

Italian Life

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Slovak Cannibal's Possible Italian Victims – Thirty Missing Women Profiled

Italian investigators have requested Slovak police to forward biological evidence and tests on remains found at Matej Curko's home

MILAN – About thirty Italian women who disappeared between January 2009 and May 2011 fit the profile – age 25 to 28; no body found – of Slovak cannibal Matej Curko's consenting victims. The news was released by police sources currently working on the case following reports from Interpol. Operational unit officers and forensic experts face a far from easy task given the nature of the offence and how little they have to go on for the time being. A possible Italian victim emerged from email correspondence between Curko, who died in a firefight with the Slovak police force on 12 May, and Swiss-born Markus Dubach, a consenting victim who changed his mind at the last moment. But the email messages give only the victim's nationality – Italian – and age. This explains why investigators have cast their net wide to include thirty crimes and unsolved cases over the period when Curko appears to have been active. Forensic experts, on the back foot after recent errors in the Meredith Kercher case, want to be absolutely certain before making any connections with the cannibal murders.

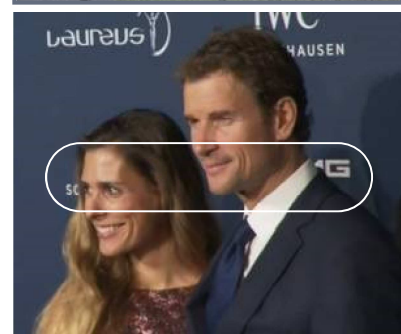
FRIDGE OF HORRORS – In reality several cases, and one in particular, appear to be more promising. Italian police officers have already asked their Slovak colleagues for biological evidence and tests on items reported to have been found in Curko's "fridge of horrors" as the cannibal killer not only stored information on his computer but kept human body parts filed away in his fridge. Now scientists want to obtain DNA test results and compare them with samples from relatives of the missing women. Investigators in Slovakia seem to have found other bodies, or parts of other bodies, as well as those of Lucia Uchnarova and Elena Gudjakova, the Slovakian women who disappeared in 2010.

INTERNET – The other trail being followed up is the one left by Curko on the internet, where the computer technician could be contacted by victims at his confidential email address, kanibm@volny.cz. The nickname kanibm (Cannibal Matej) leaves little to the imagination. So far, the search has uncovered Curko's two local victims but information is only stored by the provider for a limited period of time so evidence of contacts made and crimes committed before 2009 may already have been deleted. Nevertheless, further evidence or leads could emerge from the missing women's email correspondence. The victims' movements are also under investigation. To date, all the individuals definitely involved have been in Slovakia. Curko also arranged his final meeting with Switzerland-based Markus Dubach (who had a Slovakian email address at the same provider as kanibm) for 10 May in the Kysak forest, the area where the killer lived and worked. But instead of Dubach, Curko found a police officer, who shot him five times despite himself being wounded. Investigators also found in the woods what appeared to be a ceremonial altar, where Curko probably killed his victims before removing body parts to be cooked and eaten (there are photographs) and hiding the remains. It is unlikely that Matej Curko ever visited Italy.

Massimo Sideri

02 agosto 2011

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