

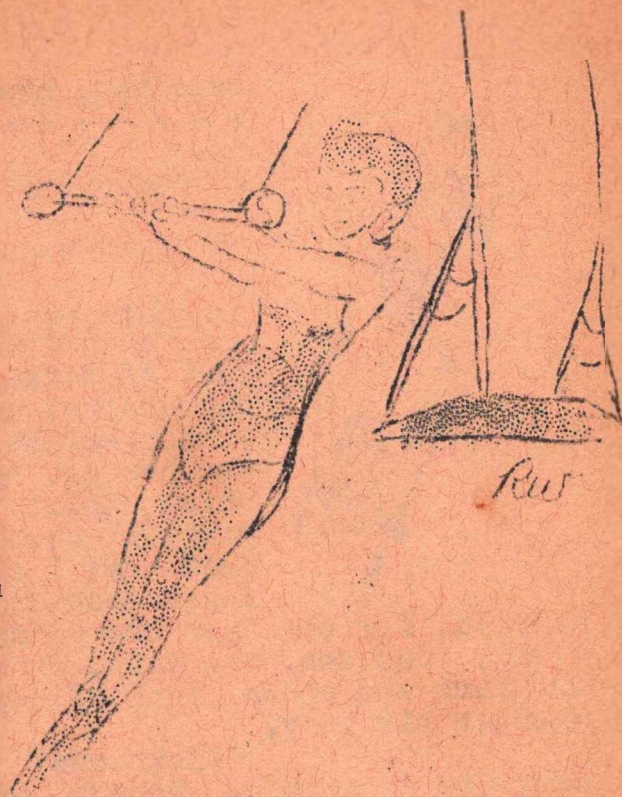
PICTURE TRICK #1

Produced, largely on stencil (how else does one produce a mimeograph zine?) by

Marion Zimmer Bradley
Box 158
Rochester, Texas

for the Dec 15th
mailing, my first, of the N'apa.

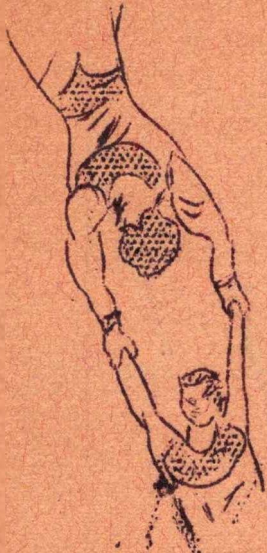
"Picture trick...a flying trapeze maneuver demanding little strength or skill....but attractive when performed by a woman...."
(from my notes)



Like, suddenly I hear from Guy Terwilleger, and it is already the third of December, to the effect that the mailing is December 15, 1959, and if I spark up the old mimeograph monster I think I can make it. So let's give it the old ginger, girl, and Make That Mailing. Come on, where's your fannish spirit? What? Enter a brand new APA completely cold, without ever having seen a mailing, without knowing anybody in the organization, (Excuse me, Alma and Bjo, I know you are there) and rush blindly into the business of publishing five pages?

Well, it seems like the fannish thing to do. But here I am, after thirteen years, more or less, in fandom, twelve of which have been spent writing for fanzines and publishing them, and seven of them, more or less, in writing sci-fiction for various markets, and suddenly I feel like a bloomin' blunderin' neofan, rushing in where angels fear to tread.

Hello, everybody, whoever you are. A couple of you, maybe more, met me in Detroit. For those who didn't, I am female, and perhaps my description should be left to others; but since the others aren't available at the moment and I am, here goes; informal



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introduction to Marion Bradley.

as of this mailing, six months.

Age; 29 years and,

Height; 5'3½"

Weight; none of your business but about six pounds more than I wish it were. Bones; large. Hair; sort of darkish blonde. Eyes; grey-green and all but useless unless propped up behind strong lenses. A short-sighted youngster, until 12, I somehow got out of the habit of ~~waddwwd~~ looking at people. Which explains, you people who had to identify yourself to me seven or eight times over in Detroit, just why; I simply do not recognize people, their faces just don't register on what I use for a brain.

Married, for the last ten years, to Robert A. Bradley, railroad agent. One son, age nine, entitled David Stephen, a long stringy creature who shows signs of being taller than I am before he numbers another birthday.

