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THE GREAT HOUDINI

WORLD-
FAMOUS
MAGICIAN
AND
ESCAPE
ARTIST

by Monica Kulling
illustrated by
Anne Reas





Chapter One

Every summer, the circus came to Appleton, Wisconsin. Nine-year-old Ehrich Weiss loved the acrobats and the magicians. He wanted to be a performer.

"I will call myself 'The Prince of the Air,'" he told his brother Theo.

Ehrich made a trapeze out of a broomstick and two ropes. His mother sewed him a costume. He looked like a real acrobat. Soon he was ready for his first performance!



They took their act on the road and ended up in New York City. Harry and Theo got a job performing at an amusement fair on Coney Island. Here, Harry met Bess Rahner. She was performing in a song and dance act with her sister.

Harry and Bess fell in love. They were married in 1894. Bess took Theo's place in the act. It was the end of the Brothers Houdini.

Theo went on performing as a solo magician. He called himself "Hardeen." But he never became as famous as his brother.



When the six months were up, Houdini got work in Paris, France. He came up with a dangerous stunt to get people's attention. He would jump into the river Seine—handcuffed!



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