

Adventures in Many Lands



Julius Zancig

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Foreword

In presenting this brochure to my readers, I believe they will find more than passing interest in what is really a narrative of events, unusual and sometimes adventurous, in many parts of the world.

Within the past year the record of my travels were first published in the *World's Pictorial News*, thereby giving me an opportunity to address a greater audience than was possible by my performances at the principal music halls throughout the United Kingdom.

My work, in conjunction with my wife, has been my life study, and it gives me pleasure to acknowledge here the many expressions of good will that have reached me from all parts of the world where we have appeared before people of every nationality. Sometimes our audiences have been severely critical, perhaps because our exhibitions of thought-transference have been baffling and mystifying.

Mystery is always fascinating, and so long as I am able to give my fellows some hours of entertainment – interesting, amusing, and always mystifying, I shall feel, regardless of any other compensation, that I have been able to add to the pleasures of life.

Early Days

I was born in Denmark, and am proud to be a citizen of the country from which beautiful Queen Alexandra came. I have had the honour of appearing before the Queen Mother, who, with that grace and charm which characterises her, set me a few tests of a novel and entertaining nature about which I shall have more to say presently.

In my early days I worked in a foundry, where I received the meagre sum of – in English money – 28 shillings a week, and you will agree that there is nothing very psychic in foundry work. It was not till I went to America that I first discovered the remarkable harmony that existed between the minds of my wife and myself that gave rise to the idea resulting in two complete tours of the world, giving our demonstrations of thought reading, or thought-transference, whichever you like to call it, everywhere we went.

My wife was a little Danish girl, and I had known her nearly all my life, having been brought up in the same village with her. This probably accounts to some extent for the unity existing between us. But it was in America, not in Denmark, that I first noticed how almost invariably we anticipated each other's thoughts, but more particularly how my wife repeatedly mentioned things and events about which I was thinking, but had not spoken.

For example, when I came home from the foundry at night she would say to me, "Would you like so and so?" mentioning something for a meal. Nine times out of ten I would reply, "Well, that's very strange, dear, but I was just thinking about it. How did you know?" she would reply, "I just saw it."

When this happened time after time, it suddenly struck me how interesting it would be if this power could be developed to some little extent. Of course, I had no idea that it was going to develop to the marvellous length that it has done. But we set to work to practise, and our first experiments were of a very simple nature. We would get a pack of cards, and I would try to obtain a clear, sharp vision of this card, and my wife would endeavour to tell me what it was.

Now there were dozens and dozens of failures, for you must remember that my wife would often try to guess a card. This was when we were not quite en rapport with each other. It was not necessary for her to concentrate, as it was for me. It was simply necessary that she should make her mind a complete blank, by banishing all other thoughts, and remaining in an absolutely passive condition to receive my thought pictures.

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Just by way of experiment select any card from a pack and after gazing intently at it, shut your eyes and endeavour to conjure up a picture of that card before you. You will find it very difficult, at first, but eventually you will be able to do to.

At length, after many disappointments and repeated trials, I succeeded in being able to transfer from my mind to that of my wife the mental visions of any object at which I was gazing. Having become more or less proficient in the art of thought-transference, we used to amuse our friends by giving private demonstrations at parties, and to a certain extent we became very well known in the locality, and on account of the extraordinary novelty of our entertainment we were asked out to various homes night after night.

Remember, I was a comparatively poor man living with my wife in very modestly-furnished apartments. I worked tremendously hard during the day, and my wages were still very small. It suddenly dawned on me that I was being asked to these parties not so much for the pleasure of my company as for the interesting entertainment which I was able to supply; and as I was somewhat ambitious, and, if you like, mercenary, I decided to put my point of view to the test.

So one day, when a lady acquaintance sent a message asking me to dine with them that evening I told her very politely that I was afraid I should be unable to come. At once the truth of my suspicion was verified, for she came herself to see me and begged me to go, explaining that she had invited a large party of friends to whom she had boasted of my wonderful powers, and promised them a demonstration.

“You must come,” she urged. “I’ll do anything for you if you will, even to paying you for it.” I was determined to see whether she really meant what she said. I stated that if she cared to pay me a certain fee I might be induced to change my mind. She simply leapt at the opportunity, and said that she had only been deterred from suggesting payment by fear of hurting my feelings and offending me. I assured her that, I was by no means, offended, and that in future I should turn my entertainment to account by charging a small fee whenever I appeared.

Growing Reputation

The result was that I soon found my social engagements were more profitable than my work at the foundry, and in the end I threw up my foundry work and applied myself to the less exacting and more pleasurable occupation which I now follow.

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My first big public appearance was at the San Souci Park, Chicago, where there were a gathering of astrologers, palmists, fortune-tellers of all descriptions, and, the greatest novelty of all, the Zancigs. We were only engaged for one season on a percentage basis of the takings, but we did so well that when they wanted us to go back again I suggested that a larger percentage of the takings should be given us. The manager was a hard-fisted stager, who stated he could not give us any more.

When he adopted this tone I thanked him, told him there was nothing doing, and was determined to get on with my private engagements. It so happened that on one occasion Oscar Hammerstein, the great impresario of the Roof Gardens, New York, was present at one of the gatherings where we appeared, and he was so impressed by our performance that he engaged us to appear there for eleven weeks, during which time we became famous.

After thirty years of completely happy married life my wife died. I thought that the end of everything had come to me. It seemed that there was nothing in life worth living for without her, and that was my state of mind, when suddenly another wonderful happening altered the whole course of my career.

I was at a party when the hostess remarked to me that there was a charming woman to whom she desired to introduce me. I entered a room that was thronged with people, and as I entered it I became obsessed with this feeling that there was someone there who was part of me.

At that moment my eyes fell upon a woman sitting at the other side of the room, and without waiting for my hostess to effect an introduction I walked straight across to her, and as I gazed into her eyes I remarked, "Is your initial A?" and she nodded her head. Again I spoke, "Your name is Agnes?" I said, and again she nodded her head in assent. Once more the coincidence of this remarkable meeting I emphasized for the name of my first wife was also Agnes. We shook hands, and as we did so I could feel that there was a bond of sympathy between us, and from that moment I knew that we were destined to become man and wife.

