

THE GALLERY

Written by

Brian Cranford

FADE IN:

EXT. ART GALLERY - NIGHT

People are seen walking into a upscale Manhattan art gallery entrance. Dressed in designer suits and evening wear. Cars passing by and general chatter can be heard.

INT. ART GALLERY - CONTINUOUS

DEVON, a slender tall man with dark hair and a well maintained five-o-clock shadow has just entered the gallery and checked his over-jacket. He is shaking hands and mingling with others. DEVON looks up and sees JENNIFER, a beautiful woman in a white gown. She notices DEVON and a large smile crosses her face and she walks towards him.

JENNIFER

Devon, I'm so glad you could make it!

DEVON leans in and kisses her on the cheek.

DEVON

Jennifer, you look lovely as always, and you know I couldn't miss your birthday party. This is wonderful, but why did you book it here?

JENNIFER

You know these people Devon, millions of dollars hanging on the wall brings out the egos in everyone.

DEVON

(laughing)

I suppose you're right.

ETHAN, a slender man in his late forties dressed as a waiter approaches them.

ETHAN

Champagne mam?

DEVON turns while still laughing and abruptly stops, recognizing ETHAN immediately.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Sir?

DEVON
...Thank you.

ETHAN walks away with the tray of drinks, but looks over his shoulder back at DEVON.

JENNIFER
So, how have you been, it's been almost six months since I saw you last.

DEVON still watching ETHAN walk away. Turns back to the Woman.

DEVON
Six months? Really? I was over seas for a little while, but would you excuse me for a minute?
(Laughing)
It was a long train ride over to this side of the city and they don't put restrooms on the subway.

JENNIFER
Of course, it's right by the Night Watch Rembrandt. There is a hallway that goes to them.

DEVON
Rembrandt... Ok, thanks I'll be back in less than six months this time.

JENNIFER laughs and leans in and kisses him on the cheek again.

INT. ART GALLERY - CONTINUOUS

ETHAN is standing in front of the Rembrandt hanging on the wall. DEVON approaches him from behind.

DEVON
What the hell are you doing here?

ETHAN
Henry, I could ask you the same thing.

DEVON
You aren't stealing that painting tonight if that's what you're thinking.

ETHAN

Oh Henry, I'm not stealing that painting. We are stealing that painting.

DEVON

You're out of your mind!

ETHAN opens his jacket and shows DEVON a gun.

ETHAN

It would be a shame if something happened to your friends in there. Remember last time in Belize? I know you don't like guns, but I do. I also know you're good at what you do, so, we're going to be good at what we do.

DEVON

(frustrated)

Listen Ethan, if I help you no one gets hurt?

ETHAN

That's the plan.

CUT TO:

INT. ART GALLERY - MOMENTS LATER

DEVON (V.O.)

First we need a way to get the painting out of the case without setting off the alarm. I'm going to have to cut it, but it can always be re-stretched.

CUT TO:

INT. ART GALLERY GIFT SHOP

ETHAN walks into the front gift shop and picks up a replica painting and a carrying tube.

DEVON (V.O.)

Then we need a way to take it out of the building. There are only a couple of exits to the gallery.

CUT TO:

EXT. ART GALLERY FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Front door has two guards standing by the entrance.

DEVON (V.O.)
The front is already guarded and
would be the most difficult.

CUT TO:

EXT. ART GALLERY BACK ENTRANCE LOADING AREA - CONTINUOUS

DEVON (V.O.)
The back door doesn't have a guard,
but does have a crash bar that will
set off an alarm if opened.

CUT TO:

INT. ART GALLERY - CONTINUOUS

View of gallery showing DEVON walking to the painting. ETHAN
is walking over to the buffet display table.

DEVON (V.O.)
Now, I'll lift the painting from
the case.
(Frustrated slightly)
You continue to buttle or whatever
your cover is. You'll need to
create a distraction maybe knock a
plate off the table or something.
Anything that makes noise. Just
make them all look at you.

CUT TO:

INT. ART GALLERY - CONTINUOUS

ETHAN walks over to the table bumps a tray of champagne
glasses off the table.

DEVON (V.O.)
So now that we have this
distraction they'll need to clean
the area and sweep it up. They'll
have to disarm the back door alarm
to get to the dumpster to throw
away the broken glass.

CUT TO:

INT. ART GALLERY - CONTINUOUS

Other staff walk over with brooms and a dust pan ETHAN start helping clean the glass up DEVON approaches and helps collect the broken glasses. They then walk towards the back door DEVON hand ethan the painting tube and opens the door for ETHAN.

DEVON (V.O.)

So we just walk out the back door.
The alarm won't matter because, hey
we are just helping clean up the
mess. Then we just walk away.

ETHAN (V.O.)

There is a reason your the best
Henry, and if this works you'll
never see me again.

DEVON (V.O.)

I'm counting on it.

CUT TO:

INT. ART GALLERY - CONTINUOUS

The plan is underway and ETHAN is about to knock the glasses off the table.

CUT TO:

INT. ART GALLERY BY THE PAINTING

DEVON is on his cellphone cutting the painting from the frame

DEVON

Thank you.

ETHAN knocks over the chaffer instead. All of the guests scream, the fuel from the chaffer lands on the floor and ignites into a small fire. DEVON sees the flame spread across the floor.

DEVON (CONT'D)

(Frustrated)

Send the fire department also.