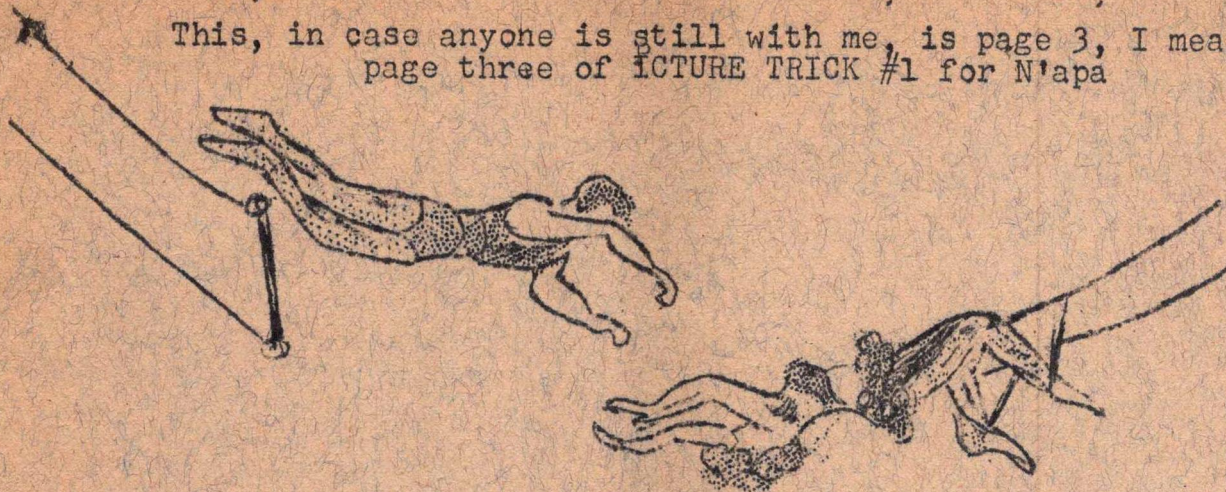
Nicknames? Take your choice, provided that they are printable. Nobody, except fans, ever calls me Marion. (And what they call me...well...it isn't always Marion, either). A lot of people who met me in Detroit started in, for some reason which is a mystery to me (except maybe because I frequently, lazily, sign letters with my initials only, MezB; to avoid the vainglory of carefully writing out my John Hancock.) -- anyhow, a lot of people started in calling me "Mez", which is about as unhandy a monosyllabic monicker as you can imagine. (They pronounce it to rime with "fez"). My family have always called me Mimi. My husband, and closest personal friends, call me "Peggy", for obscure reasons. And if you want to go back to ancient history, as a kidlet I was known as Dolly.

I live in a small house in a small town, and fill up my days with 'housework' (when I can't avoid it) writing (of which more anon....after all, since I don't know most of you people, I have a sort of sublime license to chatter away without any self-consciousness...I can't hear you when you yell SHADDAP!) and music. And recently I have been on this acrobatic kick. And now, before I continue with all this personalia, I might as well launch into a sort of explanation of why this issue of PICTURE TRICK is all filled up with pictures of the daring young men (and women) on the flying trapeze.

"I was a Rosicrucian for the FAPA ...and found Scientology

It started a few days ago when I was stencilling the first couple of bits for my FAPAZine; which in accordance with a sort of rather esoteric private joke, is titled CATCH TRAP. Ruth Wieland had sketched a few little flying-trapeze scenes for me,

This, in case anyone is still with me, is page 3, I mean, page three of PICTURE TRICK #1 for N'apa



and I was trying rather hopelessly to transfer them to these Royal Blue Heyer stencils. They made such a mess that I thought I'd sit down and try again.

"But," I hear somebody asking out there, "Why this flying-trapeze kick anyhow?"

"Oh, THAT. Well... are you SURE you want to know?"

"Oh, quit it, Mez, you know perfectly well you are going to explain it....how else will you fill up these stencils? And anyhow, haven't you been just dying to show off your knowledge? So, to repeat the question, why do your FAPAZINE and now your N'apa zine have these aerial titles, and why are the pages all cluttered up with acrobats and flyers and catchers and things?"

"Oh; well....."

