he will finally level with him.

Lodz urges Ben to sleep, indicating that Management is "worried." Ben still wants no part of Lodz and Management's "education."

Samson tells Ben that the Carnivale picking him up was "no accident." He shows him the duplicate photo of Flora in Management's album, indicates that he's figured out Ben's parentage. He informs him that Management has been searching for Scudder over the years. He goes on to indicate that while Lodz is not to be trusted, Management is a "good man." Ben asks him about the significance of the watch-fob. Samson doesn't know, but suggests they find out.

Later that night, Ben and Samson attend Lodz's mentalist act. They anonymously pass the fob up to him, and his reaction is similar to Ben's when he came in contact with Boffo's ring, albeit more intense. In Lodz's vision, the knights chant "In hoc signo vinces." Ben translates: "By this sign we conquer."

Samson pulls him outside. Ben is as shocked as Samson that he was able to translate the Latin. Samson urges him to choose someone to confide in. Lines are drawn for Ben, Lodz on one side, Samson on the other.

Lodz suggests to Management that the reason they are having trouble reaching him due to the influence and interference of Scudder. He later returns the fob to Samson. It's clear Management does not appreciate Samson's meddling.

- Ben is refusing to sleep, thereby avoiding the influence of Management's dreams.

- Ben confirms that the arrival of Carnivále on his mother's farm was not happenstance, but engineered by Management.
- Ben knows that Samson is aware of his parentage.
- Ben knows that Samson suspects he may have special powers and abilities.
- Ben understands the Latin phrase, but has no idea of its meaning or context.
- Ben realizes that Samson and Lodz are at odds, that he has become a pawn in a power struggle between the two.
- Lodz and Management realize that Ben has come under the influence of Scudder.

1.10

Ben is still refusing to sleep, but is having waking visions of the Tattooed Man from his nightmares (a symbol of the Dark Avatar). He tells Sofie what happened the night Apollonia walked, that she told him "You're the one."

Samson is ousted from Management's trailer. It's clear Lodz has replaced him as Management's right-hand. In a misguided attempt to curry favor with Management Samson asks Ben to accompany him to town. There they find a Templar Lodge.

Samson interrogates "The Commander," only to find that the Templars are exactly what they appear to be, "a bunch of fat buckwheats playing cards." However, as they leave, they pass a mural which includes an image of the Tattooed Man, and are observed by a mysterious stranger from an upstairs window.

Samson informs Ben that Management and Lodz bought Carnivále some time after Scudder left. He doesn't know why Management is searching for Scudder, but believes it has to do with something terrible that happened in "the old country."

Gabriel later finds Ben in a bathtub. The lack of sleep is killing him. Ruthie urges him to sleep. Ben tells her about his nightmares, breaks down. Ruthie comforts him and they make love. Ben falls asleep.

Lodz steals into the trailer and reads his dream – the chase through the cornfield and the tattooed man, only this time the prey is Ben, then transformed into Scudder, who tells Lodz "The Boy is Mine" and expels him from Ben's mind.

- Ben is having waking visions of the mysterious Tattooed Man.
- Sofie learns what happened between Apollonia and Ben.
- Ben fails to determine what the Order Templar has to do with his destiny.

- The Order Templar has something to do with the Tattooed Man.
- Ben learns that Management took over after Scudder fled.
- Ben learns that Management is searching for Scudder because of something terrible that happened in their past (perhaps Management is the Russian soldier in his nightmares).
- Ben makes love with Ruthie.
- Lodz sees Scudder in Ben's dream, and Scudder is aware of his intrusion, claiming that he is in control of Ben.

1.11

Ben is furious at Ruthie for seducing him. Guilty, he goes into town for a drink. There he witnesses a strange procession involving a child painted with the markings of the Tattooed Man. A strange old woman prophesies loss for Ben. He enters a Catholic Church and gives his confession to a priest that reveals himself to be Scudder, then disappears. The night seems loaded with bad portents.

When Ben returns to the carnival, he finds Ruthie dying of a snake-bite. He takes her far into the desert and attempts to heal her. His powers fail.

- Ben receives "absolution" from Scudder.
- The Tattooed Man appears to be a symbol for something dangerous to Ben.
- Ben's healing power has limits, though he has no idea what they are.

1.12

Ben returns to Carnivále. Ruthie is dead. He puts her body in her trailer, posts Gabriel outside to guard it. He seeks advice from Lodz, who takes him to Management. Management tells Ben they are of "like kind." The only way to save Ruthie is to sacrifice another, to take a human life. But he must do so before midnight, or Ruthie will be lost to him.

A Texas Ranger arrives, searching for Ben on a tip. The carnies warn him and he hides. Samson's still stinging from Management's betrayal, is resentful toward Ben. He advises him to leave, to stay away from the other carnies. Ben goes into Mexico to elude the Ranger and find someone "expendable" whose life he can trade for Ruthie's. He attempts to kill a drunk, but can't bring himself to do it. He retreats to a cemetery, where he attempts to exchange his own life, but is stopped.

Ben returns to Management's trailer with a decision: He will not kill to save Ruthie. Her death was God's will. Management informs him that the snake-bite was engineered by Lodz. Ben flies into a rage and strangles the life out of Lodz. Ruthie is resurrected.

