



The Adventurous Life of a Versatile Artist Houdini

Harry Houdini

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HARRY HOUDINI, "the World's Handcuff King and amazing Prison Breaker," a title universally and unanimously bestowed upon him, has had a career as adventurous and romantic as the most imaginative writer could possibly conjure.

Indeed, this wonderful genius, with a science concerning bolts, bars, locks, and chains that will yet revolutionize the world's methods of safeguarding itself against "the men that prowl in the night," confirms the truth of the ancient adage that "truth is stranger than fiction."

Just remember for a moment that he is the man to whom the shrewdest police, the sharpest detectives, and the most watchful jail wardens look with awe and anxiety.

And they are eminently right in this attitude of disquiet, because they know that buried in the brain of Houdini lies the secret of an unknown power he alone possesses that makes their prisons as powerless as Japanese screens, and renders their multiple-locking handcuffs, leg irons, and all the other prison paraphernalia, no more binding than store twine.

Suppose the innate and inherent integrity of character that Houdini possesses, in common with most men brought up within the circle of a mother's sweet influence, were to be swept aside by the desire for riches not his own. There are many men of many millions to-day whose money is not their own. Suppose he should be captured by a band of desperate men determined to wrest from Houdini this secret worth millions. Suppose a great hypnotist were to obtain dominance over this mystery-enveloped genius and use his baneful powers for evil designs. What then?

A slight knowledge of the marvels Houdini has accomplished mixed with a little imagination would create as many more suppositions of this kind as this book could contain.

But, to be brief, admitting the possibility of the happening of any of these suppositious instances, and you will gain a clear idea of the extraordinary character and quality of Houdini's powers. It is often the best way to see the full scope of a cause by carefully ascertaining its effect. This analytical method is equally applicable to Houdini, and recognizing the harm he would receive were his secrets confided to unworthy hands, you gain an adequately impressive idea of the enormity of responsibility that rests upon him.

Time and time again Houdini has encountered such perils, and in every case he owes his life and the preservation of his secret to his extraordinary acuteness of perception, to his marvelous knowledge of human nature, to his physical prowess that is far greater than appears from a merely superficial inspection, and, last and greatest of all, to the fact that the majority of people witnessing his wonders attribute a quasi supernatural power.

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