

MURDER IN THE SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES

On November 2nd, at 3:35 PM, a French teacher found a male corpse lying face down on the stairs in the main hall. It was Mauro, the Italian teacher. Immediately after that, the caretaker called 112 and, in a matter of minutes, the police arrived.

The forensic surgeon declared the cause of death to be food poisoning and estimated the time of death between 2:30 and 3:30 PM. The deceased's shirt had two tiny red stains on the front, which were thought to be blood at first, but later the police concluded they were fresh tomato sauce. In the pocket of his jacket there was a cinema ticket for the previous night's session, a cigarette packet and a lighter.

The police went on to question everybody who was at the School at that moment. These were their testimonies:

– **The cleaning lady** said that she had arrived at the School a little before 3 PM and she went straight to her room to change into her cleaning clothes. She remembered having seen the French teacher talking to another one behind the hall stairs, however, she did not pay attention to them because she was watching a TikTok which her son had sent her. After that, she started cleaning the rooms on the 3rd floor, as usual.

– **The caretaker**, who was reading the newspaper in his office, stopped reading when he heard the French teacher's shriek and went to the hall. He said he had arrived at 2:30 PM and gone down the hallways to check that nobody was in the School. At about 3 PM, the Italian teacher had asked him to photocopy an exam for him. Once the caretaker had finished doing the photocopying, he had gone back to reading the newspaper.

-**The School headteacher** declared that she was working in her office and, even though her door was open, she did not see or hear anything out of the ordinary. When she heard the French teacher's shriek, she went to the hall to find out what had happened and told the caretaker to call the police using the telephone inside his office and let nobody touch anything in the scene.

- **The French teacher** said that she had arrived at the School at 3:30 PM and she had found the Italian teacher's corpse in the main hall. She was holding a satchel with some books and a handbag in which there was a red lipstick, a bracelet engraved with "La più bella donna" and a restaurant card, "Trattoria Pulcinella", among other personal effects.

- **The English teacher**, crying and sobbing, said that she had arrived at the School at about 2:45 PM and that she had seen the French and Italian teachers arrive together a few minutes later. That shocked her because the previous night she and the Italian teacher had gone to the movies and he had confessed that he could not stand the French teacher. When she heard the shriek coming from the hall, she went out of her classroom to see what had happened and found the French teacher and the headteacher standing beside the deceased Italian teacher.

- **An Italian student** declared that he had come early to the School because he had a tutorial at 3:15 PM; he was supposed to meet his teacher to go through his failed exam. He also said that he had been waiting for his teacher for 20 minutes and, since he did not turn up, he decided to go downstairs to the caretaker's office to ask about his whereabouts. When he entered the main hall, a flustered caretaker was talking on the phone, and his teacher was lying face down and there were three teachers he did not know.

After the corresponding interrogations, the police did not have any doubts on who had committed the murder. What about you? Do you know who did it?

