

## 15. Chinese Water Torture

1. page 279. **“La-dies and gen-tle-men,” he began in his stentorian voice, with a crisp, staccato delivery.....filled with water.”** From “Houdini Again”, *New York Dramatic Mirror*, April 8, 1916. Houdini made a recording of his patter for the Water Torture Cell escape on an “Edison Cylinder Talking Machine.” That and a few other recordings are in David Copperfield’s International Museum and Library of the Conjuring Arts

2. pages 279-281. **Chinese Water Torture Cell...the curtain closed.** Our description of the Water Torture Cell escape was composited from several sources most notably Walter Gibson and Morris Young, *Houdini’s Fabulous Magic*, (New York: Bell, 1961), p. 176-195. Also see Max Sterling’s account of Houdini’s London show of May 14, 1913 in “What Others Are Doing”, *The Magical World*, June 4, 1913, p.5; Samuel Sharpe, *Conjuror’s Psychological Secrets*, (Calgary: Hades Publications, 1988), 37-38, as cited by Silverman in his notes deposited in the Houdini Historical Center at the Outagamie Museum, Appleton, Wisconsin; an unsigned account presumably by Will Goldston in his *The Magician Monthly*, March 1913; Clinton Burgess’s account of a New York show in *The Sphinx*, January 1922, p. 390. For a great overview of the effect see Chapter 26, “The Water Torture Cell” in Pat Culliton’s *Houdini Unlocked, book two, the Secret Confessions of Houdini* (Kieran Press & Peter C. Mayer Rare Editions, Ltd., 1997), pgs.361-391. Culliton compared the effect to a ritual sacrifice.

3. page 281. **Berlin at the beginning of his fall 1912.....** Walter Gibson and Morris Young, *Houdini's Fabulous Magic*, (New York: Bell Publishing Company, 1961), p.185.
4. page 281. **April 29, 1911. On that day....Challenged or Houdini Upside Down...** From "Houdini Upside Down' – A Unique Performance", Edwin A. Dawes in *The Complete Rich Cabinet of Magical Curiosities*, CD-ROM, (Surrey, Peter Scarlett, 2005), p. 103.
5. page 283. **Hardeen later claimed that the cost of producing....** From "Sidney H. Radner Presents Houdiniana", *New Conjuror's Magazine*, February 1949, p.28.
6. page 283. **"without a doubt the greatest...."** Houdini to Will Goldston, September 27, 1912, Berlin, letter in the Milbourne Christopher collection.
7. page 283. **"Ernst Babst and Ernst Schwandtke...** From "Houdini is Suing in Germany To Prevent Copyists From Using New Act", *The Player*, November 29, 1912, clipping in the Robinson Locke Scrapbook 247, 134, in the collection of the New York Public Library.
8. page 283. **Wanda Timm...** Wanda Timm's contract can be found among the papers deposited by Kenneth Silverman in the collection of the Houdini Historical Center at the Outagamie Museum, Appleton, Wisconsin. The German document was translated for us by Dr. Lori Pieper of the Conjuring Arts Research Center.

9. page 283. **“Performing under the name of Miss Trixy...** Houdini gave her the name of Miss Trixy in the contract signed with her. See above citation. The Houdini scrapbook that chronicles 1908-1913, in the Houdini Historical Center at the Outagamie Museum, Appleton, Wisconsin, has clippings of ads and a review of one of Miss Trixy’s performances. According to Milbourne Christopher in his *Houdini: The Untold Story* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1969), p.133, he claims that Miss Trixy even performed in Russia. In the June 4, 1913 issue of *The Magical World*, a blind item on p.4 reports that a “Miss Houdini” was doing a “sensational water escape” at the Theatre Aquarium in Moscow. “But we fancy Harry Houdini knows something of this,” the story read. Other researchers have hypothesized that that “Miss Houdini” may have been “Miss Undina” but perhaps it was Miss Trixy.

10. page 283. **“I wish to warn Managers...my rights.”** Houdini to C. Howard Watson in *The Strand*, February 1, 1913, cited in Silverman notes deposited in the Houdini Historical Center at the Outagamie Museum, Appleton, Wisconsin.

11. page 283. **In Hull, he escaped from a seabag...** From *Hull Daily Mail*, January 31, 1913, cited in Silverman notes deposited in the Houdini Historical Center at the Outagamie Museum, Appleton, Wisconsin.

12. page 285. **S.R. Champion challenged Houdini...** S.R. Champion letter to Houdini, February 3, 1912, The original is in the Knox College Archives, Galesburg, Illinois. A

copy was deposited by Silverman in the Houdini Historical Center at the Outagamie Museum, Appleton, Wisconsin.

13. pages 285-287. **Clayton Hutton found himself...the course of world history.** The story of Hutton and Houdini is from Clayton Hutton, *Official Secret* (New York : Crown Publishers, Inc.), 1961, 2-8.

14. page 286. **Back in April of 1913...** Ibid., p.5.

15. page 287. **“Mama Weiss felt so proud...Lenox automobile...”** Houdini’s diary entry for July, 1913.

16. page 288. **She often thought about that terrible accident....** M. Samuel White letter to Kenneth Silverman, July 24, 1993, cited in the Silverman Notes deposited in the Houdini Historical Center at the Outagamie Museum, Appleton, Wisconsin.

17. page 288. **And for the first two weeks he was playing at Hammerstein’s...** “Date With A King”, *Variety*, June 6, 1913.

18. page 288. **So the next day, July 6, Houdini...** Houdini’s diary entry for July 6, 1913.

19. page 288. **Houdini told them that he would make good...** Ibid.

20. page 288. **“Nu, wirst du mehr gluck haben.”** Ibid.

21. page 289. **“He hired another car...”** Houdini’s diary entry for July 8, 1913.

22. page 291. **Kukol gave Houdini a cable that had....** Undated entry in Houdini’s picture diary for 1911-1916.