After our marriage I discovered that the same unity of mind and understanding that existed between the first Mrs. Zancig and myself existed also between my second wife and me. The result was that we practised, and have now attained that same remarkable efficiency through which we can once more describe ourselves as "Two minds with but a single thought."

Tested by King Edward

One of the red-letter days in my life was when I appeared before the late King Edward VII, and Queen Alexandra at Sandringham.

To me, coming from the States, it was something of an ordeal, although it turned out to be one of the most pleasurable experiences during the whole of my career. It was during the Christmas holidays of 1906, and I had been appearing at the London Alhambra, where we had succeeded beyond our wildest expectations. The British public had been simply wonderful, as indeed it seemed always to be, and we had received a welcome that to us was bewildering.

Then before we had been many weeks in the country we received this great honour to which I refer – an invitation to give a demonstration of our powers before their most gracious Majesties.

You can perhaps imagine the excitement into which we were plunged, for we both had visions of a most imposing and over-awing reception. We conjured up in our minds visions of pomp and ceremony, and wondered how we should deport ourselves in the Royal presence. It was no light thing to appear before the King and Queen of the world's greatest Empire, and I can assure you that as we made our way to the train which was to bear us to Sandringham I felt distinctly nervous.

Had we only known, all our fears were groundless, however, for we were received with a simplicity and gracious charm that made us easily understand why both King and Queen were so much beloved by their subjects.

There was a terrific snowstorm on the day preceding that on which we were to travel to Sandringham, and the ground was covered with snow several inches deep when at length we arrived at the station. What was my surprise to find quite a crowd of people who had heard that we were coming waiting to see us arrive. A special carriage had been sent to meet us, and into this my wife and myself stepped, together with Sydney Paxton, my manager.

At Sandringham

On arrival at Sandringham we were made much of by the servants, who could not have paid us more attention if we had been the King and Queen ourselves. I was greatly

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impressed by the lavish kindness which everyone showed us, and while we were waiting for the summons into the presence of their Majesties, we gave an impromptu demonstration to the few servants at liberty to attend. Of course, they were delighted, and it may seem strange that our first performance at Sandringham should be to the Royal servants.

At length, however, we were ushered into the presence of King Edward and Queen Alexandra, and at once all the doubts and fears that had assailed me vanished into thin air. The King came to meet us, his face illuminated with a cheery smile of greeting. There was none of the pomp and ceremony I had expected. He shook hands with us in the most cordial manner and bade us welcome to Sandringham. He then presented us to the Prince and Princess of Wales. Queen Alexandra, on learning that we were both Danes, immediately entered into conversation with us in the Danish language.

His Majesty at once suggested that we should begin the entertainment, and himself selected a very difficult passage from a scientific book taken at random from one of the shelves. The ease and speed with which I managed to convey this passage to my wife seemed to astound the Royal gathering, who expressed their delight in the most vigorous fashion.

This was my very first introduction to Royalty, and it was a revelation to me, for although I had appeared in the drawing-rooms of many of the highest in the land, nowhere had I received more homely, courteous treatment and consideration than at Sandringham.

Several of the passages included in the quotation referred to above contained arithmetic and algebraic symbols and technical terms. But that night we could not do wrong, and as I visualised the various tests, so did madam read to the company my thoughts. My wife was behind at the far end of the long saloon in which the demonstration took place, concealed by a large Japanese screen; and in order that there should be no collusion, a young Princess stood behind the screen keeping Mrs. Zancig in full view as she sat in the chair blindfolded.

King's Interest

The Prince of Wales (now King George V.) wrote the word "Cagliostro," and appeared amazed when, without a moment's hesitation, my wife repeated the word, almost before the Prince had handed the paper to me.

Queen Alexandra then wrote in Danish the words "En Glædelig Jul," which translated mean "A Merry Christmas." Now it is a singular thing, but, although we were Danes, my

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wife and I had never worked in the Danish language. We had always spoken and used the English tongue to convey our impressions. So that when I suddenly began to send my impressions in Danish, it was enough to put her off to some extent. It did not, however, for even as I visualised the letters, so she spoke the words in her native tongue, much to the pleasure Her Majesty.

Another interesting test was the production of a catalogue, and although my wife did not have a copy of the book I was able to transfer the knowledge to her that it had two pages numbered 6. This caused great astonishment, and when the King wrote down a long series of figures in the form of sums and madam added them up correctly the party wore most enthusiastic in their congratulations.

Mrs. Zancig was then conducted into an adjoining chamber, and near to the door there stood an intermediary to pass the word "Ready" at the right moment. When the door was shut, my wife reproduced on the slate which she had with her not only a word written on another slate held by one member of the Royal Family but actually reproduced the identical handwriting. The King then drew a rough sketch of his famous yacht, and in a few seconds madam reproduced the sketch most faithfully on her slate in the other room.

Every conceivable kind of test that could be devised was tried that night and to my mind one of the most interesting was when the King handed me his racing diary containing a long list of Derby winners for many years back. All these particulars were read off by my wife as if she were reading from the pages of a newspaper, and in view of the fact that the diary was in the handwriting of the King, it was no small test to convey the name of the horses with their jockeys, and also the time in which the race was run.

At one period of the performance I was greatly impressed with Queen Alexandra's kindly interest and sympathy. She seemed to sense something of the strain which the tests imposed on madam, and held her hand for some minutes apparently trying to infuse confidence into my wife. Then when we had finished, their Majesties were most interested in our methods and asked us all manner of questions which we answered frankly. The Queen was particularly pressing and wanted to know whether I would ever divulge the secret of how we accomplished our feats.

We stayed at Sandringham that night, and the hospitality we received at the hands of our Royal hosts was simply wonderful. Then in the morning we were shown all over the house, and feasted our eyes upon the Christmas presents which had been placed on view in one of the huge rooms.

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Yet one other episode comes back to me in connection with my visit to Sandringham. After the demonstration, I missed one of the slates which I had been using, and turned to re-enter the room.