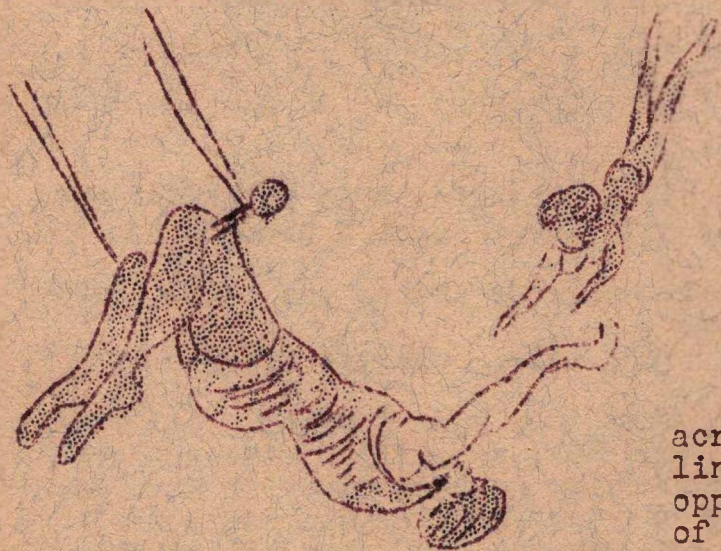
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When I was in Detroit I had just come to the end of one novel and was busily trying to write a sci-fi story. I plodded away at that novelette until my brain was bursting and my fingers ached and I just plain could not get it to come right. So I finally tossed it aside and went to the circus.

Now, I have been a circus fan since the year One, almost. I am insane about acrobats of all kinds, from the "Flying Concellos" down ~~the~~ to the "Flying Cats" ---the latter being a tumbling team formed by a local college, which puts on small exhibitions in local gyms. It doesn't matter whether it is a pile of my choral-club kids building pyramids (I was guilty of getting them to doing that when I was supposed to be teaching them Christmas carols) or that famous fellow who piles up nineteen chairs and tumbles off them without hurting himself; I am an acrobatic enthusiast. In high school and college, though loathing football, hockey and soccer, tepid about basketball, lukewarm about tennis and tolerating baseball only because, a tomboy, I was one of the two or three females who could throw a ball straight enough to serve as a pitcher, the one sport in which I participated avidly and enthusiastically was tumbling. And in spite of my non-athletic

This is the fourth page of PICTURE TRICK #1, for Nāpa....

character and build, I have always remained, and am to this day capable of such elementary acrobatic



maneuvers as backward and forward rolls, cartwheels, and the like. I am invariably horrified when otherwise healthy-looking people confess without shame that they cannot do sit-ups or touch their toes (I could do these feats when eight months pregnant...and did, to the horror of my female relatives, who predicted disasters too numerous to mention).

Anyhow, to resume; professional acrobats delight me beyond telling, and I never miss an opportunity to watch them; but of all the athletes and acrobats, the ones for whom I have a

veritable passion are the ones who soar from bar to bar "with the greatest of ease" -- the experts of the flying-return.

So I went to the circus, and I watched a woman and her two grown sons, so the newspaper write-up said, and for once I watched intelligently, with some inner eye clicking off all the technical points; and while I watched, and my sons squealed and gasped, and I held my breath a little, (for it was an outdoor circus, and a Texas high wind was blowing, making the trapeze ropes twist and blow aside, and the third member of the act had to throw out the flying bar freshly for every return); and meanwhile something inside, some curious subconscious process, was quietly ticking like a time-bomb without my conscious knowledge at all. When it was all over, and we had wandered around the lot of "back yard" as long as we decently could, chatting with performers and concessionaires, and my son, full of popcorn and licking a final snow-cone, had been stickily piled into my old Chrysler and we were on our way home, both still talking about the flyers, Stevie asked me some random question about why the flyers and catchers wore tape on their wrists....I think he had some notion that it was because of the strains of the various catches involved. I answered that no, it was to give a better grip, as far as I knew, in catching; that they did not "catch" with their hands at all, but by simultaneously gripping one another's wrists. I found myself also absent-mindedly explaining the use of resin on their hands. And then he asked me the loaded question; "Mother, why don't you write a book about the flying trapeze?"

Now by the ghost of Alfredo Codona, I had never, until that very day, week,

This is, for your information, page five of PICTURE TRICK #1

and moment, had the slightest notion of doing any more with the flying trapeze than watching it. ~~Wowww~~ I had no more notion of writing anything about the flying trapeze than I had of getting out on a 64-foot rigging and doing a triple midair somersault myself.

Nor did the loaded question go off immediately. I threw back some casual remark about "Well, that might be fun to do," and we drove home.

