

The Rogues Gallery part 1: 4 Recurring creepers you may encounter in Madrid

The [Auxiliares de Conversacion en Madrid](#) group on facebook is a hub where the 10,000+ (of past, present and future) members of the expatriate community congregate online to share advice, refer clients to one another, or collaborate on creative projects. It's not uncommon to see the occasional rant about the failings of Spanish bureaucracy, nor is it uncommon to read a thread of comments stemming from ruckus caused by provocative trolls. Community members can recommend establishments that they hold dear, or warn each other about the programs, academies and individuals that they've deemed exploitative and untrustworthy. Group members have shared their experiences with some of Madrid's more noticeably **curious characters**.

Below is information that I have gathered about these usual Madrid suspects.

1) The Birthday Boy

The modus operandi of the Birthday Boy is neither creative nor is it subtle. This **shadowy figure** prowls tusclasesparticulares.com in search of English and Italian lessons. Upon contacting female teachers he insists on having the class at night and on his birthday after confiding in them that he is a new arrival to Madrid and is responsible for taking care of his sick father. The **Birthday Boy** claims to be lonely as he has no friends to celebrate his birthday with. He calls the women he preys on at unseemly hours, fixated on arranging the class at the rendezvous point of the *Estatua del*

Oso y Madroño in Sol. **Countless women have come forward on the Auxiliares group to warn our community about his unnerving behavior.** What remains baffling to me is that the Birthday Boy continues to use the same story and schtick despite it being what makes him immediately recognizable. One can only speculate about his motivations and backstory. Perhaps he truly is cripplingly lonely, has a sick father, and was magically frozen in time to believe that each day is the anniversary of his birth.

2) Marta the blotchy-faced bandit



Marta, a **parasitic criminal** who can be identified by a blotchy

mark on her face, responds to apartment listings on idealista in order to subtly **steal** whatever she can upon the viewing. She has been active for years and clearly makes a living this way. **This woman has been reported to the police** countless times and is apparently well known to them as a career criminal. Upon hearing her description I initially theorized that the blotch pattern that is the defining feature of her face was applied with stage make-up, in order to make it harder for the authorities to identify her. I gave her too much credit, my theory was disproven when one of her victims encountered her in the street months after the crime, and unless she was coming directly from a job, her face is indeed her face. Whether the pattern is a birthmark or battle scar is yet to be revealed. It appalls me that she continues to elude capture despite being both easily recognizable and a known threat. A member of our community, who is the real MVP, managed to take her picture when she entered his home upon realizing who she was. If she attempts to enter your home under the guise of a flat-viewing my advice is to slam the door in her face and tell her “ya sé quien eres.”

3) The Note Man



The Note Man is a **quirky** absurdity. He operates out of **Malasaña**, but has been sighted in all parts of the city. He can be recognized by his Dumbledoresque beard and tattered clothing. He is known to approach people and present them with hand-written notes. Although I have never engaged him myself I have observed him perform his gimmick from a distance in **Plaza dos de Mayo** and have taken a picture of him in action. My friends Diana and Sean once wandered into the Note Man's path and he shadily handed them a menacing note that said "**DON'T RUN**". His origins and motivations are an enigma. It is unknown if he simply prefers nonverbal communication or if he is incapable of speech. **Approach with caution.**

4) La Cabra de Plaza Mayor



The “goat” of Plaza Mayor startled me when I first visited Madrid as a tourist in 2008. I was not surprised to see that it remained active when I returned in 2012. I can’t imagine **Plaza Mayor** without this shiny-bodied, wooden-faced, goat creature. The cabra is a **parasite** that envelopes a human host. It screeches to attract attention to itself in the hopes that passersby will give it their loose change . What does this goat-human creature spend its money on? What becomes of its host? Does it produce shiny cheese? How does it reproduce? These valid questions to be answered upon further research.

Any other people to beware of in Madrid?