Before I could explain to the servant what had happened, the King came across to me and said it, his breezy manner, "Left something behind?" I told him what it was, and in a moment he was engaged in searching the room, peering under chairs, and behind pieces of furniture. Suddenly he dropped on one knee, and groped beneath one of the settees. "Here we are," he exclaimed as he produced the missing slate, and with a smile handed it back to me. It was the sure touch of the most human Monarch that ever lived.

Far different was my experience with the Kaiser, whom I visited a couple of years afterwards at his Potsdam palace. Appearing at the Berlin Winter Gardens, our act had inspired the same amount of wonder and controversy as it had done in London, and before we had been there long we were commanded to appear before the Kaiser.

By some mistake, however, the sentries on guard at the Imperial Palace were only informed that we were arriving at one of the entrances. We unfortunately turned up at the other gate, and there was considerable delay before we found ourselves in the Royal presence. Naturally we were somewhat distressed at being late; although it was not our fault, but the Kaiser soon put us at our ease, apologising in the most charming manner for the mistake which had occurred.

The Kaiser had little to say, however, and the rest of the company included the Crown Prince and his pretty wife, Princess Cecile. The latter seemed more like children when I saw them, and came into the room holding hands in the most affectionate way. Princess Cecile was particularly charming, but despite the efforts of the ladies to put us at our ease, and although we readily carried out all the tests to which they subjected us, there hovered over the whole proceedings that feeling that we were in the presence of some forbidding influence that seemed to oppress us.

The rest of the party were profoundly impressed and evinced their astonishment in unmeasured terms. But the Kaiser adopted a mask that it was impossible to penetrate, and I could not tell for the time being what his exact thoughts were. There was a lofty superiority about his attitude that was totally different from that of the smiling, genial personality of King Edward, and it was not till after the demonstration that I got behind the mask and there sensed the tragedy of bloodshed of which the man to whom I spoke was to be the author.

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We stood talking on a variety of subjects, and then suddenly it came to me. I seemed to see the Kaiser surrounded by people striking at his throne, his power, and his life. Something impelled me to tell him what I sensed, and before I knew what I was doing I was warning him against the disaster that was to encompass him. Somehow or other the years 1916, 1917, 1918 came to me, and I told him that the latter year would be the most dangerous for him. I did not tell him in so many words that the danger which threatened him would come in the form of war, for it is not wise to talk too frankly when addressing Royalty. I warned him of his peril, however, and also told the Crown Prince that his life would be endangered many times during the years I mentioned.

Baffling the Scientists

It was inevitable that with two minds attuned in such perfect harmony as those of my wife and myself, we should experience many amazing and almost uncanny examples of thought transference.

On one occasion when we were in Chicago I was returning home from a club dinner one night rather late when, walking down a dark street, I felt rather than heard somebody following me. I seemed to sense something sinister, and could almost visualise the man who, with stealthy, silent steps, was trailing me.

There had been several robberies with violence in the district about that time, and I was on my guard. At length, when I felt that he was almost upon me, I turned suddenly and, holding out my hand, seized his, and shook it warmly, as though he was an old friend of mine. The man was staggered for the moment, and in that brief flash of time I tripped him up and shouted for help. I managed to retain him until a policeman arrived and took him in charge.

When I reached home I found Mrs. Zancig in a state of nervous agitation bordering on collapse. Almost before I had reached the door it was flung open, and she greeted me with the words: "You have been attacked by footpads, but you are not hurt!"

Shortly after our marriage there were many occasions, when she anticipated my thoughts, as it were. Having to go to New York on one occasion I determined to buy a Gladstone bag. I said nothing to my wife about this, as it was just a passing thought. On arriving home that night I was astonished to see the very bag which I had seen in a shop, and which I had actually been determined to get, there on the table.

A Game of Poker

I remember playing a rather amusing trick on my wife during a game of poker. We were playing with a party, and it was really uncanny the manner in which my wife won. When it happened that she and I were left to fight it out, she always won, for the simple reason that when I looked at the cards she knew precisely what I had got.

However, I determined to foil her, and succeeded. The cards were dealt, and although I pretended to take a glance at my hand I did not observe what cards I held. At length, after a long bluff, during which all the others threw in, my wife and I were left once more. She promptly threw down her cards, remarking, "You've got me beaten this time – three aces." I displayed my hand, a pair of deuces and an odd card, and she gasped, I had actually visualised three aces, and my wife had received the faked impression, and acted upon it.

During our tours I have had the most extraordinary objects brought to me to convey mentally to my wife for description. Quite recently at the London Alhambra I had handed to me a lemon which had been cut in half. Now, to get a mental image of half a lemon is a pretty good test, but it was done. I have had pieces of hangmen's rope, bits of historic coffins, gold nuggets, and jewels of rare and unusual size and value, long Welsh words to transcribe, words which I could only spell and not pronounce, live snakes, tortoises, chameleons, and mice, and in connection with the latter I remember on one occasion a pretty little white mouse being handed to me by a lady who carried it in her muff.

The most difficult tests to which we have ever been subjected, however, were those which were held under the auspices of the Society for Psychical Research in this country, and a demonstration which we gave before the leading psychologists of Germany. The conditions before the S.P.R. were most stringent, and although we were making no claims to occult powers, and left it for others to explain our phenomena, everything was done to prevent any possibility of communication by means of code either by signs or speech.

Mrs. Zancig was seated by a screen at the farthest end of the room. Two members of the party of investigators held her hands, and watched her carefully to see if they could detect any means by which she could receive any sort of signals. Then twelve of the party each drew some diagram or design upon a piece of plain card, each one drawing precisely what they liked. The cards were then placed in envelopes which were sealed, and the whole lot were placed in a black bag, and thoroughly mixed so that no one could possibly know any particular card.

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Then one of the party selected an envelope which was handed to me unopened. I opened it and withdrew the card. It was one of the conditions of the experiment that neither of us was to speak or make any sound.

After removing the card I conveyed a mental impression of the diagram upon it to my wife, who promptly reproduced a replica of the design behind the screen. Other cards were then dealt with, and in each case we were successful. One card I remember bore nothing but a huge blot of ink, which had been purposely done to outwit us if possible. Mrs. Zancig did not falter, however, and despite the unusual conditions every difficulty was overcome.

