

**0. Water for Elephants - Story Preface**

1. THE CIRCUS DURING the 1930s
2. CIRCUS PERFORMERS from the 1930s
3. ROSIE the CIRCUS ELEPHANT
4. GREAT CIRCUS DISASTERS



During the 1930s, elephants were a main attraction of the traveling circus. In this photo, c. 1930, we see elephants, performers and a very large crowd (at the top of the picture) inside a circus tent. Image online, courtesy U.S. National Archives.

*Hey, there! Hoop-la! The circus is in town!  
Have you seen the elephant? Have you seen the clown?  
Have you seen the dappled horse gallop round the ring?  
Have you seen the acrobats on the dizzy swing?  
Have you seen the tumbling men tumble up and down?  
Hoop-la! Hoop-la! The circus is in town!*

From *The Circus*

By [C. J. Dennis](#) (1876-1938), Australian Poet (and Circus Lover)

It's 1931. America is in the grip of an economic depression. People are out of work, times are hard and there seems no way out of the misery.

Then ... for a day, at least ... it's time to set aside the gut-churning turmoil. The circus is coming to town!

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

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Media Stream



Water for Elephants

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