

The Triangle Master's Life

By

Swarali A.

You might have heard of Pythagoras of Samos, one of the greatest contributors of math. He was the founder of the Pythagorean Theorem which states that the sum of the squares of the two sides, of the triangle, is equal of the square of the hypotenuse. The story I am about to tell you has nothing to do with his theorem, triangles, or math. It is a tale of murder, escape, and revenge. It is a tale about how one man's belief led to his downfall.

Pythagoras worshipped whole numbers and simple fractions but despised irrational numbers. When one of his disciples found the answer to a problem that couldn't be expressed as a whole number or simple fraction, Pythagoras became upset and made all his disciples keep that solution a secret. Legend has it that Pythagoras beheaded one of his disciples when he found another "evil" number solution to a problem. This information has been passed down from generation to generation, which means it got morphed and changed through the years, making it unreliable. I will narrate true events that led to Pythagoras's mysterious disappearance from Greece and ultimately his murder.

When one of Pythagoras's disciples found yet another solution to a problem that did not fall in place with Pythagoras's belief system, Pythagoras had enough. He was done with people using his theorem to find evil number solutions for problems. The anger erupted out of Pythagoras like a volcano and he ordered the killing of everyone associated with his theorem and triangles, whether they were top ministers or ordinary disciples. Contrary to the legend, Pythagoras murdered not one but 15 people.

Meanwhile, Edna, the wife of a top minister who worked under Pythagoras in the Department of Triangles, unexpectedly heard a knock at the door. Ike, her husband, is not expected until Tuesday from his trip. I wonder who it could be? pondered Edna. Oh, Alice! How are you? It has been so long. Apollo has been killed, I just got word from the academy, said Alice. Apollo and Ike are ministers in the Department of Triangles. Edna was aghast hearing the news and confided in Alice about the safety of her husband. It is believed Pythagoras planned to execute all his triangle ministers who worked against his beliefs. Edna, the man is a monster, how will I cope with this tragedy? Alice wailed. Edna was furious. Murdering people who are not adhering to Pythagoras's belief is vicious, Edna reasoned.

Alice, I promise, we will take revenge for the gruesome murder of our husbands. But you must follow my directions or else the plan I have devised could fail, said Edna. Okay, I trust you but this must avenge our husbands' deaths, Alice said. She trusted Edna, after all they were best friends. After they comforted each other, Alice left for her house.

Pythagoras ran. He ran like the wind. It's too risky for him to stay in Greece. The ministers knew what he did. It won't be long before they plot something against him, Pythagoras concluded. He made into Rome late at night and checked into a hotel. Once safely in the bathroom of his hotel room, Pythagoras shaved his hair as well as his beard to avoid detection by the Greek authorities.

The next morning, Pythagoras set out for the cinema. In Pythagoras's opinion, the best way to blend into a crowd was to mingle with them and act like a commoner. Alice and Edna heard the latest gossip that a new stranger came to town. "P," he called himself. They suspected he was Pythagoras. They had already planned the murder and since the target was exactly where he needed to be, they were ready to put the plan into action. They invited "P" to their house for a cup of tea. Pythagoras took this as a sign of hospitality and accepted their invitation. Little did he know what was in store for him.

So, P, how long have you been in town? questioned Edna. Oh, just a day or so, answered P. What do you do for a living? asked Alice. I am a ma..., hesitated P. Mathematician? Edna asked. We don't have many around here, Edna said. I meant to say a mailman, finished Pythagoras. The girls exchanged glances. They could easily see through P's lies. Let's go bring the tea Alice, said Edna. I'm sure it's done by now, said Alice and followed Edna into the kitchen.

Pythagoras wondered whether the women were Apollo and Ike's wives. But, how could they have known who he was? Besides they wouldn't invite him for tea if they knew he assassinated their husbands, P thought. He convinced himself that they couldn't be people he had seen before.

Don't forget the ricin, we want to kill him, Edna reminded Alice. When Edna served tea, Pythagoras relished the cardamom flavor and said it brought out the best in the tea. Minutes later, he was dead. Edna and Alice covered up the crime. They stuck the bottle of ricin in P's pocket. Edna and Alice called the police and informed that while Pythagoras was having tea, they were preparing snacks in the kitchen and all of a sudden they heard a loud thud and found P dead in the living room. Police recorded Alice and Edna's statements and investigated the cause of death. Police were convinced that P committed suicide and closed the case. Alice and Edna sighed in relief and felt they got justice for their husbands' murder.