In these big test experiments, although everyone is very charming and means well, it frequently happens that the very knowledge that one is under the keenest scrutiny, and that everything is being done to hamper one, makes the conditions less conducive to good work. After my demonstration before the S.P.R. I was approached by several members who wanted to provide us with a home and livelihood in this country entirely at their expense for the sole purpose of having us handy at any moment to produce before any committee of scientists or investigators who might care to put us to the test. Madam would not hear of such a thing, however, as she said it was too suggestive of the pet puppy dog who is brought out on certain occasions to perform his parlour tricks before his mistress's visitors.

The most severe test to which we were ever put was in Germany, when we were approached by the editor of a newspaper who organised a demonstration before a gathering of German professors, who took us very thoroughly and very seriously in hand. We were thoroughly examined first, and learned doctors submitted me to a minute examination. Then madam was taken into the next room, where she was placed in a chair which was insulated by means of a large sheet of plate glass upon which it stood. I was kept in the other room, the whole time my chair standing on a table which was insulated in the same manner as madam's.

There I sat for forty-five minutes carrying out the biddings of these professors, who put me through the most remarkable test imaginable. In madam's room one of them was feeling her pulse the whole time, whilst another held a stethoscope to her chest to see what effect it had on the beating of her heart.

After forty-five minutes of most strenuous work, I was told that I might get down, and was profusely thanked for my demonstration I naturally concluded that I had finished. Not

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a bit of it, however, for one of the old professors came over to me and suggested that he would like to make one more test. “I want to melt wax,” he stated, “which I intend to pour into the ears of both madam and yourself. The ears will then be plugged with cotton wool, and you will then carry out a few more tests.” I gazed at him in sheer amazement. Here was I, with no other interest but to satisfy the curiosity of these people, undergoing tests for nearly an hour, and then he calmly suggests plugging my ears with hot wax and wool. Without being unnecessarily curt I informed him that there was nothing doing.

One of my most amusing experiences was in connection with a self-administered test on board the steamer when I was making my first visit to England.

My wife and I were naturally of quiet disposition, and people on board did not know anything about us until a day or two out. I used to amuse myself by playing on a saw, and it was this that first called the attention of one of the officers of the ship, who was organising a concert, and who suggested that I should open the show with a tune on the saw.

I was not agreeable to this, however, and said that I would much prefer to give them a little demonstration of mind reading with Madame Zancig. He was not the least bit impressed. Mind-reading conveyed nothing to him, and at that time, of course, we were not particularly well known, whilst the possibility of thought transference was very remote.

“Oh, yea,” he replied, vaguely. “Yes – you can open the first part of the programme.”

“Get it over quick,” urged the officer in a whisper as we went on, and I was quite prepared to do so. But once we got to work the audience simply would not let us go, and we were kept at it, describing articles and reading cards for just on half an hour.

When at length we had finished, a remarkable change came over the whole party, and instead of being unknown entities aboard that ship, we were literally lionised from that moment.

Amongst Indian Fakirs

It was our success as thought-readers that enabled us to achieve perhaps the greatest ambition of our life – a tour round the world. We had heard of the remarkable phenomena said to have been produced by the fakirs and seers of India, and we both had a burning desire to visit those Eastern countries and see these marvels for ourselves.

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On one occasion, at Lahore I think it was, I saw the most inexplicable illusion that it has ever been my lot to see. We had been asked to give a performance before the Maharajah Kumar Tagore, who was entertaining many native princes in his wonderful palace.

Our host and his guests were frankly amazed at our performance, and Prince Gumbhir Junj presented us with one of the most unique daggers in our collection. "You have doubtless seen many more wonderful things done by your own people," I said to him. But he shook his head in dissent, although he admitted that many of the conjurors performed seeming miracles. Up to that time we had not had any opportunity of seeing the work of any but the lower class of fakirs, and asked the Maharajah whether he could make arrangements for us to witness the performance of one of the higher types.

Servants were dispatched in an ox-cart, and soon afterwards they returned with the most peculiar specimen of mankind that I had ever seen. He was lean, almost emaciated, and as he entered the bejewelled audience chamber, salaaming to the ground, the bones of his body, which was nude except for a loin cloth, seemed as though they would break through the skin.

Yet despite his apparent servility, there was that in his eyes which betokened a knowledge of his power. He knew that because of this power he was the equal of the prince who had summoned him there, and he knew that the Maharajah feared him more than he feared the Maharajah.

In order to inspire some little feeling of friendliness in the bosom of this weird looking creature, I suggested that we might first give him an exhibition of our modest powers. Madame was sent into the next room with a slate. The holy man sprinkled some sand upon the floor, and then bending down traced with his index finger several Sanskrit characters. No sooner had he finished than Madame Zancig came from the adjoining apartment with a slate upon which the same characters were written, clearly and unmistakably. The adept's manner immediately changed towards us, and with a deferential bow he invited us to tell him what we would like him to do.

By means of an interpreter I told him that I would like to see the vase upon the piano made to vanish without anyone approaching it. With a sudden bound that startled us, he leapt into the broad window, and raising an arm, called upon the Sun in a series of shrill appeals. Then he turned, and handing a turban to the interpreter told him to wrap it around the vase. Suddenly he turned to me. "The sahib will unwrap the vase," he said with a smile, and I approached the piano. The folds of the turban had assumed the shape of the

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vase around which it had been wound. I seized one of the folds, and as I did so the whole mass fell limply to the piano. The vase had vanished.

Frankly bewildered I expressed my amazement and delight to the man who had accomplished this wonderful feat. He was remarkably pleased at our enthusiasm and urged us to go with him to his home, where he assured us he would allow us still further marvels.

The floor was simply the earth, and in the centre of the hut was a blackened patch showing where he cooked his meals. A few ill-smelling goat skins formed his bed, and the seats provided for us were nothing but two huge stones. He squatted on the floor and told us to close our eyes. For a few seconds we did so, and then a shrill whistle caused us to open them suddenly, when we at once perceived that the floor was literally covered with writhing serpents. They slithered and glided around the stones on which we sat, and my wife was speechless and motionless with terror. There must have been two or three hundred in all, of various species, including deadly adders, and I saw them twisting and twining themselves around the legs and body of the holy man, just as a dog would fawn upon its master.