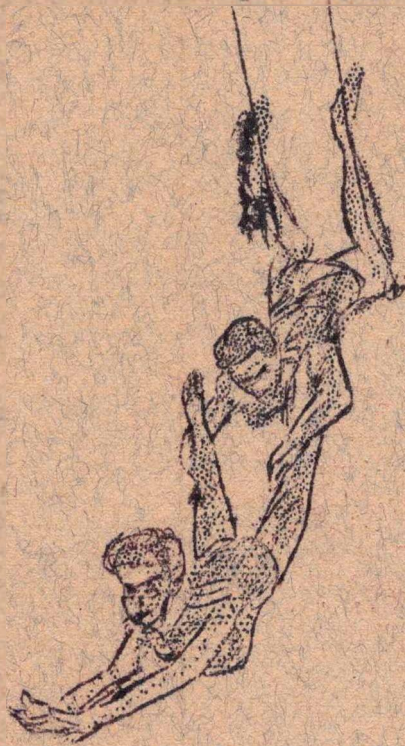
And the next day, between 1 PM and 11 that same night, I sat down with a pencil and tablet of paper and wrote an 8,000 word children's story about circusses. The next day I typed it and handed it to Steve and said "Here," and thought that would be the end of the matter.

Three days later the time bomb exploded. WHY NOT WRITE A BOOK ABOUT AERIALISTS?

I told it "Oh, nuts," and tried to get back to my science fiction story.

But the fuse had been lighted, and I, who a week before had labored long and mightily to produce 4,000 words on a blocked-up science fiction story, suddenly found myself flooded with the itch and the urge to sit down and WRITE. When this happens there is nothing to do but sit down and write. Sometimes the sitting down and writing dispels the urge, but this time, before I quite knew what had hit me, I had 425 pages of manuscript, twelve books read through an annotated, and pages upon pages upon pages of notes jotted down from all my random, lifelong collection of circus anecdotes, talk, jargon and so forth from more or less a lifetime of never missing a chance to wander around circusses and carnivals and make a nuisance of myself talking to performers. My memory, so faulty about remembering faces, opened up and disgorged literally hogsheads of these random memories and I found myself thinking about, dreaming of (literally...I've spent every darned night for three weeks on a flying trapeze) and just mentally walking around the whole area of an imaginary but very real circus with a family of (you guessed it) flyers.

Where it will go from here is anybody's guess. I may throw the book out and start from scratch again. I may start working on a kid's book about the flying trapeze. Quite frankly, I almost never talk about a book in progress and the reason I am doing so now is in a hope that by doing so now I can rid myself of this book which came quite literally out of the air



Sixth and last page of PICTURE TRICK #1, for N'apa, December 1959

and planted itself on my typewriter like Poe's Raven. I may re-copy the book (Did anybody ever write a book in six weeks that was any good?) and try submitting it somewhere. I may chuck it in the furnace. Since I never did anything like this before, I have scrapped all my preconceived notions about the sort of things I may or may not do. As I say, at this time two months ago, I had no more notion of writing about the flying trapeze than I had of getting out at the top of the rigging and doing a triple-midair-somersault myself, or running away with a circus. Having so unexpectedly done the former, God knows, I might suddenly discover myself trying to do the latter!

Heaven help us! I suddenly discover that I have somehow managed to fill up all six of these stencils, quite painlessly, and it wasn't a bit harder than pulling an impacted wisdom tooth.

Now, of course, the question is; can I get them mimeographed, and mailed to Guy Terwilliger, before December 15th, what with the Christmas rush and everything?

If you don't find PICTURE TRICK in your mailing, you will know that I failed...or that I suddenly became self-conscious about all this spontaneous nonstop chatter directed in the general direction of a gaggle of total strangers. If you DO find it; then you will know that I'll be around again, with something in, perhaps, a more formal and APA-ish vein, after I've had a chance to see a mailing and evaluate the members and get acquainted with you'all and seen what sort of things you produce when you get behind a stencil.

I ought to add, perhaps, that all of this was done without benefit of correction fluid, mine having thickened in the bottle. The office-supply store was closed for a funeral last time I went there; beware --loose types wandering around this fanzine.

And now the bottom of the stencil is rapidly shooting up at me. I started this fanzine by defining a picture trick as a flying-trapeze maneuver demanding little strength or skill, but attractive when done by a woman performer. Whether this spontaneous chatter, which demands little strength or skill, is successfully attractive, you must decide...or whether I missed the trick and, like the chap below,

took a tumble into
the safety net

...which in
itself is a pretty difficult and
dangerous maneuver, believe me.

A very merry Christmas!