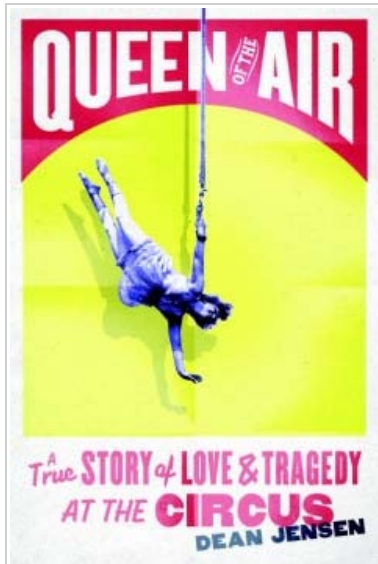


Books: Gripping *Queen Of The Air* A Real-Life *Water For Elephants*

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QUEEN OF THE AIR By *Dean N. Jensen*

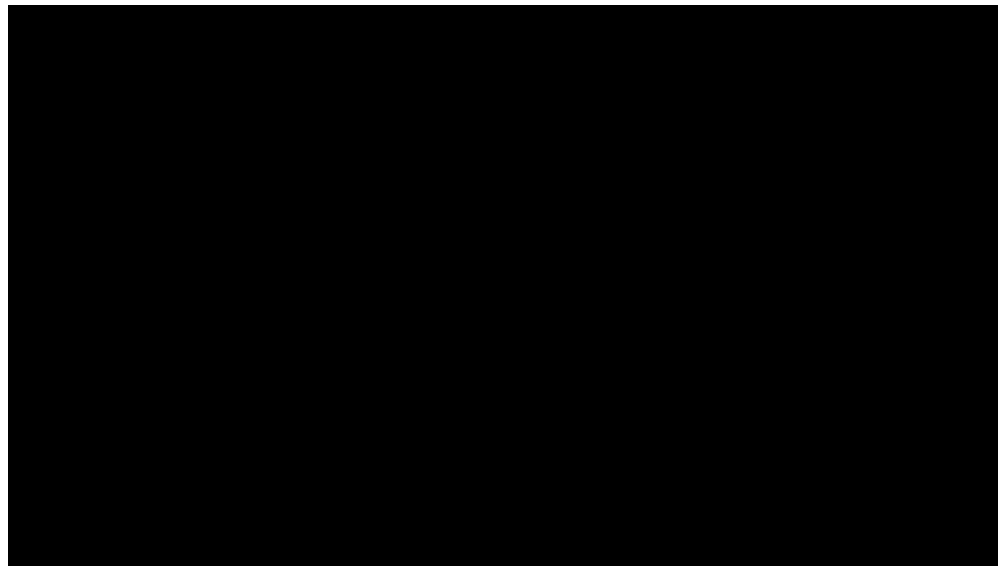
\$26.00 hardcover

Crown

An unattractive cover is the only flaw in this otherwise thoroughly gripping, melodramatic true story of one of the most famous circus performers of all time. *Queen Of The Air* begins with a family on hard times that reluctantly allows its little daughter to go away on tour throughout Latin America with a traveling circus. She is abused by the owner yet rises to become one of the greatest acts in the world. But she's not the star of this story.

Her daughter from that rape turns into a prodigy of prodigies called Leitzel, the Queen Of The Air. Among the many unlikely events that pepper this true story: the mother is wracked with guilt that she had to ignore her children for her career but is insanely jealous when the little girl almost immediately outshines her. Leitzel leaps from success to success with her dazzling skill as an aerialist and is soon the top attraction at the biggest circus in the world. There a young nobody in the circus falls in love with her.

That teenage boy Alfredo gets to smooch with Leitzel but she's really only dallying with him. They both marry others but Alfredo is determined to become worthy of her...and turns into a member of the Flying Codona Brothers, ultimately becoming perhaps the first man in history to regularly perform the literally death-defying triple somersault while traveling at 60 miles per hour. More than a decade later and now world famous himself, Alfredo reunites with the woman he always loved.



She loves him too and they get married. But she loves fame ever so slightly more and is too used to flitting from lover to lover for the jealous Alfredo's taste. Romance, high society, passion, disdain, celebrity, money, madness, bold gambles, tragic failures -- it's all here in a tale that you would scoff at if it weren't true.

A real life *Water For Elephants* is the inevitable comparison for *Queen Of The Air*. Author Dean N. Jensen took literally decades to tell this story right; everyone he initially interviewed is dead now. It was worth the wait. The result is one of the most improbable and entertaining books of the year.

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