More Wonders in India

He asked to us to close our eyes, and scarcely had we shut them when the whistle sounded again, and on opening them we saw nothing but the earth and floor, with the holy man squatted on a goat skin smiling at us.

Our adventures in India were among the most interesting and wonderful of any that I have ever experienced throughout my tours of many countries. Not all of them were in connection with the holy men and fakirs, for one of the most exciting that I remember was one day when in company with two natives, both of whom could speak excellent English, we got into a big crowd which was making its way towards a temple where, I was given to understand, a certain rite, which consisted of the burning of oxen upon the holy altar inside, was to be a feature of the ceremony.

None but the strictest vegetarians were allowed within the holy precincts, and as we were carried towards the entrance by the swaying crowd my native attendants warned me that it would be dangerous to enter the sacred building. Apart from the difficulty of getting out of the crowd, I was intrigued a little, and felt to see what was going on, and instead of taking the advice of my friends I swept into the temple, carried almost bodily by the natives. There on a large, marble slab the burnt offerings were being tended by

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two white-robed figures surrounded by a number of others, amidst a vast gathering of prostrate natives.

Scarcely had we entered, however, than we were spotted, and the strident jangling of a bell upon the stillness of the air called attention to the presence of strangers. At once there came a tremendous change over the whole assembly, and they gazed towards us with sinister, glowering looks which evidently boded us no good. I could sense that something serious was going to happen, and as one white-robed figure issued orders to others who were standing around, I decided that I must act and act immediately.

At least a dozen began to approach us as we stood hemmed in on all sides by angry, murmuring blacks, and with a sudden inspiration I plunged my hands into my pocket where I had a great handful of tiny silver coins, and seizing them I threw them far and wide, scattering them all over the temple.

Now the native is invariably – I might almost say inevitably – a beggar, and forgetful of all except that there was money to be got for nothing, they commenced to fight and scramble among themselves. A terrible melee ensued, and it was during this disturbance that we made a rapid and discreet exit. I was told afterwards that there had been many infidels who had entered that temple only to disappear mysteriously and very completely. So I rather fancy I managed to escape very neatly.

I was invited to attend many weddings and receptions of various kinds, and never shall I forget the splendour with which these ceremonies were carried out. During the festivities afterwards I was called upon to give a demonstration or two, and I remember on one occasion varying my performance by the introduction of hypnotic experiments. There were a number of vastly rich merchants in the gathering, whose gorgeous Eastern robes scintillated in the lights which gleamed from golden candelabra. To my amazement, when I invited subjects for my experiments, several of these gentlemen stepped forward and placed themselves at my disposal. Frankly, I was somewhat nervous of offending my hosts by taking advantage of this offer, but the Prince in whose palace the festivities were taking place smilingly assured me that all would be well.

I proceeded, and found that several of these merchant princes were quite good subjects, and I was easily able to get them under control. I made some of them crawl about the floor on all fours, imagining that they were mules. I told others that they were blacksmiths who had to shoe these mules, and the guests laughed uproariously at the antics of their friends when they saw them going through the movements of shoeing a refractory mule.

Strange Customs

There were no ladies present on these occasions, but they were up in a gallery behind a grille, from which they looked down upon the merriment below, and one, a princess, was so impressed with my performance that she took a wonderful gold toe-ring from her toe and threw it down to me as a present. The handwork on this ring is the most perfect of its kind. Madame Zancig was allowed to go up and visit the ladies, and was made much of by them all. They examined minutely the clothes she wore, and asked her about the customs of the country. In some of the towns I saw some very peculiar happenings. In some places people are not allowed to die in their homes, and when it is decided by the physician that they are about to pass away they are covered with a sheet and carried to a certain place until such time as they are dead, when they are flung into the holy river.

One of the most gruesome places that I went to see were the Silent Towers at Bombay. There in the Tower live the people who keep a silent watch over the heaps of dead that are brought there. They never go out or leave this sacred place, and the trees round about are decayed and withered through the onslaughts of the vultures that throng around this terrible place.

The bodies are taken there and left on a kind of grating. But long before they reach this spot the birds have sensed their prey, and the trees are literally dark with these waiting vultures. Before the bodies have been there a few minutes the bones are picked clean and there they are left to crumble beneath the blazing sun, till they fall through the grating on to a still finer grating, and from thence into the holy river which flows underneath.

The methods followed by the natives in laundry work are very peculiar. I remember seeing a whole troupe of them holding hands and stringing themselves out into the river until it was well above their waists. They then removed the clothing so that they might stand whilst they washed it in the water around them. They then donned it again, still standing in the water, after which they came out, and allowed it to dry in the sun.

Coming down the street at Bombay we saw an old man whose head and breast were smeared with oil and ashes, from which we learned he derived the description of "Veiled Man." This term is applied to those who go from shop to shop warding off evil spirits. In his hand he held a huge metal gong which he struck from time to time with a stick. I watched him, and saw him enter a shop. Apparently he found evil influences in abundance. He gibbered to the merchant, who gave him a silver coin to avert the calamity which the old man prophesied. The latter promptly drew from his belt a small metal globe

and a pointed metal roll about twelve inches long and a quarter of an inch in diameter. Inside the globe was a parchment-like paper upon which prayers were written. Grasping it, he made his way about the room, exhorting the evil spirits to go. Presently he stood stock still in the middle of the room. Then with a sudden cry he thrust the spike into his head, and stood there with gaze transfixed.

The native servant who was with us told us that if we cared to pay this man a rupee we could withdraw the spike ourselves, to show that no false scalp was used, but he pointed out we could not extract the spike until the yogi was willing. We paid the rupee, and I tugged and tugged at the rod without success.

Then the Yogi held up his hand, and muttered a few words. At once the rod came away in my hands, and although I looked closely at the head of the man, no puncture could I see, nor was there a drop of blood. I do not pretend to explain it, I merely tell you what I saw.

Vanishing Chair

You will remember that I told you about a seance which took place at Lahore before the Maharajah of Tagore during my tour in India. That seance turned out to be more fruitful than I thought so far as phenomena was concerned.

