

# ***THE LEANING TOWER OF PISA***

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It was summer vacation, and the weather was very hot in Los Angeles. Tom and Tanta wanted to go somewhere that was cooler. Their parents decided to take them to Italy.

The first place they went to was Rome. In Rome there are many museums. After going to several museums and public gardens, they found a nice restaurant. The menu was in Italian, but it had pictures of the food, which made it easy to decide what to eat.

Their waiter was very nice. He could speak English. He taught the children a few Italian words and then gave them a book to read. They tried to read it, but it was in Italian.

The waiter told them if they looked at it long enough, the words would become clear to them.

After dinner they went to the hotel. Tom and Tanta looked at the book for a long time, but the words never changed. Tanta fell asleep.

Suddenly, Tom could read the book. It was about the Leaning Tower of Pisa and the book said they needed to go there and stop the tower from falling down.

Tom told his parents about the book and said they had to go to Pisa that day. His parents thought it was crazy, but since they didn't have any plans for that day, they agreed to go.

A small river runs through Pisa. The river brought them to the Leaning Tower of Pisa. The famous Leaning Tower of Pisa is a wonder. The white stone of the building makes it easy to find. Once inside the gate they saw the just how tall the building was and how much it was leaning.

Tom took out the book and began to read. 'The king of Pisa built the cathedral and tower

in 1174 to show his power. The cathedral was still intact, but the tower began to lean. Beyond the cathedral you will see a green meadow and if you look a little longer you will see a motley wall. In front of the wall is small museum.

‘Go inside the museum to find a solution to the tower’s leaning. Tom and Tanta went inside and began to look for a clue as to where there they might find a book or paper to tell them how to fix the tower.’

After looking for a long time, they asked the man inside the museum if he knew where the message might be.

“The only place such a document might be is in the book of history. I’ll get it for you,” he replied.

The children watched as he climbed a ladder to the top shelf and took out a book with a lot of dust on it. The man blew off the dust and read the cover.

“This book is in old Latin. Do you know how to read Latin?” he asked.

Tom and Tanta looked at each other.

“Latin? No, we don’t know how to read Latin. Do you?” Tom asked.

“As a matter of fact, I do,” he replied. “What are you looking for?”

“A solution on how to stop the Leaning Tower from falling down,” Tanta answered.

He climbed down the ladder and set the book on his table.

“I don’t think I have ever read this book. I have read most of them, but not this one. Perhaps if I had, I would have been able to find the answer to stop the tower from falling down.

He began to read the book slowly and then translate it so Tom and Tanta could understand.

After a few pages, the kids began to get tired.

“This is SO boring!” Tanta said. “I think I am going to fall asleep.”

“Don’t, we have to find the solution. The book the waiter gave us says we have to,” Tom yelled at his sister.

“Wait! I think I found something,” the man said as he pointed to a picture in the book.

It was a drawing of the tower, only it was not leaning. It was perfectly straight.

“The book says to get the tower back to where it should be you must say the following

words. ‘Turrim statim facti sunt’,” the man read the words in the book.

“What does that mean?” Tom asked.

“It means, ‘Make the tower straight’,” he told them.

“You mean all we have to do is say those words and then the Leaning Tower will be straight again?” asked Tanta.

“That is what the books says. I think you should try it. Then our tower will be straight and safe again,” the old man answered her.

“Thank you. We appreciate your help. Now we can do what the book told us to do,” Tom said and then they left the museum to run to the tower.

“Where are you going?” asked their dad.

“We have to fix the tower!” yelled Tanta.

They ran to the tower as fast as they could. When they got there, many people were taking pictures and reading about the tower and its history.

Tom spoke up, “Turrim statim facti stunt!”

Nothing happened.

“What do you think went wrong?” he asked Tanta.

“Maybe we should say it together,” she suggested. “The book says we both have to fix the tower, right?”

“I guess so. Let’s try it together,” Tom responded.

So, together, at the same time they said, “Turrim statim facti stunt!”

Suddenly the tower began to move. It moved until it was straight up and down. They had fixed the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

The people who were there began to get angry.

“What happened? Why is the tower straight? It’s not leaning anymore. Why would I want to come a see a tower that looks like this?” the people were saying.

“Oops, maybe we made a mistake,” Tom thought out loud.

Their parents came and saw what they had done.

“You have ruined the tower. No one will want to come here anymore. Why did you do

this?” their mother was upset.

The two children were sad.

“We did what the book that the waiter gave to us to do. We thought we were doing a good thing. Now we see it wasn’t a good thing. People are really angry,” Tom said to his parents.

“We had better go now before someone realizes it was you who fixed the tower,” their dad said as he took Tanta’s hand and headed for the car. “They may want to hurt you.”

The trip back to the hotel seemed to take a long time. Both children fell asleep.

When Tom woke up, he was in the room and the book the waiter had given him was in his lap. He looked over at Tanta and she was sleeping in her chair. He looked at the book and he could not understand the words.

He woke up Tanta and asked if they had gone to the Leaning Tower of Pisa and she said, “No, we haven’t. You should know that. We are going there tomorrow, aren’t we?”

Tom went to his parent’s room, and they were still asleep. He woke them up to ask them what had happened. Of course, they didn’t know what he was talking about.

It turned out that Tom had had a dream and that the Leaning Tower of Pisa was not fixed after all.

**The End**