

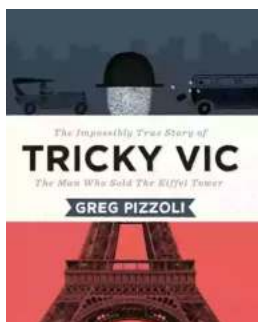
The Impossibly True Story Of The Man Who Sold The Eiffel Tower

Have you ever heard of a man selling a famous landmark? Well, prepare to be amazed because this article is about a real-life Indiana Jones-like figure who managed to sell the iconic Eiffel Tower! This incredible story involves cunning, audacity, and the gullibility of the wealthy. Strap in as we dive deep into the impossibly true story of the man who sold the Eiffel Tower.

The Mastermind Behind the Scheme

Meet Victor Lustig, a con artist who could charm his way into anyone's pocket. Born in Austria-Hungary in the late 1800s, Lustig roamed Europe with his silver tongue and quick wit. It was in Paris, in the early 1920s, where he hatched his audacious plan.

Lustig was well aware of the Eiffel Tower's fame, its prominence as a symbol of France. It stood as a proud testament to human engineering and innovation. Lustig saw an opportunity to exploit the naiveté of the rich and famous who were infatuated with owning a piece of history. He aimed at targeting potential buyers who were eager to invest in unique and prestigious possessions.



Tricky Vic: The Impossibly True Story of the Man Who Sold the Eiffel Tower by Greg Pizzoli (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 9722 KB

Screen Reader : Supported

Print length : 48 pages



The Proposal That Couldn't be Refused

To execute his plan, Lustig posed as a government official and sent out letters to several scrap metal dealers, knowing that they would be interested in acquiring the valuable metal content of the Eiffel Tower. In the letters, Lustig invited these unsuspecting businessmen to a secret meeting at a luxurious Paris hotel.

In this meeting, Lustig unveiled his remarkable proposition. He presented himself as the Deputy Director-General of the Ministry of Post, Telegraph, and Telephone. He announced that the French government had decided to sell the Eiffel Tower due to its high maintenance costs, which the country could ill-afford.

Lustig carefully selected his targets, ensuring they were men of wealth and influence, yet who lacked the necessary skepticism. He played on their desires and fears of missing out on exclusive opportunities. To further ignite their interest, he added a sense of urgency to the transaction, stating that secrecy was crucial due to potential public backlash if the news got out.

A Diamond in the Rough

One of the prospective buyers, André Poisson, a scrap metal dealer, was immediately hooked by Lustig's proposal. Lustig masterfully crafted an air of authenticity and trust around him, making it difficult for anyone to suspect his true intentions. Poisson became convinced that this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity was too good to pass up, especially if others were also considering the deal.

To solidify the legitimacy of the transaction, Lustig took Poisson on a tour of the Eiffel Tower. He showcased the supposed problematic areas, highlighting the

extensive maintenance required and the expenses involved in keeping the landmark standing tall. This visit, coupled with Poisson's growing excitement and undying interest in the deal, sealed his fate as Lustig prepared to pull off his audacious scheme.

The Shocking Revelation

After several meetings to finalize the details, Lustig arranged for a secluded encounter with Poisson, where he handed over a briefcase filled with documents confirming the legitimacy of the sale. In exchange, Poisson handed Lustig a hefty sum of money as a down payment, believing he was on the verge of becoming the owner of the Eiffel Tower.

Little did Poisson know that he had just been swindled by a professional con artist. Lustig quickly disappeared, leaving Poisson to discover that the briefcase contained nothing but worthless papers and the realization that he had been deceived.

The Escape and Its Consequences

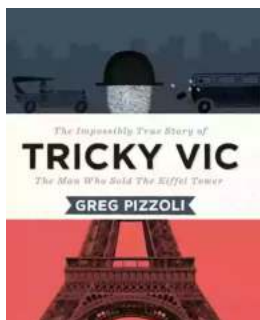
As news of the scam broke, Lustig fled France and embarked on a series of elaborate cons across Europe and the United States. However, his journey was not without its setbacks. Eventually, he was apprehended in the United States, convicted of various fraud charges, and sentenced to prison.

Ironically, Lustig's audacity and creativity had made him infamous. The story of the man who sold the Eiffel Tower spread like wildfire, capturing the imagination of people worldwide. His legend lives on, as his audacious feat continues to be a symbol of the extraordinary lengths some would go to achieve their goals.

The Legacy of Victor Lustig

Despite his nefarious deeds, there is an undeniable allure to Lustig's incredible story. It serves as a cautionary tale for those who underestimate the power of deception and persuasion. Lustig was not just a criminal; he was also a master manipulator who exploited the human desire for wealth, exclusivity, and the thrill of an adventure.

So the next time you gaze upon the magnificent Eiffel Tower, remember the impossibly true story of the man who almost managed to sell it. Victor Lustig remains an unforgettable figure in history, a captivating rogue whose audacious exploits continue to fascinate.



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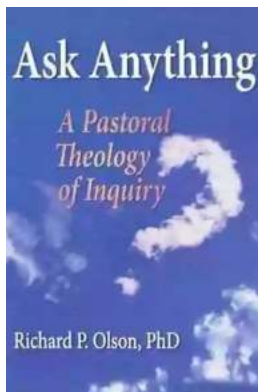
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A New York Times Book Review Best Illustrated Children's Book of 2015

In the early 1900s, Robert Miller, a.k.a. “Count Victor Lustig,” moved to Paris hoping to be an artist. A con artist, that is. He used his ingenious scams on unsuspecting marks all over the world, from the Czech Republic, to Atlantic ocean liners, and across America. Tricky Vic pulled off his most daring con in 1925, when he managed to "sell" the Eiffel Tower to one of the city’s most successful scrap metal dealers! Six weeks later, he tried to sell the Eiffel Tower all over again. Vic was never caught. For that particular scam, anyway. . . .

Kids will love to read about Vic's thrilling life, and teachers will love the informational sidebars and back matter. Award-winner Greg Pizzoli's humorous and vibrant graphic style of illustration mark a bold approach to picture book biography.



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