

Kingston Trio

"Jocko And The Trapeze Lady"

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Dick Feller

He was a boy when the circus first came to the dust of
his West Texas town.

And twenty years later, he'd spent twenty years as
Jocko the Sad Circus Clown.

He did slap-stick gags in grease paint and rags and
the people would laugh 'til they cried.

But they never saw past the painted clown mask to the
sad, empty man locked inside.

The trapeze lady swung easy and gracefully, high in
the high trapeze swing.

Her parents were flyers. The circus was her life. The
carny was deep in her veins.

High in the spotlights in sequins and pink tights, she
flew like a bird in the wind.

The saw dust's on daughter, the strong men who
caught her were all that she brought to her tent.

Jocko worked down with the center ring clowns with a
sad painted smile on his face

And the trapeze lady swung easy and gracefully high
in the great canvas space.

Jocko looked up with a tear in his heart and, Lord, he
wished he could fly

For she never looked down at a baggy pants clown who
looked up with love in his eyes.

It was Tulsa, the last stop, the last show of the big top,
a loud, sell-out crowd filled the seats.

They clapped for the walk-around and cheered for the
clowns. The fliers brought them to their feet.

Then a still half-lit match fell in tender dry grass and
soon found the dry saw dust floor.

The flames leaped higher. When the people heard,
"Fire!" they swept like a wave for the door.

Jocko looked up to the top of the tent and a hundred
feet from the ground

Swung the trapeze lady, up on the high swing, alone,
with no way to get down.

He ran to the ladder that led to the platform, she cried,
"Jocko, no! There's no time!"
But her quick word of fear fell deaf on love's ear as
slowly he started to climb.

Hand over hand to the high flier's stand, taking the
rope that hung there
With one quick look down, the sad circus clown looked
up and took to the air.
Slow then slowly he started to swing, his eyes turned to
tears in the smoke.
Faster then faster and as he swung past her, her
strong flier hands found the rope.

She slipped to the ground as the flames found the
rigging and licked at the rope that he held.
He'd started below when the rigging let go and down to
the saw dust he fell.
She ran to his side and with tears in her eyes, "Oh, no!
Jocko, why?" she cried.
He raised his sad head. "I loved you," he said and he
closed his eyes and he died.

Now, the trapeze lady swings easy and gracefully high
in the great canvass space.
But a place and a time are still etched in her mind of a
smile painted on a sad face.
And she sometimes looks down to the center ring
clowns for someone she never has found.
For she still remembers the time when love came to her
wearing the face of a clown.

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