

14. The Emperor of Sympathy-Enlisters

1. page 259. **It was past last call...he stormed off to his cabin.** We based the story of Houdini's Manuka experiences on a letter that Chief Officer Gerald S. Doorly wrote to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle on September 18, 1927. The letter is in the collection of the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.

2. pages 259-260. **he challenged the local divers when they reached Suva.** Harry Houdini, *The Adventurous Life Of A Versatile Artist*, (Revised 1922 Edition), 38. Also see Harold Kellock, *Houdini His Life Story* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1928), 221.

3. page 260. **Houdini had already won three...Bess out of her prize.** Houdini's diary entry for May 28, 1910.

4. page 260. **Fancy Dress Ball.** Letter from Doorly to Doyle, September 18, 1927, in the collection of the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.

5. pages 260-261. **Chief Officer Doorly had interviewed...** Ibid.

6. pages 261. **"Never have I ever spoken of getting letters..."** Montraville M. Wood to Houdini, July 22, 1910, in the collection of the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.

7. page 261. **“I made my debut here years ago...”** Robinson Locke scrapbook 247, 99, in the collection of the New York Public Library.

8. page 261. **“Have 2 complete sets of alum...”** Houdini to Moisant, August 19, 1910. In the collection of the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin, cited in the Silverman notes deposited in the Houdini Historical Center at the Outagamie Museum, Appleton, Wisconsin.

9. page 261. **“I offered you GRATIS my entire...”** Houdini to Moisant, September 8, 1910, letter in the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.

10. pages 261-262. **He died competing for a \$4,000....** *The Washington Post*, January 1, 1911, p.7.

11. page 262. **Alfred, who founded an aviation school...** *New York Times*, April 23, 1911, p.C9.

12. page 262. **“I would advise you to leave flying...”** Weyer to Houdini, January 14, 1911, in the collection of the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.

13. page 262. **“From 1907 to 1910, thirty-five pilots...”** *New York Times*, October 15, 1911, p.1.

14. page 262. **Montraville Wood, spent most of April...** Montraville M. Wood to Houdini, April 30, 1911.

15. page 262. **“At one time I saw twelve machines....”** “The Love Letters Of Houdini,” by Ada Patterson, *Washington Post*, August 17, 1930, p. MF4.

16. page 262. **William Badger...** “Aviators Badger and Johnstone Drop to Death”, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 16, 1911, p.1

17. page 262. **St. Croix Johnstone...** Ibid.

18. page 262. **Houdini participated in a benefit flying....** Milbourne Christopher, *Houdini: The Untold Story* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1969), page 124 and Milbourne Christopher, *Houdini: A Pictorial Biography* (New York: Gramercy Books, 1976), p. 83. Unfortunately, Christopher doesn't cite his sources for Houdini's participation in the benefit flying show. We were unable to corroborate it when we searched the *Chicago Tribune* files for the article about the benefit.

19. page 262. **Houdini left it in storage outside of London...** Milbourne Christopher, *Houdini: A Pictorial Biography* (New York: Gramercy Books, 1976), p. 83.

20. pages 262-263. **Donald Stevenson.....remove the machine.** See the letter Houdini wrote to the storage facility on May 17, 1913, reproduced in Milbourne Christopher, *Houdini: A Pictorial Biography* (New York: Gramercy Books, 1976), p. 73.
21. page 263. **“£1000 Aeroplane-First time on any stage”** Unidentified clippings in the Houdini Imitators scrapbook, in the collection of the New York Public Library.
22. page 263. **Empress, “The Female Houdini”.... “Handcuff Queen Faints”**, unidentified clipping in a Houdini scrapbook in the collection of the Library of Congress.
23. pages 263-264. **“I hereby swear by God the Almighty...for perjury...”** The wording here is taken from the contract that had an assistant named Josef Zwettler sign on November 30, 1912 that was cited by Silverman in the notes he deposited at the Houdini Historical Center at the Outagamie Museum, Appleton, Wisconsin.
24. page 264. **they experimented with an escape from ice...** Milbourne Christopher, *Houdini: The Untold Story* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1969), p. 127. For more details on Houdini’s planned escape from ice see the entertaining article by Patrick Culliton, “Houdini Facts You Never Knew”, *Genii*, October 1962, p. 68. Details of the proposed escape can be found in Walter Gibson, *Houdini’s Escapes and Magic*, (New York: Blue Ribbon Books, 1930), p.251.

25. page 264. **Billy Robinson wrote him in February of 1912....** Robinson to Houdini, February 7, 1912, letter in the collection of the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.

26. pages 264-265. **“Houdini was an intense man....”** Patrick Culliton, *Houdini Unlocked, book one, the Tao of Houdini* (Kieran Press & Peter C. Mayer Rare Editions, Ltd., 1997), 126. Goldstein, who performed under the name of George “The Mysterious” Brooks, also provided recollections for Walter Gibson and Morris Young, *Houdini’s Fabulous Magic*, (New York: Bell Publishing Company, 1961).

27. page 265. **“substantial presents and bonuses to show...”** From “Twenty Years With Houdini” by James Collins, *The Sphinx*, October, 1936, p. 206.

28. page 265. **On March 2, 1913, at the Finsbury Park Empire...** *The Magician Monthly*, March, 1912, 60, clipping in the Culliton archives, now housed at the Conjuring Arts Research Center.

29. page 265. **“We CHALLENGE you to stand....”** The challenge bill is reproduced in facsimile in Milbourne Christopher *Houdini: A Pictorial Biography* (New York: Gramercy Books, 1976), 50.

30. page 265. **Cape Town, South Africa. F.J. Peers...** F.J.Peers to Houdini, February 26, 1911, letter in the collection of the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.

