

A small icon of the RMS Titanic ship sailing on the ocean, positioned above the word "TITANICA".

TITANICA

Titanic's Passengers and Crew

by Alex Giannini

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by Alex Giannini

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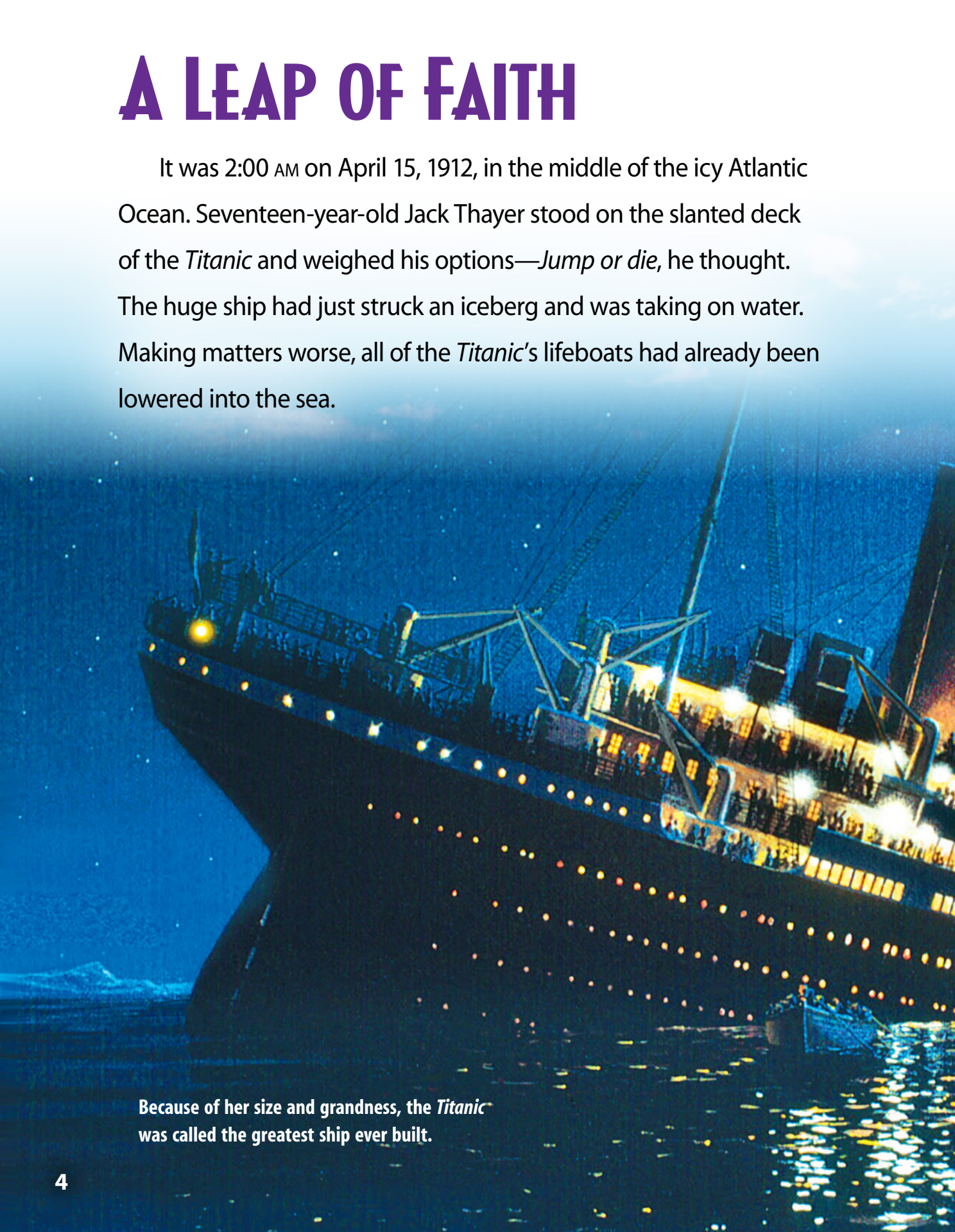
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A LEAP OF FAITH

It was 2:00 AM on April 15, 1912, in the middle of the icy Atlantic Ocean. Seventeen-year-old Jack Thayer stood on the slanted deck of the *Titanic* and weighed his options—*Jump or die*, he thought. The huge ship had just struck an iceberg and was taking on water. Making matters worse, all of the *Titanic's* lifeboats had already been lowered into the sea.



Because of her size and grandness, the *Titanic* was called the greatest ship ever built.

Jumping into the ice-cold Atlantic Ocean would put Jack at risk of **hypothermia**, drowning, or being crushed by the ship. So Jack turned to Milton Long, a friend he'd made aboard the *Titanic*, for an answer. Milton's expression said it all. They would have to jump. Jack closed his eyes for a moment. Suddenly, a noise like a train crash startled him. This was it—the *Titanic* was going down!



Jack Thayer, along with his parents, were passengers aboard the *Titanic*. They were headed home to the United States after a European vacation.

On April 10, 1912, the *Titanic* set sail on her maiden, or first, voyage.

“THE SHOCK OF THE WATER”

Jack looked down at the lifeboats bobbing in the black ocean. With time running out, Milton jumped first. Jack watched his friend **plunge** into the icy depths, never to resurface. Finally, Jack leapt over the railing. He hit the freezing water and was pulled downward, his body spinning in every direction. “The shock of the water took the breath out of my lungs,” Jack said.



Jack fought his way to the surface and took a huge gulp of air. He swam as fast as he could away from the **ocean liner**. When he finally looked up, he saw an overturned lifeboat with men clinging to it and grabbed hold of it. Jack turned back to see the mighty *Titanic* dip down into the water and sink beneath the black waves.

Along with about 25 other men, Jack Thayer survived the long night at sea on an overturned lifeboat.



Captain Edward J. Smith

The *Titanic*'s captain, Edward J. Smith, had ordered women and children to board the lifeboats first. The men had to wait their turn. However, there weren't enough lifeboats for all the passengers and crew aboard the *Titanic*.