On reaching Calcutta a few weeks later I chanced to be discussing it with one of the guests at the hotel where we were staying, and I was given another example of the mysterious powers of the Hindoo. This man was a very high caste Hindoo, and a most entertaining talker. When I related my experiences to him we were seated on the verandah of the hotel on the ordinary chairs upon which everyone sat. I mention this to show that there could have been no preparations made, particularly as the following incident was simply the outcome of casual conversation. He listened intently to what I had to say about the performances of the fakirs I had seen, and when I admitted that I could not solve the mystery he gave a little laugh.

“It is because you cannot see,” he told me, and then he reached forward, and placing his thumb upon my forehead just between the eyes, he went on: “You have an eye here, but you cannot see. You are clever, and you accomplish much that is wonderful; but you do not know yourself how you do it. You eat too much meat, you drink spirits, you lead too careless a life, and you do not meditate. Watch!”

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There on that cane chair where he sat, he drew up his legs beneath him, and tucked them into the chair. Then he placed his hand upon his stomach – or rather I should say under his stomach, for he formed them into a cup shape – and directed his gaze with the utmost concentration upon them. Presently, to our utter amazement, he began to rise from the chair and floated about eighteen inches above where he had been sitting.

I suspected trickery at once, and thought that the explanation lay in the fact that he had so disposed of his legs that he was using one of them as a support. I leaned down to make sure, and was astonished to see that his whole body was quite clear of the chair. Then I walked round to see if there was any means of hoisting himself by the back. Once more I was completely baffled, and after seizing my cane and passing it to and fro under and over him, as well as all around him, I confessed that I was beaten.

All this while – probably only a matter of 20 or 30 seconds – the distance between the Hindoo and the chair began to diminish and a moment later he had sunk gradually back into his seat. He smiled an inscrutable smile, and as he regained his normal position he remarked, “You see there are many things you cannot understand. Eat less and meditate more.”

Myself, I pretend to make no attempt at explanation, although it has since been suggested to me that when he placed his thumb on my forehead, and told me I had an eye there but could not see, he was simply hypnotising me, and giving me a powerful suggestion that I should not be able to detect him in his trickery.

The following incident, however, cannot be laid to the account of the occult. It happened when we reached Simla. There I gave a demonstration of our powers, and succeeded in describing some of the most remarkable exhibits which were given me as tests.

I had never been to India before, and I knew nothing of the various charms and trinkets which were worn by the natives. Some of them were of the most primitive type, and I remember that on one occasion I was handed a piece of stuff composed of copper wire and rubber, which had evidently spent some time in the water.

Message from the Sea

Gradually I spelt out the message, “a piece of cable taken from the depths of the sea.” I had just reached the end of this message when I suddenly saw a piece of something white sticking out from almost the middle of the cable. I looked at it closer and then saw that

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it was the tooth of some fish which had apparently bitten through the cable and left one of its teeth embedded in it. At once I commenced to spell out the extra description, and I chanced my luck by describing the tooth as a shark's tooth. As it happened, my description was correct, and when the man who gave it to me acknowledged the fact, the people were so amazed that there was a tense silence until they recovered from their astonishment, then they burst into rapturous applause.

It so happened that the man who had put us to this severe test was himself a conjuror of some repute, and after the performance he expressed a desire to show me some of his own tricks. Of course, I was only too pleased to take advantage of the offer, and we repaired straightaway to the place where he lived.

Now, he was attired in just a simple breechcloth as I believe they call them and the first trick was to produce snake after snake from his naked belly. There seemed to be a supply of these reptiles, which writhed about the floor and crept about the waving arms of the illusionist. Still they came, and I was frankly puzzled, until with a smile he removed his turban from his head, and there, cunningly concealed in numerous pockets, we saw a number of snakes which, he still had to produce. I at once offered him a rupee if he would produce more snakes without touching his turban. He agreed to do so, and sure enough he still managed to extract snake after snake, from the air itself it seemed.

Taking a handkerchief from his pocket he produced seven or eight snakes in rapid succession, and then for another rupee showed us how he did it this time. His breechcloth consisted of another series of pockets, in each of which was a snake, and the slipping of a string would release a snake, dropping it into the performer's hand. It was the smartest sleight-of-hand imaginable.

Our readiness to pay for anything he did commanded his admiration, and he chattered to one of our servants, who turned to us and said, "Him say give him one rupee and he die." It sounded interesting, and I gave the rupee. The conjuror began to lope round in a circle. At each circuit he became more frenzied. At length the attendant seized a huge stone, which he hurled with all his force, at the conjuror, striking him a terrific blow on the side of his head which would have killed an ordinary man outright.

With a shriek of a agony the man leapt in the air and then fell in a crumpled heap at the feet of his assistant. We were horrified at the tragedy, which we felt quite sure had been enacted in our presence, and I rushed forward to render what assistance I could. Then there came a convulsive shudder, the muscles relaxed, and there lay a corpse at our very feet. The servant smiled and waved us to make a thorough examination of the dead man.

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I knelt down and felt his pulse, and listened to find if we could hear I his heart beating. Not a sign could we detect. I then tried all the known tests, including those of hypnotism. I lifted the eyelid and struck the naked eyeball with my finger. Not the least notice did the conjuror take. Suddenly he leapt to his feet, and with a gay laugh dashed from our presence. As he went he shouted something to my servant, who translated it as follows: – “Him say he no die so long for one rupee.”

A Trip to China

We will leave the mystic shores of India, with its gorgeous colourings and atmosphere of deep underlying things of which we in the West appear to be ignorant. I never tired of gazing on the performances of the conjurors with which the country abounds, or endeavouring to pierce the marvels accomplished by the holy men and fakirs.

But at length the time came when we found it necessary to continue our tour around the world, and we set sail for China. On the boat going over we created a great stir amongst the passengers by carrying out a few thought reading experiments. One lady, however, was a very superior person, who loftily disdained any belief in the possibility of conveying impressions, and very loudly proclaimed us frauds and charlatans for imposing on people. Now, in view of the fact that we simply gave a demonstration for the purpose of entertaining the passengers, and that we never claimed, and never have claimed, any occult powers, leaving other people to tell each other how we accomplished our feat, this was rather hard on us, and I determined that I would convince her against her will.

