

Honor Amongst Thieves

By: Lady Jae

The sun was setting, inviting the shadows of the night on to the cold Boston streets. The streetlights blinked to life giving them the first signal. Rio tapped his foot. His hands trembled as he opened a fresh pack of cigarettes. His partner, Mitch, rocked back and forth, biting his bottom lip with his eyes closed. Blueprints of the Gardner museum laid across the deteriorating dashboard of the worn, pick-up truck. Stale cigarettes littered the floor and un-managed dental hygiene lingered in the dry air between them. The entrance of the museum was dark. But two security officers lurked inside, threatening to foil their plan.

“Eleven minutes,” said Rio. He took a deep breath as his hands combed through his pinch of salt and pepper beard.

“Let a couple more cars go by before we move. The traffic is still busy,” Mitch said. He glanced at his best friend and partner and laughed.

“What’s so funny?”

“You, in this cop get up. You look foolish,” said Mitch. He adjusted the tie on his own costume and tilted his hat back.

“So, imagine how dumb you look then,” said Rio, as he lights a cigarette.

“As long as we don’t look dumb after this move, I don’t care how dumb I look now. I can’t believe you have me going into a museum when there is a bank right down the street,” Mitch said.

Rio adjusted his glasses and looked at Mitch in confusion.

“With everything in that museum, we can buy a bank. Trust me, Mitch, I have never led you wrong before.”

“There was that one time with Stephanie. She was crazy as hell and you sent me into the fire to be burned.”

“You just won’t let that go, huh?”

“You weren’t the one that almost died by the hands of the wild woman with the baseball bat. My knee still aches every snowfall.”

They shared a laugh as another car passed, cutting their fun short. Rio cleared his throat then picked up the blueprint. He pointed the cigarette at the three places he circled from his first visit.

“This is where we are going to put the guards after we tie them up. Make sure you get the Rembrandt from here, Mitch. I’ll be in the Dutch room getting as much as I can carry. Be careful. Any damages can cost us money.”

“Tie them up, then get the Rembrandt. I got that part. But what if they overpower us?” Mitch asked.

“They won’t because I have this just in case.” Rio opened the glove compartment revealing a fully loaded revolver.

Mitch's palms sweat. Murder wasn't an alternative option, but he wasn't opposed to it either.

"Is that going to be necessary?"

"Probably not, but I don't want to take any chances. Mitch, this heist can and will change our lives. Just think about it. The last grand heist, all or nothing. The one to change history, well at least our history. Just wait, in a day we'll be on the beach soaking it up and you will thank me," Rio said.

"I hear you, Rio, damn sure wouldn't mind seeing a beach. My knee has been aching you know."

Rio shook his head and dropped his cigarette in the overfilled ashtray. The ember burning old butts as it faded out. He glanced at his watch. Five minutes since the last car passed. He closed his eyes steadying his nerves.

Mitch watched him, waiting for Rio to speak. Waiting for the next move. He gripped the baton to his palm. His nerves calmed themselves as he stared, as if he could channel his partner's energy.

Rio opened his eyes and locked eyes with Mitch. "It's time."

Mitch nodded and pulled his hat lower on his brow.

"Let me talk to the guards. People with glasses are more believable."

"Who the hell told you that malarkey?" Mitch asked.

"Nobody. I came up with that myself."

“And that is exactly where you should keep it. To yourself. Don’t repeat that to nobody else after tonight. Promise?” Mitch asked. He held his hand out to Rio as his other hand rested on the door handle.

Rio laughed then shook his hand. “I promise. Now let’s go get rich.”

Rio tucked the revolver in the small of his back then followed Mitch out the car. They ran across the vacant street up to the glass-plated museum doors. Golden specks in the massive door handles glittered in the streetlights. Mitch used the baton and hit the glass, careful not to leave a print. A tall, slender man approached the door shining his flashlight, with a shorter man right behind him. Mitch shifted his weight and sucked his tongue against his teeth.

“Easy man,” Rio said.

The door lock clicked and Rio side-eyed and smiled at Mitch.

“Officers, can I help you?”

“Um, yes we had a call of a noise disturbance, so we came to make sure everything was okay,” Rio said.

“That’s weird. We never called,” said the tall guard. He glanced back at the shorter guard who just shrugged.

“Do you mind if we look around to be sure?” Rio asked.

“I don’t see the harm,” said the tall guard.

The guard held the door wider, and Rio and Mitch stepped inside. Rio struck the tall guard across the head and the guard's body slumped to the floor. Mitch laughed and swung his baton knocking the other guard out cold.

Sirens blared in the distance as Rio and Mitch, loaded up the truck. They took off into the night laughing, having completed the greatest heist.