The summer heat bore down on the city. The pavement reflecting the sun’s heat made it feel like walking on a stove top. Bill, covered in sweat, lumbered into the museum dragging his feet the whole way. His dull badge pinned against his food stained dull grey uniform shirt. His uniform pants, at least a size to big, dragged over his shoes collecting samples from everywhere he had walked.

“You’re late”, said the frail old lady with the Coke bottle glasses behind the front desk.

“Fire me”, Bill replied.

Bill continued past her toward the ancient time clock. He pulled his timecard from the shelf and slid it into the clock. The time clock’s stamp bit down hard on the card like a starving dog on a piece of raw meat.

Bill began his tour of the museum in the lobby. The dimmed lighting played tricks on his eyes, shadows appeared as monsters cast upon the walls. He entered the bathroom, kicking the stall utilizing a crane technique that would make Mister Miyagi proud.

Bill walked out of the bathroom whistling as if he were one of the seven dwarves headed to the diamond mine. As he turned the corner, the first man in black appeared and electrical taped Bill’s mouth shut. “Nothing personal, Mate. We just need you out of our way for a bit” the man in black whispered.

The man in black continued to wrap Bill’s head in electrical tape, leaving only his mouth uncovered. The second man, wearing all grey, was standing beside his partner in black. “Keep your mask on in case the cameras are on” the man in grey stated.

They shoved Bill into a chair and taped his body to it. Bill gave up on any struggling that he had been doing as it was a lost cause.

“Stick to the plan, only take what we discussed, don’t get greedy” said the man in grey.

The masked men moved from room to room as if they had done this a million times before. They knew what they were here for and where to get it, each man armed with a box cutter and a flashlight.

“How hard would it be to move a stolen piece of art?” the man in black said to himself. “I could use the extra money and by the time anyone finds out I will be long gone” he continued.

The man in grey arrived at the first painting on his list and quickly cut it out of the frame. He couldn’t roll it because of its age and shape. “You, my friend, are my ticket to paradise” he said to the painting.

After collecting multiple paintings, the criminals met back where they had incapacitated Bill. “What time is our pickup arriving, Jesse?” the man in black questioned.

“Why did you have to go and do that!” shouted the man in grey. “We

never use real names, you know that!” he exclaimed.

With that he reached into his jacket and pulled out a handgun. The man in grey fired two shots into Bill’s head. His body jerked back and forth in the chair before going limp. “This changes everything” the man in grey stated.

The man in black’s eyes widened as far as they could, he hadn’t signed on for murder. “I fucked up I admit it, but did you have to kill him? I didn’t sign on for murder.”

“You said my name. He knew my name” the man in grey exclaimed. “I’m not taking any chances.”.

The man in grey collected all of the art they had stolen and stacked it neatly in a pile. He then quickly turned toward the man the man in black, gun in hand.

He pointed the barrel of the gun tightly against the man in black’s forehead. “Why couldn’t you have just kept your mouth shut?” he asked. Everything after that seemed to be in slow motion. The hammer of the gun slowly moved back then went forward. The bullet sped through the barrel and into his forehead. Blood splattered everywhere, his eyes bulged from their sockets.

“He said my name, I had no choice” the man in grey said, walking out of the museum with the stolen paintings in his arms. “He said my name.”