My opportunity came sooner than I expected, and I did not fail to take advantage of it. I chanced to notice that she was reading a novel of which I had a copy down below in my cabin. She was sitting in a deck chair on the upper deck, and as I dropped into a chair beside her I noticed that she had just reached Page 151. I knew that my wife was downstairs in the cabin, and I had instructed her to hold herself in readiness to receive any impression I might send her during the next hour or two. When, therefore, I saw the title of the book which our critic was reading, I flashed it to my wife, following it up with the number of the page at which it was opened.

Then I waited a few moments until I saw that the lady who was reading it had got some way down the page. In the meantime my wife had been reading the page herself and had made herself acquainted with the thrilling incident with which the author was dealing at the time. It chanced to be the murder of her lover by a woman who no longer cared for him. I then spoke to the lady and suggested that she might give me a test by which she

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could satisfy herself that no fraud was practised upon her. I pointed out that, as my wife was nowhere in sight, if, without our seeing each other, she could tell our sceptic all that she had just been reading, it would completely dispel any doubts she might have as to our bona fides. After a few moments she condescendingly agreed, and I asked her to go down to the cabin where my wife was, leaving me on deck, I pointed out that I had not left her side for several minutes, during which time I had been conveying to my wife the incident which she had just read, and which I had also read as the book lay open on her knees.

She made her way down below, and not only did my wife give her a detailed and graphic account of what had transpired in that particular page, but she told her the book in which it would be found, and the number of the page. The woman was literally dumbfounded, and of course we did not enlighten her as to our possession of the duplicate book, so that she imagined the whole incident had been visualised entirely in my mind, and then transferred to that of my wife.

At length we reached China, and you can imagine our feelings perhaps when I tell you that almost the first thing that we witnessed was the beheading of 16 Chinese criminals. It was a terribly gruesome business to me, but apparently it was taken as being all in the day's work by the natives.

Death Dealer

The men who were to suffer the death penalty were carried out by two coolies in a sort of net on a bamboo stick. Just the sort of thing that I have seen them use for carrying hogs in other countries. The condemned seemed to accept their punishment very philosophically, and when they reached the place of execution made no fuss when liberated from their net prison and made to kneel down a few paces apart, in one long line.

At last all the preliminaries were over, and the executioner, a great, hefty man, with a huge, curved sword, approached his victims. They were all kneeling, as I have stated, and as the executioner approached number one on his little list number one accommodatingly bent his head forward to make his neck more easily "get-atable." The death-dealer raised his arm; there was a swish through the air. I closed my eyes! When I opened them I saw that the body of number one, minus his head, which had rolled a few feet away, had tumbled over on its side, whilst the executioner was just about to attend to number two in the line. I glanced along the line to see how the other doomed men were taking it, and I was amazed to see those farthest away almost craning their heads forward, as though to

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count how many before it was their turn. Never have I seen death so casually looked upon and anticipated by those Chinese criminals.

Less gruesome, but by no means less interesting, were the funerals which we witnessed. A funeral apparently is looked upon as a great event, and one for a great display of sorrow and ceremony. No revue or fair could ever attain such spectacular features as those connected with a Chinese funeral.

China was wonderful. Its vastness, the simplicity of its people and – their guile. They were intensely interested in our demonstrations of thought reading, but all the time they were on the look-out for some code, and even when we submitted to tests imposed upon us by their own professional conjurors they were frankly doubtful, and we had dozens and dozens of offers to buy the secret of “how it was done.”

This desire on the part of other people to fathom the means by which we accomplish our feats has led to several exciting incidents, for despite all the special tests to which we have been put, and the impossibility of trickery, folks will not accept our own explanation of the matter, and endeavour to obtain by any means in their power what they are pleased to term our “secret.”

The Land of the Geisha

My first view of Japan was very different from this for when we got into dock I was amazed to see the women engaged in the arduous work of coaling the steamers.

Whilst I was in Tokyo, the city was plunged into excitement by the disappearance of one beautiful geisha known as “Apple Blossom.” It turned out to be a romantic disappearance after all, as she eloped with a young and penniless lover who had spent a small fortune in coming to free her at the house of her master.

My wife and I had given a thought-reading demonstration one evening, and had been invited afterwards to a private dinner at the house of a well-known member of the Japanese nobility. At this gathering there were a number of the finest conjurors and illusionists in Japan.

Now, I have frequently spoken of the sort of intuition which my wife and when we were called upon to undergo a few private tests she did a very unusual thing, she point-blank refused. I was amazed, and could not understand her reason. I tried to persuade her to

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change her mind, and at length succeeded, although she warned me that she did not feel at all comfortable about it, and was certain that something was going to happen. I have no nerves and thinking that she was somewhat unstrung at the idea of performing before such a critical audience, I assured her that it was quite alright.

It was, so far as the performance went, although we were put through some very severe tests. The audience was very quick, and I had scarcely got hold of one object before another was handed to me. Now, this often has a disturbing influence on our work. Whilst I am engaged in conveying one object I am forced to see another, and my mind sometimes conveys that as well. Consequently things become a trifle mixed. We got through all right, and then my wife declared that she must go home. I was persuaded to stay, and had a very interesting time, discussing magic and illusions.

At length I set out to reach my hotel, and thought as it was a nice night I would walk. This I did and had almost reached the turning when I felt somebody behind me. I turned quickly, and as I did so two men came towards me in a very threatening attitude. The face of one seemed familiar, although I could not quite place it. At that moment, I remember, I clearly visualised the scene. The silent street with a store at the corner and the faces of the two men. I was undecided what to do, but my indecision rapidly evaporated when I saw the flying figure of my wife coming towards me accompanied by a Japanese constable.

The two men at once took to their heels and fled, whilst my wife said that she had sensed something wrong all the time, and a moment before she had actually received the impression of the place where the two men were about to attack me, and had fortunately found a police officer just outside the hotel and brought him along with her. She recognised one of the men as the servant of one of the Japanese illusionists, who afterwards confessed that he had instructed his men to get hold of me somehow and extract the secret of my thought-reading feats in any manner they could.

