



John Wilkes Booth was a member of an acting family. His father was an actor as were his two brothers. Once - on November 25, 1864 - John appeared in New York City with his two brothers in a single performance of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*.

A story is told about a gypsy who once read Booth's palm:

One day a gypsy living in the woods near Cockeysville read John's palm. She said, "Ah, you've a bad hand; the lines all cris-cras! It's full enough of sorrow. Full of trouble. Trouble in plenty, everywhere I look. You'll break hearts, they'll be nothing to you. You'll die young, and leave many to mourn you, many to love you too, but you'll be rich, generous, and free with your money.

You're born under an unlucky star. You've got in your hand a thundering crowd of enemies - not one friend - you'll make a bad end, and have plenty to love you afterwards. You'll have a fast life - short, but a grand one. Now, young sir, I've never seen a worse hand, and I wish I hadn't seen it, but every word I've told is true by the signs. You'd best turn a missionary or a priest and try to escape it.

Booth did not "turn a missionary or a priest," nor did he "try to escape" whatever lot his life had in store. In fact, some of his friends said he was so singularly focused on kidnapping President Lincoln, in exchange for the release of Confederate prisoners of war, that he seemed consumed by the idea.

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John Wilkes Booth and a Gypsy's Prediction

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