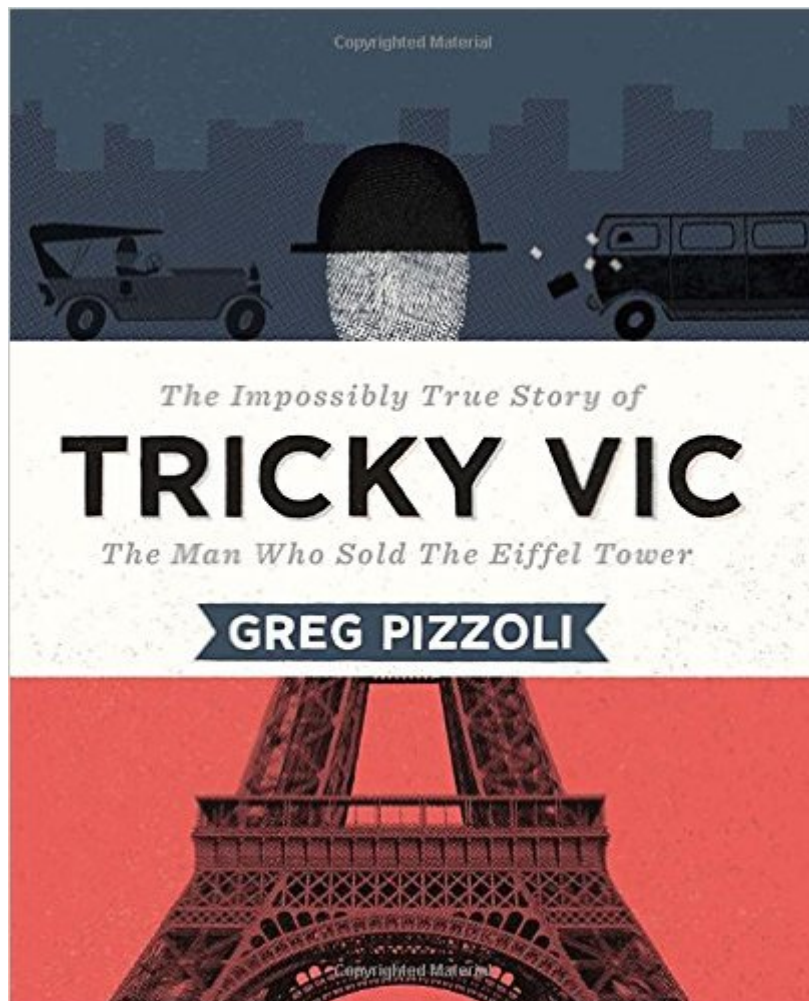


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# Tricky Vic: The Impossibly True Story Of The Man Who Sold The Eiffel Tower



## Synopsis

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.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 48 pages

Publisher: Viking Books for Young Readers (March 10, 2015)

Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 7.7 x 0.4 x 9.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (15 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #172,411 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #34 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Law & Crime](#) #108 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Europe](#) #330 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Historical](#)

Age Range: 7 - 9 years

Grade Level: 2 - 4

## Customer Reviews

I was listening to a favorite podcast of mine the other day when the panelists began discussing the difference between heist films and con man films. A heist film is one where the entire movie is a build-up to a great and fabulous heist. "Ocean's 11" and that sort of thing. In the children's book world this would be "The Great Greene Heist". A con man film is different. There you have a single individual, and not necessarily a heroic one either. "Catch Me If You Can" is a con man film. And on the children's book side? Honestly, we don't have a lot of

them. Maybe "Pickle" by Kim Baker but that's a stretch. It really wasn't until I laid eyes on Greg Pizzoli's "Tricky Vic" that I could appreciate what I had been missing all these years. Told with a relaxed easygoing style, Pizzoli takes one of the world's most notorious individuals in the con game, and refuses to humanize him. Here we see a character that was larger than life. Makes sense that he'd try to sell a structure that was in many ways his equal. In 1890 he was born Robert Miller, but that didn't last. Names came and went and by the time he was an adult, Miller was a professional gambler turned con artist. His preferred method of payment was gambling on transatlantic ocean liners but then along came WWI and Miller, now calling himself Count Victor Lustig, needed a new occupation. Through a little low level trickery he got the blessing of Al Capone and then set about bilking the easy rich. But his greatest feat, and the one that would put him down in the history books, was his successful con of "selling" the Eiffel Tower to prospective buyers.

See this review and more at: <http://idiosyncraticlibrary.com/> In the eye of my memory, the children's biography section of any bookstore or library, is filled with dull books on the virtuous lives of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, sharing shelf space with formulaic offerings on the lives of sports figures and historical figures that vary only by the photographs on the cover. To me, this was simply a section to walk through before getting to 'the good books.' If Tricky Vic was on offer when I was a kid, I would have stopped and given that section a chance. Unlike most of the lives that populate children's biography shelves, this is no hero story. This is a story that lifts the veil of ordered life and gives children a peek into the underworld of mobsters, greedy marks, and charming hucksters. With a title and cover that promises foreign intrigue and danger, Tricky Vic is a thrilling journey into the life of infamous con man Robert Miller, sometimes known as Count Victor Lustig. Starting with his birth in Eastern Europe, and following him through his early cons in gambling houses and aboard passenger ocean liners before World War I, to his ventures in America with infamous Prohibition era mobster, Al Capone, readers follow along as Lustig tries out and then develops his skills as a talented con artist. Then, readers come to Lustig's most lucrative con, one he was able to pull off more than once - selling the Eiffel tower. Pizzoli describes the art work in the book as a combination of "pencil, ink, rubber stamps, half tone photographs, silk screen, Zipatone and Photoshop" and the result is stunning. The overall effect is simple, yet amplifies the text with meaning and humor.

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