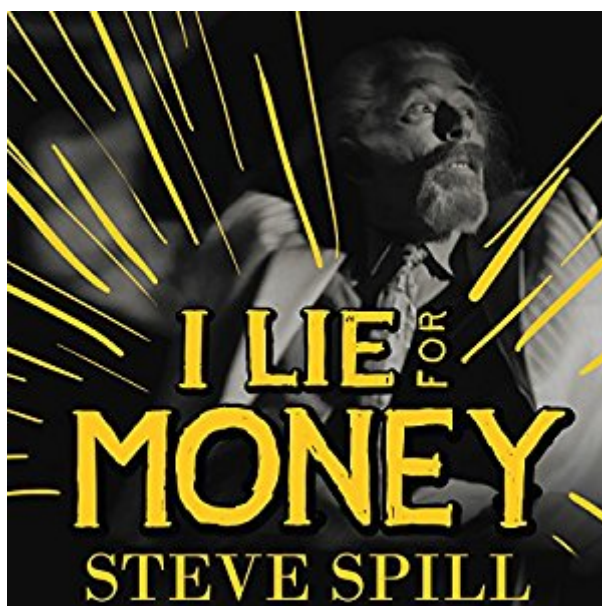


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# I Lie For Money: Candid, Outrageous Stories From A Magician's Misadventures



## Synopsis

In this funny, irreverent, unique, eccentric memoir, magician Steve Spill reveals how he managed to survive decades inside a rarely profitable, sometimes maddening, but often deliciously rewarding offbeat showbiz profession - magic! Spill tells of how his tailor grandfather sewed secret pockets in a magician's tuxedo back in 1910, which started his childhood dream to become a magician. This dream took Spill on a journey that started with him performing as a young boy at a "beauty on a budget" neighborhood house party to engagements in Europe, Africa, and the Caribbean, to today in Santa Monica, California, where he's been starring in his own shows since 1998 at Magicopolis, the theater he designed and built himself. Being a magician has given Spill the opportunity to interact with the world's most famous and fascinating people. In his memoir Spill reveals the many unique encounters that his profession has led him to enjoy and endure: hosting Sting as his opening act one night, spending two days on camera with Joan Rivers, and selling tricks to Bob Dylan, as well as encounters with Adam Sandler, Stephen King, and other celebrities. *I Lie for Money* is a literary magic show that captures the highs and lows of an extraordinary life that will delight and amaze you with wit and wickedness. This book should be an obligatory listen for anyone considering a creative career, and it serves as an inspiration to those who desire to craft an independent life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Steve Spill is a former child prodigy who grew up to become one of the best comedy magicians on

the planet. Over the last 50 years, he's had a front row seat to the evolution of stand-up and magic in the latter half of the 20th century. Along the way, he's entertained and amazed everyone from A-listers to African tribespeople, and thereby collected the frequently crazy and funny tales contained in this highly readable and frequently surprising memoir. This book stands out amongst many other show biz biographies because rather than focusing on the inevitable personal pain behind the art, this is primarily an upbeat journey. Mr. Spill is a superb raconteur, and whether he's describing a wince-inducing mishap while vanishing a lit cigarette to impress the girls (don't try this at home!) or poignantly relating why the worth of a 50 cent pack of cards is in the eye (and talent) of the beholder, he has an immediacy and wit to his writing that really draws in the reader. The appeal to magic buffs is a given (especially 11 pages in particular, where he describes the true secrets of a much purloined reputation maker). However, I believe even non-magicians will enjoy getting a backstage peek as to the level of thinking, passion, and commitment it takes to make it in the trenches of live entertainment night after night. Despite the title of the book, Mr. Spill's personal stories illustrate certain universal truths of the human condition; hence, their great appeal. In short, Steve Spill's journey through life thus far makes for entertaining, enlightening reading. It put a smile on my face, and I suspect it will for you as well – and that's no lie! Highly recommended. NOTE: Although the subtitle of the book contains the adjective "outrageous", aside from a few innuendos, Mr. Spill writes in a relatively "clean" style. It's refreshing to find a funny book that doesn't need to troll in the gutter for laughs.

This was a terrific book. Steve's account of his adventures, his travels, and his magic was remarkable. It was a revelation of a world of wonders, of times and places it is impossible to see today, but it was a rare treat to view them through his eyes. I was particularly struck by the theme of active diligence and daring running through it, which led to so many extraordinary and wonderful... stories, as the title suggests. Steve's appreciation for those around him, for the details of texture, and colour, tone and demeanour bring his stories to life and touch them with story-telling magic. But it is also the story of a beautiful magical theatre in Santa Monica, that you can visit yourself!

I knew I was born a few years and a couple of states away from the mecca of show biz magic, but with Steve Spill's behind the curtain reminisces, I feel like Life has given me the gift of vicariously experiencing what I missed. Captivating, laugh out loud, can't put it down fare. And I'm only through

the first few chapters (and my first sleepless night). I guess I could hash tag everything that immediately resonates with me, but I've been the kid who dreamed of seeing and knowing the greats, the legends, and of being able to entertain luminaries and the common folk with a sparkle in my eye and a sense of wonder. Steve Spill not only does that, he is that. And in his book, he tips his hat and out "spills" real magic. No spoiler alerts, just buy this story of a man's wonderful life, and treat yourself. It's a pleasure, and that's no lie. Thank you for sharing, Steve, and for inspiring a little more adventure and magic in me.

If you just look on the surface there is the way you think things work and the way they actually work. There's also the way you think things happen and how they actually happened and then there's also the way you think people are and the way they actually are. This book shares with you how things actually work, what makes things really happen and who Steve Spill really is. All of these things are fascinating and make for a very enjoyable read. I highly recommend this book if you like to know the thinking behind the person and action behind the accomplishments.

I have a special fondness for magician's memoirs and to my two old favorites, *The Memoirs of Robert-Houdin* and *Illusion Show* by David Bamberg, I am pleased to add a new favorite, Steve Spill's *I Lie for Money*. Spill was fortunate in being in the "right place at the right time", Los Angeles in the late 1960s when the Magic Castle was the center of the magical universe, with Dai Vernon, Charlie Miller, Francis Carlyle, Albert Goshman, Tony Slydini and others holding court there nightly and the teenage Steve Spill learned from them all. He recounts those experiences and his subsequent experiences, first as "Highdini" opening for rock bands, then performing in comedy clubs, pioneering bar magic in Aspen, Colorado with Bob Sheets, then operating the the Brook Farm Inn of Magic with Sheets in Maryland, before returning to California where he defied the odds and opened his own magic theater, Magicopolis in Santa Monica in 1998 where he continues to perform his unique brand of comedy magic weekly with his wife, Polish born actress and writer Bozena Wrobel. Magicians will enjoy the inside tales of the Magic Castle and his years in the trenches with Sheets and others. Fans of comedy will enjoy his stories of working with comedy legends Bill Hicks, Dennis Miller and Joan Rivers. The range of celebrities he has worked with run from Sting to Steven King and his perspective on working with them is always entertaining. Of particular interest is a chapter on tricks he invented and audience tested that never got the response he had hoped, such as a variation on the classic "Rice Bowls" trick that he called "Timothy Leary's Brain". Other chapters also show his creative process at work, detailing how he workshops an effect and then

hones it in performance to become a signature piece of entertainment. Spill was only 60 when he wrote this with many years of active performing ahead of him, so one can hope that a sequel to this will be available in the near future.

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