

LEVELED BOOK • 0

ANNIE OAKLEY



Written by Rus Buyok • Illustrated by Robert Squier

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Annie Oakley was born in a small Ohio town. As soon as she could lift her daddy's hunting **rifle**, he was teaching her to shoot. When her daddy died, her momma was left in an awful way. She had a hard time feeding Annie and the other children.



Annie saw how hard her momma was working and decided to help. She picked up her daddy's rifle and went hunting. That first day, she brought home more fat **pheasants** than she could carry.



Her family never went hungry again. Little Annie became the best hunter in the county right quick. She started selling the extra food to the people around town and giving food to those who couldn't afford it.



This went on for years until a handsome man named Frank Butler came to town. He was a **sharpshooter**, and he put on quite a show of shooting targets. At the end of his show, he asked the crowd if they knew anyone who was a better shot.

The townspeople said they knew of one person and sent someone off to fetch Annie. When Frank saw short Annie, who was skinny enough to hide behind a cornstalk, he laughed.



“Is this the best you’ve got?” Frank asked. The townspeople said yes. Annie just smiled. “All right, then. Since a lady is challenging me, I’ll let her pick the contest.”

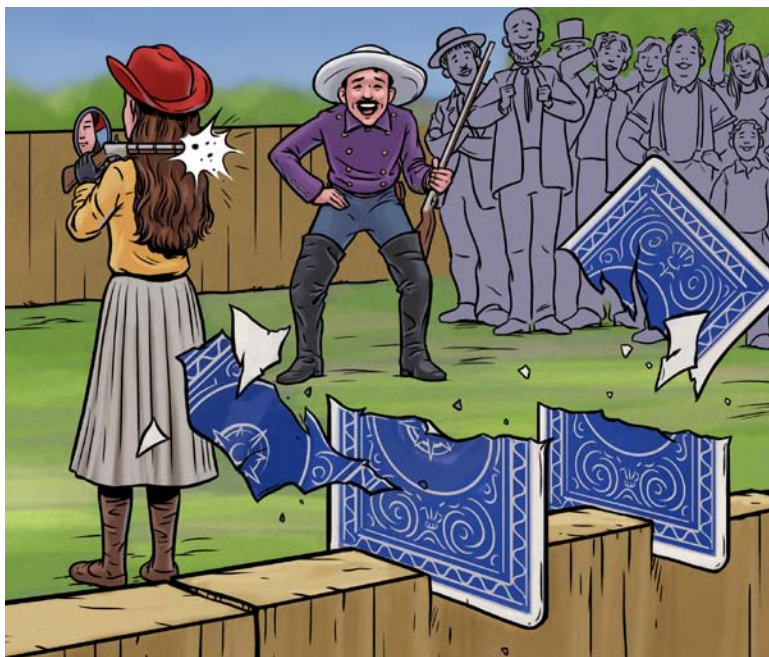
“Shooting cards,” Annie said proudly.

“Are you sure?” Frank replied. “I’m the best card shooter in the West.”

Annie nodded and said, “We’ll be shooting cards edgewise.”



Frank went first. A boy set up five playing cards in little notches on a fence so the edges faced Frank. From where Frank stood, they were all but invisible. He took a deep breath and fired. He hit three cards: one through the middle and the tops of two others.



Annie stepped up, a small smile on her face. She asked the boy to set up cards on two fences opposite each other.

Annie's hands moved like lightning, and the gunshots were thunder. She shot the cards in front of her clean in half with barely a thought. Then she pulled out a mirror and shot the cards behind her from over her shoulder.

Annie had won, and Frank asked her to marry him on the spot.



The two were hitched, and Frank took Annie on the road. Annie started making a name for herself as the best shot in the West. People would toss pennies and dimes in the air at her shows. She was fast enough to shoot every one before it hit the ground. Any coin shot by Annie Oakley would immediately **quintuple** in value. Once, a man became rich by throwing a bundle of silver dollars in the air. Annie shot each one before it hit the ground.



Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show was the biggest show in the world. Bill heard of the lady sharpshooter and had to see her **talent** for himself. He took the **famous** Indian Chief Sitting Bull with him to one of Annie's shows.

"That was good, but not good enough for my show," Buffalo Bill told Annie after her show. "Show me something amazing."