- Ben speaks directly to Management.
- Ben learns that, to save a human life, he must take one (the assassin/healer).
- Ben learns that his power carries grave responsibility.
- Ben realizes the authorities are still actively tracking him.
- Ben's rage and sense of justice overwhelms any moral qualms he may have against murder.
- For the first time, Ben consciously directs life-force from one source (Lodz) into another (Ruthie).

CARNIVÁLE YEAR 1: BEN HAWKINS SUMMARY AND RECAP

What is KNOWN:

- The carnies know Ben is a fugitive from the law
- Samson and Jones know Ben "was expected."
- Lodz knows Ben is connected to Scudder.
- Samson knows that Lodz feels Ben is "dangerous."
- Apollonia knows that Ben is an Avatar of Light.
- Ben knows he can heal with the laying-on of hands.
- Ben has seen Brother Justin and would know him by sight.
- Ben knows his mother was involved with Scudder, the soldier in his dreams.
- Ben knows Scudder worked for Carnivále as a geek.
- Ben knows Scudder was a "rummy."
- Ruthie knows there's something odd going on involving Ben.
- Ben knows that his past and his destiny are somehow entangled with Carnivále.
- Management lives unseen behind a curtain in a locked trailer.
- Only Samson speaks to Management.
- Ben knows his dreams are rooted in real events, evidenced by the photo of Scudder and the bear's cap and vest.
- Ben knows that exposure of his power will turn him into a freak in the public eye.
- Samson knows that Scudder was instrumental in the curse on Babylon that claimed the life of Dora Mae Dreifus.

- Ben's dreams are getting worse.
- Ben is wanted for murder.
- Lodz regains direct access to Management.
- Management exists.
- Samson is in possession of a Templar watch-fob that bears Henry Scudder's initials.
- Ben knows that Samson is aware of his parentage.
- Ben knows that Samson suspects he may have special powers and abilities.
- Ben understands the Latin phrase, but has no idea of its meaning or context.
- Ben is having waking visions of the mysterious Tattooed Man.
- The Order Templar has something to do with the Tattooed Man.

What is SUSPECTED:

- Ben suspects he is linked with an unknown preacher
- Apollonia suspects that Ben is "the one."
- Samson and Ruthie suspect Scudder was Ben's father.
- Ben is told by Lodz that if he refuses to follow his destiny, people he loves will die (like Flora).
- Ben suspects Carnivále seems to be following Scudder's footsteps.
- Ben suspects Lodz had a hand in helping Scudder develop his abilities.
- Ben suspects Scudder was somehow involved in a tragedy in the mine, or at least one murder.

- Ben suspects that Scudder may have something to do with the unlucky reputation Babylon has among the carnies.
- Samson's curiosity is piqued by the incident with Boffo's ring.
- Ben's dreams are influenced by Management.
- The Tattooed Man appears to be a symbol for something dangerous to Ben.
- Ben suspects that the mysterious preacher in his dreams (Justin) may be a false prophet.

What is CONFIRMED:

- Ben confirms Scudder was his father.
- Lodz confirms that Scudder was Ben's father.
- Ben confirms the destructive cost of his power.
- Ben's move to heal Becca confirms Lodz's suspicions that Ben has a measure of Scudder's power.
- Lodz conclusively proves that Ben is endowed with supernatural powers.
- Ben confirms that the arrival of Carnivale on his mother's farm was not happenstance, but engineered by Management.
- Lodz sees Scudder in Ben's dream, and Scudder is aware of his intrusion, claiming that he is in control of Ben.
- Ben's rage and sense of justice overwhelms any moral qualms he may have against murder.

What is LEARNED:

- Ben learns his powers are even more extensive than he'd thought.

- Ben learns his father was likewise endowed with supernatural abilities.
- Ben learns that Lodz knew of Scudder's powers.
- Ben learns that Scudder was a coward, that he ran from his destiny.
- Ben learns that to control it, he must use it.
- Ben learns that Lodz knew Scudder long before Scudder met Flora.
- Ben is exposed to the word AVATARA, an important clue to the source of his power and ultimate destiny.
- Samson learns that Management's mysterious agenda supercedes the welfare of the troupe.
- Ben learns that Ruthie and Scudder were lovers.
- Ben learns that, no matter what kinds of precautions he takes to exercise his healing powers, the loss of life is inevitable.
- Lodz tips his hand to Samson over Ben's importance.
- Ben realizes that he has some connection to a medieval order of knights.
- Ben realizes that Samson and Lodz are at odds, that he has become a pawn in a power struggle between the two.
- Lodz and Management realize that Ben has come under the influence of Scudder.
- Sofie learns what happened between Apollonia and Ben.
- Ben learns that Management took over after Scudder fled.
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- Ben learns that Management is searching for Scudder because of something terrible that happened in their past

(perhaps Management is the Russian soldier in his nightmares).

- Ben's healing power has limits, though he has no idea what they are.
- Ben learns that, to save a human life, he must take one (the assassin/healer).
- Ben learns that his power carries grave responsibility.
- Ben realizes the authorities are still actively tracking him.
- For the first time, Ben consciously directs life-force from one source (Lodz) into another (Ruthie).