

### 3. The Celebrated Clairvoyants

1. pages 47–49. **“We have just recently become aware of a tragic situation . . .”** The account of this séance is drawn from Dorothy Kipper Lickteig’s *Anderson County Kansas Early Gleanings*, Anderson County Historical Society, Vol. 3, 1930–1952, 52–53 and 150–151. For dramatization purposes, we have given a name (Sadie Timmins) to the unnamed victim in this account.

2. page 49. **“Houdini, can’t you do something on a Sunday night . . .”** Recounted by Houdini in his exposé of the medium Margery at Boston’s Symphony Hall on January 2, 1925. Transcript of the address is in a black bound volume at the Library of Congress.

3. page 50. . . . **on March 31, 1848 . . .** *The Saturday Evening Post*, February 4, 1860.

4. page 50. **While still a teen . . .** “How I Unmask the Spirit Fakers” by Houdini, *Popular Science Monthly*, November 1925.

5. pages 51–52. **“Well, you’ve caught me . . . confess himself a fraud.”** Ibid.

6. pages 52–53. **Davenport Brothers . . . escape show.** *The New York Times*, November 7, 1926.

7. page 53. **Early in 1891 . . .** Joseph Rinn, *Sixty Years of Psychical Research* (New York: Truth Seeker Co., 1950), 84.
8. pages 53–54. **The wooden post had “ . . . these weird tests.”** The various accounts of Dr. Gregorowitsch come from “The Trick That Fooled Houdini” from *The World Magazine*, July 6, 1924; *The Newark Call*, November 12, 1922; *Chicago Daily*, September 1, 1893; *Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 29, 1895.
9. page 54. **Mayer Samuel had an insurance policy . . .** These are Jimmy Collins’s recollections contained in an October 31, 1926 wire service article “Fraud in Youth Turned Houdini Against ‘Seers’”, unidentified clipping in a scrapbook in David Copperfield’s International Museum and Library of the Conjuring Arts. The article also appeared in the November 1, 1926 edition of *The New York American*.
10. page 54. **“It seemed strange to me . . .”** Houdini quoted in “Houdini Challenges Worcester Mediums; Will Expose Frauds” in *Worcester Evening Post*, December 1, 1925, 1.
11. pages 54–57. **The old German’s heart . . . which is what they did.** The story comes from “Zanzic, Charlatan Supreme!” apparently written by Houdini from information he received from Ziska, published in *M-U-M* for September 1923, page 177. A few of the more interesting references to Zanzic can be found in; *Billboard* for September 28, 1918; *Billboard* for November 2, 1918; *Billboard* for November 9, 1918; several programs and

clippings in Houdini's scrapbooks nos. 18, 19, 29, and 40 in the Library of Congress; *Mahatma* for January 1900; Houdini's *Conjurers' Monthly Magazine* for October 15, 1906 (here he spells it as Zan Zic); and a letter to Houdini from Harry Helms on January 24, 1917 that is now at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas Austin.

12. page 57. . . . **trail off into obscurity.** The obit for Zanzic published in *The New York Times* for December 18, 1899 seems likely, but we've found others making Zanzic as mysterious in death as he was in life.

13. page 57. . . . **assistant to Alexander Herrmann . . .** *Mahatma* for June 1895.

14. page 57. . . . **his only brother wouldn't . . .** Houdini received a letter from Edward Robinson, Billy's brother asking Billy's whereabouts. It was from February 7, 1908 and is now in the collection of the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin.

15. page 59. **Bess came from a . . .** Harold Kellock, *Houdini His Life Story* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1928), 51.

16. page 59. **One night early in their marriage " . . . had peopled my world."** Harold Kellock, *Houdini His Life Story* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1928), 54–55.

17. page 59. **"borders on the supernatural"** Clipping in the Houdini Pressbook 1894–1899 presently held by the Houdini Historical Center at the Outagamie Museum,

Appleton, Wisconsin. The city isn't clear but the theater is the Wonderland Theatre and the date is January 1, 1895.

18. page 59. **Houdini had even incorporated . . .** *The Daily Telegraph* of St. John, New Brunswick, for June 5, 1896.

