



This series narrates of real events in the notarial practice.

PART 1. The third party's money.

After a quite chaotic paralegal left the office to a new job, there was a small box on his desk containing several pieces of paper. Nobody in the office knew what was in it. I got the task to turn the box and find out what action was needed.

There were a lot of loose notes in the box. I was able to locate some of the files where these notes belonged. I sent the others to the vertical archive. In the box there was also a kind of financial scheme of a real estate file.

It appeared that already about three years quite an amount of money was still in the third party's account! That's strange! After some investigation I discovered that the invoice of the real estate broker of the buyer was calculated in the notarial settlement. This means that the buyer paid the broker's invoice through the third party's account of the civil law notary. The amount that was still on the third party's account was exactly the same. This could mean that the broker's invoice was not paid at all. That's strange. In the file I could not find any reminder from the broker.

Fortunately the broker is still in charge, so I called this broker to find out what happened. Well, that's strange! The broker said the invoice was properly paid. By the buyer and not by the notary's office. It means the buyer paid the broker's invoice twice, so I concluded the amount still resting on the third party's amount was the buyer's money. This is what we call a classic "corps in the cupboard".

Right. Stay cool. Put on my diplomatic hat and dial the number. In the most kind and pleasant way I tell the man on the phone what happened. What? Was the client angry? No, not at all. He was happy and said: "Gosh, that is really great! I have just booked a vacation to Indonesia, and now I have some extra money to spend there!"

Sometimes a corps in the cupboard is funny!