Sitting Bull pointed to a speck high in the sky. Annie took aim and shot. The speck flew on, and Buffalo Bill shook his head and started to walk away. Sitting Bull made him wait. A few minutes passed, and a single tail feather from a large eagle drifted down. There was a bullet hole in the middle.

Sitting Bull was so impressed that he adopted Annie as his daughter and named her Little Sure Shot.

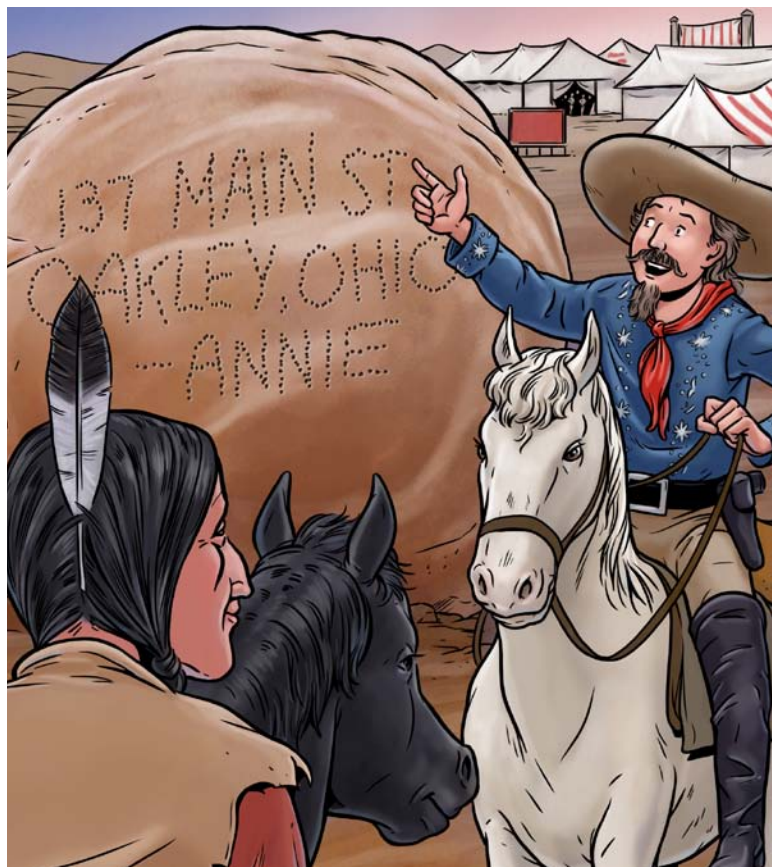


Buffalo Bill nodded and said, “What else have you got?”

Annie climbed a nearby hill, kneeled, aimed, and fired. Then she kept firing, again and again, always in the same direction. She came down the hill smiling.

“What were you shooting at?” Buffalo Bill asked.

“You’ll see,” Annie said.



Buffalo Bill and Sitting Bull said their goodbyes and started the long journey back to the Wild West Show's tents. They rode for almost a week before they saw the camp next to a large boulder. As they came closer, Buffalo Bill saw a message on the boulder. It was an address carved by Annie's bullets.



Buffalo Bill sent a **telegram** to the address inviting Annie Oakley to join the Wild West Show. She did and went on to do even greater **feats** all over the world. They say she even made some new stars by shooting holes in the sky, but that's another **tale**.

Glossary

famous (<i>adj.</i>)	well known (p. 11)
feats (<i>n.</i>)	amazing actions or accomplishments (p. 15)
pheasants (<i>n.</i>)	large game birds with long tails that are related to chickens (p. 4)
quintuple (<i>v.</i>)	to make or become five times greater in size, amount, or value (p. 10)
rifle (<i>n.</i>)	a long-barreled gun that is pressed against the shoulder when fired (p. 3)
sharpshooter (<i>n.</i>)	a person who is very skilled and accurate when shooting at a target (p. 6)
tale (<i>n.</i>)	a true or fictional story, especially one told in an imaginative way (p. 15)
talent (<i>n.</i>)	a natural ability or skill (p. 11)
telegram (<i>n.</i>)	a message sent by telegraph and then delivered in a written or printed form (p. 15)

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Correlation

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Annie Oakley

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