19. page 60. **Dr. Hill's show . . . boardinghouse dining table.** Harold Kellock, *Houdini His Life Story* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1928), 101–102.

20. pages 60–61. . . . **six-year-old Joe Osborne . . . trifling with their emotions.** The Osborne story is taken from Dorothy Kipper Lickteig's Anderson County Kansas Early Gleanings, Anderson County Historical Society, Vol. 3, 1930–1952, 53–54 and Vol. 5, 1973–1986, 478, as well as from Houdini's own account in *A Magician Among the Spirits, The Original Manuscript*, edited by Maurine Christopher, (Washington, D.C.: Kaufman and Greenberg, 1996), annotated 98–99.

21. page 61. . . . **offered him \$25.** "Tricks of Fake Mediums" by Houdini, in *Liberty* for November 28, 1925.

22. page 61. **In Galena, before another . . . someone yelled out.** Harold Kellock, *Houdini His Life Story* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1928), 106–107.

23. page 61. . . . **\$15 on a “fine red dress.”** Houdini’s diary for November 1897, from the collection of Dr. Bruce Averbook.
24. page 61. . . . **“lived like a king.”** Houdini’s diary for February 1898, from the collection of Dr. Bruce Averbook.
25. page 61. . . . **deposit \$100 cash . . .** Houdini’s scrapbook of Police letters in the collection of the New York Public Library.
26. page 62. . . . **the mayor did hold the bankroll. . .** “Why I Am A Skeptic” by Houdini, *Variety* for September 24, 1920.
27. page 62. **He also learned the Bible trick.** Harold Kellock, *Houdini His Life Story* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1928), 106.
28. page 62. . . . **save her from “objectionable” contacts . . .** Ibid., 107.
29. page 62. . . . **would break his arm in a fall . . .** Ibid., 109–110.
30. pages 62–63. **“When it was all over I . . . a genuine medium.”** “How I Unmask the Spirit Fakers” by Houdini, *Popular Science Monthly* for November 1925.

31. page 63. **“I was brought to a realization . . .”** Harry Houdini, *A Magician Among the Spirits* (New York: Harper, 1924), xi.
32. page 63. . . . **a second tour with the Welsh Brothers . . .** Houdini’s diary for April 16, 1898, from the collection of Dr. Bruce Averbook.
33. page 63. . . . **garnered such rave reviews . . .** Numerous clippings are in the Houdini Pressbook 1894–1899 currently held by the Houdini Historical Center at the Outagamie Museum, Appleton, Wisconsin. Some can be found on page 13.1 therein.
34. page 63. . . . **the Bard Brothers . . .** Houdini’s diary for May 1898, from the collection of Dr. Bruce Averbook.
35. page 63. . . . **seriously training as an acrobat . . .** Houdini’s diary for May and August 1898, from the collection of Dr. Bruce Averbook.
36. page 63. . . . **he would boomerang a playing card . . .** Hardeen tells this story about Houdini doing this after learning a somersault from Jim and Eddy Bard. It’s in *The Sphinx* for June 1936, 118.
37. page 63. . . . **had met many of the leading . . .** Joseph Rinn, *Sixty Years of Psychological Research* (New York: Truth Seeker Co., 1950), 13.

38. page 63. **“I don’t know what . . . the spirit world”** Ibid., 156.

39. page 64. **Rinn, as usual, offered** Ibid., 158.

40. page 64. **Bess’s brother-in-law . . .** Harold Kellock, *Houdini His Life Story* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1928), 123.

41. page 64. **“I contemplated quitting . . .”** Will Goldston’s *The Magician Annual*, 1909–1910, 17.

42. page 64. **“57 Handcuff Act.”** Houdini’s *Magic Made Easy* published in 1898 by Van Fleet printer, Clipper Building New York, sixteen pages. Also printed in a thirty-two-page version in Chicago by B. Schulman, Show Printer. This information comes from Manny Weltman’s bibliography, *Houdini a Definitive Bibliography* (California: Roadrunner Press, 1991).