Had it not been for the curious intuition of my wife there is no doubt that I should have suffered some sort of assault, probably by means of Ju-Jitsu, though I am afraid the results would have been very disappointing to the conjuror.

In South Africa

South Africa proved to be in direct contrast to any other country we visited, but not less interesting. The first thing that happened on our arrival at Cape Town made us realise how very small the world is after all, for we had no sooner got ashore than we were greeted

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with, “Hullo, Zancig,” and a man whom I had not seen for years – not since we had made our first appearance at Hammerstein’s theatre – came up and made us feel at home. There is one incident I want to mention in connection with our journey from New York to Cape Town. It was a long trip, taking nearly six weeks, and on the way I practised a very neat trick upon a fellow passenger who had earned a very unsavoury reputation amongst the other passengers on account of his treatment and behaviour towards some of the ladies aboard. He was taking a company of dancing girls for a tour of South Africa, and there is no doubt as to the type of manager that he was.

It was my custom, after my wife had retired to rest, to walk for about half an hour on the lower deck just by way of exercise. For this purpose I wore a pair of silent deck shoes.

One night I was taking my usual walk when suddenly I heard somebody crying in one of the cabins, and I stopped, wondering what was the matter. I thought the occupant might be ill. I knew it was one of the cabins where some of the girls belonging to this man were sleeping. You can imagine my surprise then when I heard a man’s voice saying, “Don’t be a little fool.” I had no difficulty in recognising the voice as that of the man who was so openly detested, and I determined that I would give him a fright such as he had never had before. I waited to hear whether the girl continued crying, but suddenly I heard him say, “Well, damn you, you can work your passage back as soon as you get ashore.”

I stepped back into the shadows, and waited another moment. Suddenly the door of the cabin was opened stealthily, and, after peering this way and that, the man came out and scuttled off in the direction of his own cabin. It happened that the next night we were having a concert, at which I was to give a demonstration. This I concluded would be the best time to administer a public rebuke which should make the culprit squirm, and also let the rest of the passengers know what manner of man was in their midst. Accordingly I laid a little plot with my wife, who at once grasped the necessity of teaching this man a lesson.

The concert was a tremendous success, and at length it was our turn to appear before the audience. We went through the various tests of thought reading, and gradually I worked my way into the neighbourhood of the man himself, who offered me a peculiar coin.

Exposing a Villain

Suddenly madame emitted a tremendous shriek, which startled everyone there. “There is a bad influence here,” she said, when I asked her to continue. “It is not good. I see – I

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see a deck with cabins. Yes, it is the lower deck. I see a figure creeping along towards a door. He taps, and a frightened voice asks him who is there. He bids the girl inside to open the door. She does so and he goes in. "There are three girls in that cabin, and they are afraid. He goes to one, who tells him he must go. He refuses. She insists, and he tries to kiss her. She struggles and cries in her terror. 'Don't be a little fool,' he urges, and still the girl insists that he shall leave them alone. At last, mad with rage, he leaves the cabin, and creeps back. That is all, but that bad influence is here now." As I stood by his side I could see that the man to whom this description of his deed of the previous night must have come as a terrible shock, was literally quaking with fear, and I intended that the rest of the passengers present should have no doubt as to his identity. That is why I stood beside him all the time.

I had previously arranged to convey his appearance to my wife when I had reached him, and as she was blindfolded it accrued miraculous to the people that she should have been able to divine so completely what had evidently happened. For the rest of the trip he was shunned by everyone, and had the good grace to keep to his cabin as much as possible. This much I know. On arrival at Cape Town he stranded several girls there, for whilst we were appearing in the town they came round and told us how he had timed them to catch a certain train up country, and had taken all those he had wanted on a previous train.

The most wonderful thing that I saw in South Africa was during our visit to Kimberly. We were taken over one of the mines, and shown all the workings of the place. We gave a performance to the chiefs and officers of the works, and as they had never seen anything like it before they were greatly impressed. Then I suggested that the natives might enjoy a show, and arrangements were accordingly made.

I think I have mentioned that at this time I used to include a bit of hypnotism in my act, and on this occasion I thought it would interest the Kaffirs. So I got a little native boy, whom I put to sleep, and performed various little tricks with him, much to the amazement of the company. Those who have seen my performances will have noticed that I always work with a little jewelled stick, and on this occasion I used it on this hypnotised boy, I pointed it, at him, and told him that he could not say his name, and immediately he became dumb. This was after he had repeated it correctly several times.

My audience were very quiet, but I thought that it was due to nothing more than wonder. Suddenly, however, a huge specimen of manhood strode towards the stage. He was a Kaffir chief, I learned afterwards, and certainly he made a magnificent figure as he mounted the stage. In a language I could not understand he asked me something, pointing

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towards the stick in my hand. I held it towards him, and as he reached out to touch it I jerked it slightly. The sudden touch caused him to draw away his hand quickly, and then he turned, and in ringing tones declaimed something to the audience who had been looking on aghast.

I was quite amused. But suddenly my amusement was turned to something very different when I looked upon the forbidding faces of my audience. I turned to go on with my performance, thinking to tide things over. But I could hear vague murmurings, and I felt the earth begin to tremble with the regular bent of hundreds of feet beating a rhythmic time upon the floor. One of the white foremen appeared at the side of the stage and beckoned me. He looked very serious, and when I went to him he explained that the chief had told his countrymen that I was a devil man possessed of evil spirits, and that the stick I held was a devil stick. He stated that he had distinctly felt a shock when he had touched it.

The foreman advised us to get away as soon as we could, and as the murmuring was becoming louder and louder, and the floor was shaking beneath the steady stamping of feet, he blew a loud blast on the whistle which they always carry. At once the guards rushed in armed with rifles, and we were escorted from the hall. It was not at all a nice experience, and I remember a similar occasion when the natives got so nervous that they left the place in a rush, and I could see their faces pressed against the windows outside staring in a frenzy of fear. After we left South Africa we went to Manila, and from there to California, where we were booked for the Orpheum circuit, opening at San Francisco. And now I must bring to an end this record of my travels, which I shall always remember as one of the most interesting periods of my life.

THE END.

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