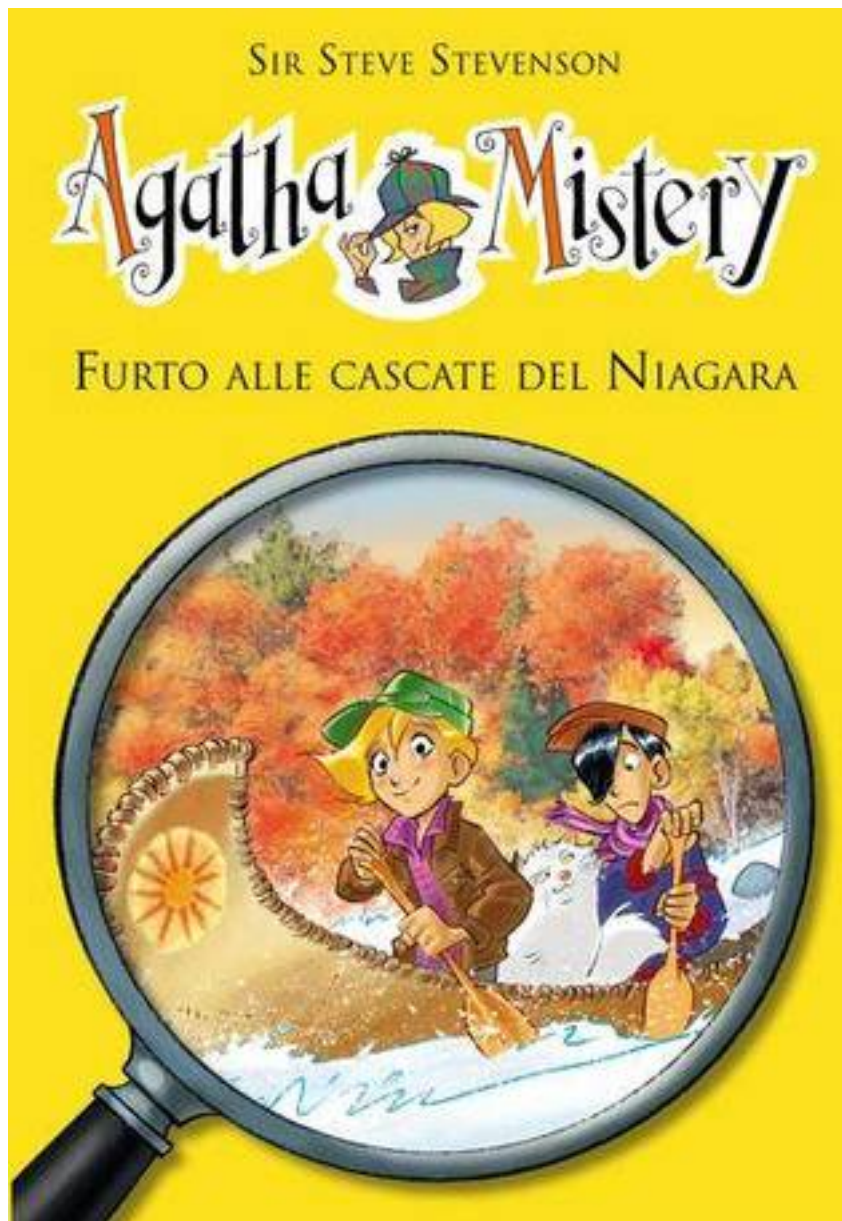




Books. Furto alle cascate del Niagara

Traci Andrihetti (December 04, 2015)



An International Children's Mystery Series from Bologna



Mario Pasqualotto (Bologna) is a psycholinguist, editor, translator, and author. To date, he has written the young adult novel [L'estate delle falene](#) [2] (The Summer of the Moths) (Einaudi Ragazzi, 2011) under his own name and two successful children's series under the pen name Sir Steve Stevenson (De Agostini): **La Scuola dei Pirati** (A School for Pirates), action-adventure books featuring the Sea Scouts; and the **Agatha** Mystery series (in English translation, "Agatha: Girl of Mystery") featuring Agatha Mystery, a vivacious twelve-year-old with a photographic memory who travels the world solving mysteries with her spy cousin Larry Mystery, her faithful butler, Mr. Kent, and her cat, Watson.

In [Furto alle cascate del Niagara](#) [3] (Theft at Niagara Falls), Agatha and her crew travel to the Overlook Hotel after famed opera singer Helga Hoffmans's jewels are stolen from a safe in her suite. The case takes them on an adventurous hunt through the dense forests around the Falls for Ratmusqué, Canada's most notorious thief.

Furto alla cascate del Niagara is a fun read, both in terms of the story and the language. Perhaps because of his background in psycholinguistics, Pasqualotto writes in a neostandard Italian that is colorful and quite creative, as evidenced by the excerpts below.

BORROWINGS

detective Eye (Ital. **detective** or **investigatore privato**; **private eye**)

Larry: Studente pasticcone della prestigiosa scuola per detective Eye.

(Larry: Bungling student of the prestigious school for private eyes.)

Ratmusqué (from the French **rat musqué**; Ital. **topo muschiato**; Eng. **muskrat**)

Obiettivo: Scovare nelle misteriose e fitte foreste canadesi un ladro astuto e abilissimo, il famigerato Ratmusqué.

(Objective: Flush an astute and extremely clever thief, the notorious Ratmusqué, from the mysterious and thick Canadian forests.)

NEOSTANDARD ITALIAN

acciambellato (**curled up**; from Ital. **ciambella**; Eng. **ring-shaped cake** or **doughnut**)

Agatha salutò Watson, acciambellato nel suo trasportino, poi accese la torcia.