31. page 266. **“I never objected to a small artiste taking...”** Houdini to Raymond, May 2, 1911, letter found in Houdini Imitators scrapbook in the collection of the New York Public Library.

32. page 266. **“the Kennington Road inventor...”** Raymond to Houdini, May 5, 1911, reply found in Houdini Imitators scrapbook in the collection of the New York Public Library.

33. page 266. **“I don’t believe that it was your intention....presenting it.”** Houdini to Raymond, May 10th, 1911, letter found in Houdini Imitators scrapbook in the collection of the New York Public Library.

34. page 267. **Houdini’s dispute with Raymond...fisticuffs ensued.** David Bamberg, *Illusion Show – A Life in Magic* (Glenwood, Illinois: Meyerbooks, 1991), 78. It seems that this fight was not specifically over the Milk Can; it had to do with some cuffs Houdini plugged with buckshot, making it impossible for Raymond to get out of them.

35. page 267. **a giant 1,600-pound sea monster....by the fumes.** “Houdini Escapes From Monster”, *Boston Herald*, September 27, 1911, clipping found in the Robinson Locke Scrapbook #247, p.102, in the collection of the New York Public Library.
36. page 268. **Buffalo in the middle...during a challenge.** “Houdini-The Most Mysterious Man In The World” by Raymond J. Brown, *Popular Science*, October, 1925, 155-156.
37. page 268. **severe stomach problems that he had sent her...** See Houdini diary entries July 3, 7 and 27, 1911.
38. page 269. **“I am confined to my bed...”** Houdini to Goldston, November 20, 1911, copy of the letter in the Silverman papers deposited in the Houdini Historical Center at the Outagamie Museum, Appleton, Wisconsin.
39. page 269. **“I am allowed to go to work....”** Houdini to Waitt, November 30, 1911, Harvard Theatre Collection in the Pusey Library, Harvard University.
40. page 269. **“Think I started into work....”** Houdini’s diary for December 7, 1911.
41. page 269. **“possibly going to be a permanent...”** Houdini to Waitt, December 18, 1911, in the Harvard Theatre Collection in the Pusey Library, Harvard University.

42. page 269. **Dr. Wholly some photographs of him....** Harold Kellock, *Houdini His Life Story* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1928), 231.
43. page 270. **H.B. Hearn, the theater manager....** The amazing story of Houdini's arrest in Richmond was composited from several sources including "Deep Sea Diving Suit Not Easy For Houdini", *Virginian Pilot and the Norfolk Landmark*, March 9, 1912; "Houdini Arrested for Creating Disturbance", *Virginian Pilot and the Norfolk Landmark*, March 10, 1912; and "Manager Fines Houdini", *Variety*, March 13, 1912;
44. page 270. **Whenever he played in a foreign country....** See Chapter Seven footnote 16, for page 113.
45. pages 270-271. **"He is the Emperor of Sympathy..."** *The Bulletin*, Sydney, Australia, March 24, 1910, clipping found in the collection at the Library of Congress.
46. page 271. **Holborn Empire tried to do that to him....** Harold Kellock, *Houdini His Life Story* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1928), 225-226.
47. page 271. **In Richmond, Virginia...brewing all week long.** See footnote #43 above.
48. page 272. **"They refused to pay me my money..."** Ibid.

49. pages 272-274. **Willis Avenue Bridge in Harlem....He won.** “Houdini Does So Worry Police”, *New York Telegraph*, April 4, 1912, found in the Robinson Locke scrapbook 247, p.129, in the collection of the New York Public Library. Also “Houdini, Shackled, to Leap Off Bridge”, *New York Times*, April 3, 1912, p.13.

50. page 274. **New York City jail in Yorkville....** “Who Can’t Break Jail With A Piece of Wire?”, *New York Times*, September 7, 1906. Also “Goes from Vaudeville to Prison”, unidentified clipping, September 5, 1906, found in the Robinson Locke Scrapbook #247, in the collection of the New York Public Library, and *The Sphinx*, November 15, 1906, p. 100.

51. page 274. **Houdini had revealed that technique in his....** Harry Houdini, *Handcuff Secrets*, (London: George Routledge, 1909), 25-26.

52. pages 274-275. **The feat was scheduled....away by a waiting car...** “Handcuffed and Manacled in Box, He Frees Himself Underwater,” July 8, 1912, clipping in a scrapbook in the collection of Pat Croce.

53. page 275. **“E’s all right,” one of Houdini’s assistants reassured him.** Ibid.

54. page 275. **“If the public knew how much....”** “Exposing Houdini’s Tricks of Magic,” *Modern Mechanics and Inventions for November*, 104, clipping in the collection of David Copperfield’s International Museum and Library of the Conjuring Arts.

55. page 275. **Police Commissioner Woods to be thrown...were deafening.”**

See “Houdini’s Remarkable Feat,” *Billboard*, July 25, 1914, p.6, and, “Battery Crowds

See Houdini Sunk...,” *New York American*, July 16, 1914, cited in Silverman’s notes

deposited in the Houdini Historical Center at the Outagamie Museum, Appleton,

Wisconsin. Also, the *Washington Post*, June 11, 1916, reports that Commissioner Woods

was a member of the IACP, which might explain how Houdini was able to get permission

to do an outdoor spectacle in a city that never had been hospitable to his stunts.

56. page 278. **Houdini’s 1912 underwater box...** See *Billboard*, July 25, 1914, cited in

Silverman’s notes deposited in the Houdini Historical Center at the Outagamie Museum,

Appleton, Wisconsin, and “Often Courts Death,” December 6, 1914, clipping in

Robinson Locke Scrapbook #247, in the collection of the New York Public Library.

57. page 278. **During that engagement, he made....Houdini’s life.** Harold Kellock,

Houdini His Life Story (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1928), 233-234.