

The Patience Heist

Alex stepped onto the showroom floor, dressed in a Boston PD uniform, his eyes drawn to the beautiful paintings adorning the art gallery walls. Suddenly, he heard heavy breathing and feet shuffling from the other side of the door. Without hesitation, he pulled a Glock 19 from his holster and pointed it at the door.

“Everyone was tied up and gagged, and now we have the whole place to ourselves,” Peter said.

Alex exhaled loudly with relief.

“Announce yourself next time, and you were about to get shot,” Alex said as he relaxed and put the gun back in the holster.

“How about this being the last time I do a heist with you? I am not as young as I used to be anymore,” Peter remarked.

“Or as thin,” Alex chuckled as he patted Peter on his tummy.

“Never mind that. Is this the room with the priceless painting?” Peter scoffed.

“Yes, it’s that Rembrandt right there,” Alex said, pointing to the heavily guarded painting in the middle of the room.

“Hold up, Alex. Anything that touches the center of the floor where the painting sits will set off the silent and loud alarms, and it’s Statesville for us.”

“WHAT? Do you mean to tell me you got me halfway to the finish line, and we must turn around because the floor is booby-trapped?” Peter said frustratedly.

“Patience, Peter. Electronics are the answer,” Alex said as he pulled a notebook and a remote keypad out of his pocket. “This notebook is our passport to paradise.”

“I think I will put my future in some rope,” Peter said as he pulled a twisted polypropylene manila rope from his book bag.

Peter tied one end around the light lantern in the gallery near the painting and the other around the stair rail leading to the main floor. Alex looked on in amazement as Peter jumped up, grabbed the rope, and slid across it with his fat body. Alex looked at the notebook and punched in a code to deactivate the floor alarm; then, he stood before a tired and out-of-breath Peter.

“When the man gives us all the codes, it’s silly not to use it,” Alex chuckled.

Peter jumped down and rolled his eyes. He reached into his bookbag, pulled out a can of laser beam visualizer spray, and sprayed it over the lasers until they became visible.

“You had to bring the whole kit, didn’t you?” Alex said sarcastically.

“I’m just checking for the laser beams,” Peter explained.

“It’s there,” Alex said as he punched a few more numbers on the keypad, and the laser beams disappeared. “And now it isn’t.”

Peter and Alex approached the painting and removed the plastic casing surrounding the Rembrandt.

“A glorious work of art, huh?” Peter said in amazement.

“One could spend a lifetime without setting their eyes on a beauty like this, and now we will be some of the richest men in all of Boston once we sell it on the black web,” Alex said.

Peter attempted to grab the frame in which the painting was sitting, and Alex stopped him again.

“Ah, patience, Peter! The frame is the trap. One more set of numbers.”

Alex studied the last set of numbers in the notepad. Confused by what he read in the notepad, Alex sucked his teeth and said, “Why can’t a man write a zero like a zero? Or is it a nine?”

Peter was angry and pulled a pocket knife out of his book bag.

“I can’t take a chance. I don’t trust anybody. I am glad I came prepared. The old ways are still the best.”

“Be careful, Peter; if you touch the frame, it’s over for us.” Nervous and sweating profusely, Peter put the knife blade on the edge of the painting and slowly sliced it into the painting like a slice of cake.

“Easy,” Alex said as he checked his phone alarm. “We have six minutes before the guard shift changes, and they see the people gagged and bound, so hurry up.”

“Well, do you want me to hurry, or do you want me to take it easy? I can’t do both,” Peter grumbled as he continued to slice the right side of the painting, trying not to damage it any further.

Suddenly, Alex’s phone alarm clock buzzed and startled them both. Peter put his hands over his heart and panted as if he was having a heart attack.

“I thought you shut that thing off?” Peter shouted.

Alex shut off the alarm and reassured Peter, “Patience, patience. You’ve got this.”

Peter, panting, said, "You tell that to the guard. He'll be here in two minutes."

Alex, now frustrated and impatient, grabbed Peter's pocketknife.

"Give me that!" And nervously cut into the bottom edge of the painting, trying not to harm Rembrandt.

To relieve the intensity in the room, Alex asked, "What did you do with the Three Mounted Jockeys, Vermeer, and the oil-on-wood Flinck?"

"Those ugly ass paintings that look like eight-year-olds painted them blindfolded? I loaded them up in the van already," Peter said as he chuckled.

Sweat poured down Alex's face as the clock ran down, and they had only fifty-five seconds before the guard shift changed, and they would be caught.

Peter, anxious, said, "The guard is practically at the door."

"You want that painting, don't ya?" Alex said, upset.

"Yeah," Peter grabbed Alex's pocket knife and said, "Then there's only one way to get it."

He roughly cut the painting out of its frame and grabbed the painting. Peter's elbow accidentally touched the frame, causing the alarm to blare. Suddenly, the room's doors, where the painting was on display, slammed shut. The only way out was the door they had left open to the gallery's basement for a quick escape. Alex and Peter, in a panic, ran down the basement stairs as they heard the commotion of the security guards trying to get into the Rembrandt room. The van peeled off down the alleyway, and Alex and Peter attempted to catch their breath when they heard,

“So, how did it go?” the innocent-looking van driver said. Alex and Peter looked at the driver and rolled their eyes.