DEVON hangs up the phone, rolls the painting up and puts it into the tube, pulls the fire alarm, then runs over to ETHAN.

DEVON (CONT'D)
I said create a distraction, not
burn the place down.

ETHAN
Did you get it!

DEVON is taking his jacket off and trying to put out the
flames.

DEVON
Yes, here, just go! I am not
letting all of this be destroyed
because you're an idiot.

ETHAN grabs the paint tube and heads to the back door.

CUT TO:

EXT. ART GALLERY BACK ENTRANCE LOADING AREA - CONTINUOUS

ETHAN slams through the back door to be greeted by two police
cars with their guns already trained on him. He stops and
holds his hands up.

OFFICER REYNOLDS
Keep your hands up!

Another officer walks over and lifts the paint tube off of
his shoulder and pats him down. The officer finds the gun as
well.

OFFICER MICHAELS
Looks like he has a gun also.

OFFICER REYNOLDS
So, robbery, arson, most likely
possession of an illegal weapon.
You are looking at serious time
buddy.

The police load him into the car and are looking at the
painting. DEVON opens the back door and walks over to the
police. DEVON is now wearing a security guard badge and
jacket from the gallery.

DEVON
Good evening officers.

ETHAN'S eyes widen, but he can't really hear the conversation.

OFFICER REYNOLDS
You the one that called this in?

DEVON

Yes sir. I noticed he seemed to be a little odd so I thought it would be nice to have the boys in blue down here in case anything happened. They don't let us guards carry anything stronger than a stun gun

(Laughs)

So let me ask you, would something like assisting in busting this guy get me into the academy?

The cops both look at each other.

OFFICER REYNOLDS

Anything helps.

(laughs)

Hell, I was a security guard before I joined myself.

ETHAN yelling muffled from the car.

ETHAN

That's the guy, he set me up!

DEVON looks over the cops shoulder.

DEVON

Man, he seems a bit crazy.

The officers both look over at the car.

OFFICER MICHAELS

I wouldn't worry to much about him, he was caught red handed with the painting, a weapon, and he tried to set the building on fire. He'll be in jail for a long time.

DEVON

Good to hear it. Well officers, if you don't mind my boss asked me to retrieve the painting so we can move it to storage until we clean everything up inside.

OFFICER MICHAELS

The painting, well its going to be submitted as evidence.

DEVON

That painting is worth millions officer.

(MORE)

DEVON (CONT'D)

My boss is already discussing this with our lawyers and they will file the formal complaint with all the necessary paperwork for prosecution. Also, I don't want to lose my job by losing this painting a second time.

OFFICER REYNOLDS

Well as long as they have the proper paperwork and the information that should be fine. Is the storage facility more secure?

DEVON

Absolutely, that thief in your car will never get his hands on this painting ever again, I can assure you of that.

ETHAN watches from the car as the officer hands DEVON the painting tube and walks away. No one can hear him screaming from the back of the police car.

ETHAN

He is stealing the painting. He is the criminal! He set me up!

CUT TO:

INT. ART GALLERY - EARLIER

ETHAN hands DEVON the paint replica and tube and ETHAN heads to the main hall.

OPERATOR

Nine-one-one what's your emergency?

DEVON

Yeah, I work over at the art gallery over here at 5th and Lexington. There is a real shady guy walking around here dressed as a butler. He keeps eyeing some of the artwork, and I can't find his name in any of the employee rosters. I was just hoping you could maybe send a couple officers down. We have a party going on here, and I don't want to see anyone get hurt if he has a gun or something. He seems a little off his rocker.

OPERATOR

Ok sir, just stay calm, if he does have a weapon we don't want him using it. Keep clear and we will send someone.

DEVON

Thank you

DEVON hears a loud crash and sees the chaffer hit the ground.

OPERATOR

Sir, would you be able to stay on the line until the police have arrived?

DEVON

(Frustrated)

Send the fire department also.

DEVON hangs up the phone

OPERATOR

Sir, Sir..

DEVON runs over to the table and fire and takes off his jacket and starts swatting the flames out.

DEVON

Yes, here, just go! I am not letting all of this be destroyed because you're an idiot.

ETHAN runs off with the painting. DEVON grabs the water container from the other chaffing dish and douses the flames out.

CUT TO:

INT. ART GALLERY COAT CHECK - CONTINUOUS

DEVON enters the coat room looking for another jacket. He turns and sees the security guard room door is open slightly.

DEVON

What have we here?

DEVON checks the camera and sees all the security guards are ushering people out the front door and sees the cops arresting ETHAN at the back entrance. DEVON grabs a security jacket and a security lanyard laying on the table.

He quickly reformats the security tape showing him taking the painting from the case to earlier and turns the recorder off. He then makes his way to the back of the gallery.

CUT TO:

EXT. ART GALLERY BACK ENTRANCE LOADING AREA - NIGHT

ETHAN sitting in the police car looks up to see DEVON standing in the door way watching as the police walk away towards their car.

ETHAN

That son of a bitch. They just handed it to him.

The police officer gets in the car.

OFFICER REYNOLDS

All right, hope you're ready for a nice cold cell.

The police car drives off as DEVON watches from the back door. ETHAN looks back and sees DEVON exit the building with the paint tube over his shoulder and DEVON looks back at the police car and gives ETHAN a nice wave of his hand goodbye.