

ROUND ONE - The murder is announced

Round Instructions:

Where possible the cast (minus the inspector) should be present seemingly mingling normally with the rest of the guests.

The person playing Luigi Savini (the Maitre D') should be greeting all the guests as they arrive and passing them on to the three waitresses, Anna Maria Renzetti, Nadia Addario and Daniela Calasso who should show them to their seats. Benito Pallino could be cleaning glassware, or cutlery, or sweeping, or another menial kitchen related chore within the room and Cristian Baldini should be sat at a table by himself perhaps looking over his accounts, or some other financial papers seemingly ignoring the rest of the guests.

All the guests should be in a position to see the acting before the scene begins.

ROUND ONE SCRIPT

Anna Maria Renzetti should enter the kitchen (or a room you designate as the kitchen which should lead off the room where the guests are seated if you cannot gain access to the kitchen for the event).

Suddenly she backs out of the kitchen screaming very very loudly. She might want to drop a pile of "unbreakable" trays or something for additional affect. Daniela, Benito and Nadia rush over instantly – Cristian and Luigi join them at a much more sedate pace, almost as if they are used to screaming people in the restaurant.

Daniela: What is it?

Anna Maria: (Clearly anguished) It's... it's... it's.... Manuel! (She faints)

Benito: What did she say?

Daniela: She said (mimics Anna Maria's voice) "it's... it's... it's... Manuel!"

Benito: At least it wasn't another rat.

Nadia: (Hisses) Keep your voice down Benito – you know the boss doesn't like you talking about them in front of the guests.

Cristian reaches the gathered cast, with Anna Maria still unconscious on the floor. He takes a quick perfunctory look at her and then addresses the guests.

Cristian: Absolutely nothing to worry about ladies and gentlemen. Anna Maria has always been one of our more emotional staff. I am sure

everything is all right; we'll look after her while you carry on with your meals.

Cristian begins to waft a handkerchief over Anna Maria's face to try and revive her. Luigi should have reached the gathered cast by now.

Cristian: (To Daniela) What did she say again?

Daniela: She said (again mimics Anna Maria's voice) "it's... it's... it's... Manuel!"

Luigi: I wonder what he's done now! I always said his practical jokes would cause a problem one day.

Cristian: Luigi – you go and find out what all this is about – I don't want to risk another... sensitive person.

Luigi enters kitchen and then backs out, hand clasped over his mouth in shock.

Luigi: Mama Mia!

He stumbles backwards and Benito thrusts a chair underneath him just in time to catch him from falling.

Benito: I take it it isn't the rats then?

Daniela: (Hisses) Benito!

Luigi wipes his brow as if trying to pull himself together, Nadia walks over to him and puts her arm around his shoulders.

Nadia: (Caringly) Luigi? Are you all right?

Luigi: I think – I think I – (holds hanky to mouth and runs out of room towards toilets as if about to throw up. The cast watch him leave.)

Cristian: Well if it isn't the rats – what in Da Vinci's name is it? Wait here everyone.

Cristian walks into the kitchen and swiftly exits. He looks shocked and leans on a chair for support. The other cast members watch him as he puts his hand to his mouth, looks ready to vomit and then pulls himself together.

Cristian: Benito – seal off the kitchen. No one is to go in. I need to make a call.

Daniela: What is it boss?

Nadia: What's the matter?

Cristian: It's Manuel.

Nadia: Manuel?

Cristian: He's dead!

The remaining cast look shocked.

END OF SCENE 1

(Make sure Nadia or Daniela help up Anna Maria and escort her away from the room at the end.)