



Final Silence: The Strange Friendship Between Houdini and Conan Doyle

Massimo Polidoro

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This is the story of an unusual friendship between two of the most intriguing characters of the early 20th century--renowned escape artist Harry Houdini and celebrated mystery writer Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (creator of Sherlock Holmes). Both men were fascinated by the occult practice of spiritualism, Houdini as an ardent skeptic who often publicly exposed fraudulent mediums and Conan Doyle as a true believer who became convinced that the dead could and did communicate with the living.

Despite their differing perspectives the two men not only respected each other but became friends. The correspondence between them on the subject provides a fascinating glimpse not only into the personalities of two talented and interesting celebrities but also into a psychic phenomenon that is the ancestor of today's channeling craze.

Based on original correspondence, photographs, and his own extensive research, Massimo Polidoro reconstructs this unusual friendship between a believer and a skeptic, which weathered mediums, seances, an apparition of Houdini's departed mother, automatic writing by Conan Doyle's wife, public debunkings, and hurt feelings. He also discusses the final rift that ended the friendship of the two strong-willed men. Fans of Conan Doyle, Houdini, magic, and the historical roots of the "New Age" will be delighted by this amazing story.

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