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Assuming Names: A Con Artist's Masquerade (Criminal Mischief Book 1)



Synopsis

When it was over, there were a lot of questions. The detectives were embarrassed but they still wanted answered, "How did a 15-year-old runaway successfully pose as a world travelled countess?" The newspapers turned it back on them, practically sneering, "How did she do it while under investigation by the FBI, DEA, and Interpol?" The Mafia had been demanding the same thing for six months, "What is your real name?" And the psychologists asked the question they always ask, "Why?" It's the why of it that will keep a girl in trouble. Assuming Names is the true story of a young con artist. It's the tale of a runaway that assumed the title of Countess and then went on to fool the FBI, DEA, and Interpol as well as a number of other celebrities and institutions with an elaborate tale of world intrigue. A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR: Hello everyone. This is Tanya. You may find yourself reading my book and saying, "No, this did not happen." You may be inclined to say it is too far-fetched and, quite frankly, impossible. I have provided evidence at my website that what I write is the truth. I mention it at the front of the book but it may be easy to overlook, so I am reiterating here. At my website are copies of the newspaper and magazine articles mentioned in the book. The articles are from the Austin American Statesman, The Dallas Morning News, and Woman's World Magazine. They are all nationally recognized media for news. Previous reviewers were concerned I may have gone to Photoshop to create them, and while my book does paint me as the sort that would do such a thing, the reality is that those media institutions would sue me into submission before the cache could be cleared. In the end, you may not believe me, but you can surely believe what the papers wrote.

Book Information

File Size: 1291 KB

Print Length: 290 pages

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited

Publisher: Thompson Books (March 4, 2014)

Publication Date: March 4, 2014

Sold by: Â Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00IT5VUSY

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #38,013 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #21

in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Biographies & Memoirs > True Crime > Hoaxes & Deceptions

#24 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > True Crime > Hoaxes & Deceptions #185

in Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Thrillers & Suspense > Crime > Heist

Customer Reviews

Edit: Story is easily verified through the Dallas Morning News archives. Search for title: Teen-ager untangles her web of deceit. Date: May 1, 1986 I normally don't get involved in these discussions because I find someone has already said what I want to say so I don't have to say it. This time however no one is weighing in with the obvious. The vitriol in the one star reviews is either ignorance or personal. I'm not slinging insults, I use the word ignorance in the strictest definition. The reviewers are unaware the author's story is backed up by the media. Big media, like the Dallas Herald, Woman's World Magazine, the Statesman, and the giant old elephant in the room, the Associated Press. You ask, "Really?" and the media answers, "Yes, really." Yes really, a fifteen year old girl went and pulled a jaw dropping long con that should earn her some sort of recognition in Wikipedia's list of famous impostors. Because none of those tricksters took on the FBI or Interpol. Nor did any of them do it before they were legal to drive. So before you trash the book as too farfetched to be tolerated, go and look the story up. Because if you're not tearing the book apart for its unsubstantiated claims, which we've determined are substantiated, then I suspect the hate is personal, because this young woman has gone to some effort to make enemies. She starts the book with a Bloody Mary styled incantation against Jesus (something I was too terrified as a child to repeat three times) and then she casually makes a couple of rape jokes. Really. But it's kind of funny. Really, again. Not every single word she writes is repeated by the media, but the big stuff is. The bits about the FBI, Interpol, the DEA, INS, the mental asylum, the sheriff's departments, Ron Howard, the ACLU, and the Dallas Refugee Agency. All the big stuff is bona fide verified. You ask, "Really?" and the media answers, "Yes, really." Yes, really.

I really enjoyed this book. Assuming it is all true and the events described weren't given much in the way of literary license, we get to ride along in the head of an amicable, compulsive sociopathic con artista. How fun is that? The author, going by the name Tanya Thompson, learned early in life how to exploit her good looks, charm, fearlessness and extreme intelligence to avoid boredom, real work and to have astonishing adventures. She describes what it's like to be an admitted sociopath. You just can't help but laugh at how her mind works. Or doesn't, as the case may be. You don't have to like her or what she does (presuming she's still in the game), but you do have to respect the giant huevos and her very devoted guardian angel. It is entirely reasonable to have doubts about the authenticity of all the events described, but if you just give yourself over to it, you'll have a good time following Tanya's escapades. If she's shining us, well, so what? The salvation of your soul and your bank account probably don't rest secured on how much stock you put into her autobiography. Her first official con (not counting the times she would flirt with older men until they came after her, then ran to hide behind her retired Marine daddy) was a fifteen-year-old's attempt to gain an official, government-issued ID in the name of an entirely fictitious British countess. When that failed, she figured out how to steal identities of real people, instead. Okay, you do feel sorry for the real people who really got burned, but the author claims she is capable of feeling guilty, so she contained her cons to stealing things that are usually covered by insurance. That does have a way of assuaging your own guilt for enjoying her cons along with her. Having brought down the ire of a Mexican smuggling ring on one of the women whose identity she borrowed, she even had the decency (if you can call it that) to make an anonymous call to the poor girl and warn her that she might soon have some ticked-off hombres showing up at her house. You don't have to like her, as mentioned, but you really can't help yourself. You just know that she could con you in a heartbeat and you probably wouldn't even mind it that much. The story left off with an intro to the sequel where the author is in Belize turning over a stolen Mustang as a bribe for a bureaucrat in order to be admitted into the country. The author can add writing to her list of talents, as well. The narrative is easy and unassuming. It flows well and never bogs down in details that don't advance the story. Assuming Names was such a fun read, I can't wait to see what she stirs up in Belize in her next book The Expatriates

Sadly, I didn't have the opportunity to get my copy of this book free on what sounds like the greatest book tour to ever roll through Europe. I didn't get to meet the author in a bar, on a train, or in the company of the "shady

shades, so my review isn't tainted by her charms or what sounded like ecstasy. Consumable ecstasy. After reading the book I am envious of those who got to experience Tanya first hand. I bet those half crazed and fully out of their mind reviewers have a few stories to tell that could not be told here. This book reveals a young woman who is bold enough at the age of 15 to stroll into Dallas and say she's a countess. She's 15 and she breezes through one interrogation after another, making quick work of the FBI, Interpol, DEA, and, while her time in the mental asylum didn't sound nice, she fooled a full panel of health professionals. Next she was taking on the Mafia, I guess because the risks hadn't been high enough already with the federal authorities. This girl just wrapped up every agency and gangster like a pro, but again: she was 15! There are dark turns in the story that will pain you to read, but I can think of no other author that will see the reader through it with greater mirth. The book is fun, exciting, thrilling, scary, dark, and irreverent - I think this is what the other reviews also said about Tanya when they met her. I am envious. If this book tour comes my way, I am so totally there.

Beautifully written. The story flies along propelled by the quick style of writing. It's both breathless and punchy. I seriously love the method shown here. Edgy, contemporary and wholly original literary nonfiction.

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