

THE PYRAMID

The Guerreros' showstopper begins when Brian steps onto a wire, three stories up, and dons a shoulder brace holding a crossbar. Next on the wire is Cappy, wearing a brace at the other end of that bar. Aura then steps from a platform (not shown) onto that crossbar. Wilson is next on the wire, followed by Werner, the two of them connected by another bar. Jenny then steps onto a bar, one end of which is resting on Aura's shoulders, the other on the platform. Jahaida balances a chair behind Jenny, who sits on it. Finally, Jahaida slips into a brace at the other end of the bar attached to Aura, and steps onto the bar between Werner and Wilson.



CONSIDER YOUR SISTER-IN-LAW. Picture your whole family around the dining room table for the holidays, and start with your sister-in-law as she's spooning the gravy. Think of all her strengths, her good intentions, as well as all the things that make you want to stick your fork into your thigh.

Look, I know you don't know me from Adam—but just indulge me for a minute before the showstopper comes on. Turn to your brother now. You're studying him as he drains his third beer, thinking of all the stupid arguments you've had, all the quirks of his that have made your teeth grind since you were kids.

Now your spouse. Don't worry, she's oblivious; she's yapping to her sister. Consider her moods, her hormones, her chocolate addiction—the whole works. Got it?

Now close your eyes and imagine this. Imagine all of you at that table—brothers, sisters, in-laws—forming a human pyramid. Seven of you, stacked up in three tiers, except you're not on the ground. You're on a wire the width of your ring finger . . . three stories above the ground . . . the person on top standing on a chair . . . and no safety net below. To survive, your family has to synchronize every step and walk from one end of the 34-foot wire to the other. Just one failure to accommodate one of the niggling little pushes or pulls from that sister-in-law, one old jealousy between you and your brother, one bad night with your wife—hell, one cough or sneeze—and it's coffins for all of you.

One more thing. You have to do this not once, but seven days a week, for two years, all over the country. Traveling and eating and sleeping and dressing together, hating one another and loving one another and handing one another your lives again and again and . . . Look, the Guerreros are almost ready now.

LADEEZ and GENTLEMEN! You are about to witness CIRCUS HISTORY! Fifty years after the Wallenda family ASTONISHED the world with an UNPRECEDENTED seven-man pyramid on the high wire. . . .

This is all you needed, right? You got your kids here, you got your popcorn and soda, and all you want to do is enjoy the circus, and you got some idiot next to you chewing your ear off. I'll shut up in just a second, promise. But there're just a few things I can tell you that'll make what you're about to see, as amazing as it is, even *more* amazing. Like the ringmaster

said, the Wallendas were the ones that made The Pyramid famous. They're the family that brought it from Europe back in the late '40s and the pictures made everyone's eyes bug out . . . and then made them cover their eyes 15 years later when the Wallendas collapsed in Detroit. It was horrible. Karl Wallenda up there dangling by his foot with a cracked pelvis, his ex-wife's niece clawing for dear life to his back, two other in-laws dead on the floor, and his own son paralyzed for life. And have you heard? It's already gotten one of the Guerreros, too. Just a few months ago, not long after the beginning of this two-year tour they're doing with Ringling Brothers. The Pyramid took out their kid brother Walfer, crushed the poor guy's vertebrae and paralyzed him from the waist down. You're probably wondering how the hell the other six survived, but it's not that simple, because—

LADEEZ and GENTLEMEN, the challenge of the seven-man pyramid requires the complete communication, cooperation and concentration of our artists. We ask for COMPLETE SILENCE in the arena!

All right already, I'll whisper. Don't worry, I'm not going to ruin it for you, because I can't. The more you learn about this trick and this family, the more unbelievable it gets. See, it's a family that . . . how can I say this? They all love one another, maybe too much, but hang around them for a few days and you start finding out about the rivalries and spats, conflicts that were never quite resolved. Maybe a little like your family or mine, the difference being, for the Guerreros, that each of those things can play itself out in the most subtle of ways, and kill them.

This might sound strange, but you know how hard it is to keep a family together these days? That's all the Guerreros are trying to do up there. To be *one*, a clan, just like when they were kids in Colombia, even now that they're adults living in America and some of them have kids of their own. Maybe that's unrealistic nowadays, an impossible illusion, and one thing's for sure—it's cost them years of heartache and anger between the ones who held onto that illusion and the ones who gave it up. Until a couple years ago, when they finally came to realize that there was only one way to do it, a way no other family would ever dream of. Because the one thing that can keep them all together is the one thing that can destroy them altogether.

You guessed it. The Pyramid. The Seven. *Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey is proud to present this DEATH-DEFYING maneuver, performed by the sen-SA-tional GUERRERO FAMILY!*