(Agatha greeted Watson, curled up in his carrier, then she turned on the flashlight.)

sgattaiolare (**to slip away**; from Ital. **gatto**; Eng. **cat**)

"Per ora abbiamo solo indizi ipotetici, perché le telecamere esterne non hanno ripreso nessuno che fuggiva dall'albergo durante il concerto," spiegò la ragazza. "Come ha fatto il nostro uomo a sgattaiolare fuori?"

(For now we've only got hypothetical clues, because the security cameras didn't capture anyone fleeing from the hotel during the concert," the girl explained. "How was our man able to slip away?")

AUGMENTATIVE & DIMINUTIVE



bestione (Ital. **bestia + -one**; Eng. literally, **big beast**, i.e., **brute**)

Mr Kent fece scrocchiare minacciosamente le nocche, subito imitato dal bestione della sorveglianza.

(Mr. Kent cracked his knuckles threateningly, immediately imitated by the security brute.)

ladruncolo (Ital. **ladro + -uncolo**; Eng. **lesser thief**, i.e., **petty thief**)

“Ma questi due ladruncoli da strapazzo non potevano certo saperlo, per loro sfortuna!”

(“But these two third-rate petty thieves certainly couldn’t have known that, unluckily for them!”)

CLOTHING

farfallino (Ital. **farfalla + -ino**; Eng. literally, **little butterfly**; figuratively, **bowtie**)

smoking (borrowed from Eng. **smoking jacket** but in the American context refers to a **tuxedo**)

Silenzioso come un’ombra, Mr Kent si aggiustò il farfallino dello smoking e si diresse alla centralina elettrica.

(As silent as a shadow, Mr. Kent adjusted the bowtie of his tuxedo and headed for the electrical box.)

jeans a zampa di elefante (Eng. **elephant paw jeans**, i.e., **bell-bottom jeans**)

Indossava un paio di jeans a zampa di elefante e una camicetta chiara.

(She was wearing a pair of bell-bottom jeans and a light shirt.)

COMPOUND WORDS

rubacuori (Ital. **rubare + cuori**; Eng. literally, **he steals hearts**, i.e., **heartbreaker**)

“Che rubacuori!” ironizzò Larry, incontenibile. “Mi dispiace, ti ricordo che la tua... ehm... amica ha preso l’aereo all’alba per la prossima tappa del suo tour. Ce l’aveva detto in albergo...”

(“What a heartbreaker!” joked Larry, irrepressible. “I’m sorry, I remember that your...um...friend was going to catch a flight at dawn for the next stop on her tour. She told us that at the hotel...”)

spaccatimpani (Ital. **spacca + timpani**; Eng. literally, **it splits eardrums**, i.e., **ear-splitting**)

Mentre partiva l’autoscatto, l’EyeNet emise un trillo spaccatimpani.

(While the self-timer was going off, the EyeNet device emitted an ear-splitting squeal.)

SOUND EFFECTS

gnam gnam (Eng. **nom nom**)

“Questo incarico... gnam gnam... presenta tantissime stranezze!” Larry inghiottì l’ultima tartina rimasta nel piatto, bevve un sorso di limonata e consegnò alla hostess il vassoio della cena.

(“This assignment...nom nom...has a lot of strange twists!” Larry swallowed the last canapé on the plate, drank a sip of lemon soda, and gave the flight attendant his dinner tray.)

opsss (Eng. **oops**)

Larry diede un leggero colpo di tosse. “Ricordati, cara cugina, che la nostra è una missione segretissima...”



“Opsss... hai ragione!” sospirò Scarlett.

(Larry gave a slight cough. “Remember, dear cousin, that ours is an extremely secret mission...”

“Oops... you’re right!” Scarlett sighed.)

EXPRESSIONS

dare nell’occhio (Eng. literally, **to give in the eye**; figuratively, **to attract attention**)

Prima regola: Non dare mai nell’occhio.

(First rule: Never attract attention.)

un granchio colossale (Eng. literally, **a colossal crab**; figuratively, **a colossal blunder**)

Quando finalmente capì la verità, si accarezzò il naso e passò in rassegna i volti di tutti i presenti. Avevano preso un granchio colossale!

(When she finally figured out the truth, she rubbed her nose and scrutinized the faces of all those present. They’d made a colossal blunder!)

EXCLAMATIONS

diamine (Eng. **good heavens**)

“Chi ti ha dato il permesso di... di... oh, diamine!”

(“Who gave you permission to... to... Oh, good heavens!”)

Per la barba di Abramo Lincoln! (Eng. literally, **For the beard of Abraham Lincoln**; figuratively, **For the love of Abraham Lincoln!**)

“Per la barba di Abramo Lincoln!” esclamò disgustata. “Non ho mai sentito una puzza più terribile!”

(“For the love of Abraham Lincoln!” she exclaimed, disgusted. “I’ve never smelled anything so terrible.”)

Pasqualotto’s books are written for children ages 7 and up, but they’re also terrific texts for adults learning Italian. Both of his series are so popular that they’re available in 22 countries and counting, and the Agatha mysteries were recently featured in the Italian newspapers Corriere della Sera and La Gazzetta dello Sport, as advertised in this cute [commercial](#) [4].

For more information about Pasqualotto, a.k.a. Stevenson, visit his [author page](#) [5] on the Dreamfarm agency website.

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[4] <https://vimeo.com/134190177>

[5] http://www.dreamfarm.it/eng/autori_illustratori/dettaglio_autore_illustratore.asp?id_autore=14&id_tipo_autore=1&nome=Sir++Steve+Stevenson+%28Mario+Pasqualotto%29