

Sabrayah Nunez

Professor Fleshner

Art

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### Tate Modern

My name is Vada LeCoultre, my parents passed away when I was just an infant. I was adopted by a woman named Scarlett LeCoultre when I was just five years old. When I was ten years old I had taken her last name, I have no recollection of what my last name once was. I was raised in a small town called Cave Springs in Arkansas, my mother was most known for her beauty and intellect. I miss her more everyday, her beautiful green eyes, silky black hair, her angelic voice when she sings, I wish I had said goodbye.

My mother was a waitress at Lucy's Diner, from what I remember we had no issues with money. "Vada!" The girl calling my name is my best friend, Susan Joneson. Her father is Richard Joneson, the mayor of Cave Springs. "How are you holding up?" Ever since my mother passed away Susan has been keeping tabs on me more often. "You know, same old same old." I said in an irritable tone. "One of these days you have to talk about it, you understand that right? Bottling up your emotions isn't healthy, Vada." Susan had said in a worrisome voice, I don't like it when my loved ones are worried about me. "I plan on seeing a therapist soon, Susan." This was a lie, Susan has done so much for me, I don't want her to feel obligated to have to take care of me. Yet again, she has her own family issues to deal with. "That's amazing Vada! I'm glad to hear it."

As we were arriving at Lucy's Diner, it felt unreal, I can hear the customers' conversations fade in and out. Me and Susan had gotten our regulars, "How are you doing

sweetie?” Lottie asked, Lottie was a good friend of my mother’s. “I am doing better, thanks for asking.” I said in a calm voice. After arriving home I saw someone waiting for me on the porch. “Scarlett?” a deep voice said, “Um no, my name is Vada, daughter of Scarlett.” This man was odd, gave me a weird feeling, he looked at me with sorrow in his eyes. “Who are you again?” I asked him. He responded with, “I am an old friend of Scarlett, I never knew she had a daughter. Where is your mother right now?” I was slightly confused, if he was an old friend wouldn’t he know that my mother has passed? I don’t recall seeing him at the funeral. “I’m sorry but my mother passed away a few months ago.” As I was looking at him in his eyes, it looked like he wanted to cry, you can tell that it took every bit of strength from him not to. He handed me an envelope, “Your mother would have wanted you to have this.” as he was looking at me I opened it, and there was a key inside it with a tag tied to it, “What is this for?” I asked him. “It’s for a storage unit, your mother kept valuable things in it. I will arrive back in a week, and hope to receive your answer.” he said. “An answer? To what exactly?” I asked him. “To whether you want to follow your mother’s footsteps or not.”

I stood there in confusion. Before I could ask him more questions he had disappeared. I turned the envelope over and read “Big Yellow Self Storage Birmingham”. I quickly went inside my house and searched it up. I read that it was a storage unit in the United Kingdom in Birmingham. Before I knew it I was on a plane a day later. When I arrived I went and found the nearest hotel. I didn’t bother settling in, I went straight to the storage unit. I was standing in front of the door for about twenty minutes. As soon as I opened it, I couldn’t believe my eyes. There were antiques, paintings that would cost millions of dollars. I heard footsteps coming from down the hall. When the person arrived, it was that man. The man who was on my porch. “I thought you weren’t going to see me for another week?” When I had asked him this question he smiled.

“You remind me a lot of your mother.” He said while smirking. “Although biologically she isn’t your mother, you guys are very similar.”

“I didn’t tell you I was adopted.” I said in a stern voice. “There are a lot of things you don’t know yet, young one. For instance your mother. A beautiful and intelligent woman.” He had asked me to meet him at an art gallery named Tate Modern, I had only agreed to him so I could get answers. The next day I had arrived in London, it was a two hour drive from where the storage unit was located. The man arrived shortly after I arrived. He seemed pleased to see me, “You still haven’t told me your name.” I said in a hopeful tone. All this time speaking to a stranger and I still haven’t gotten a name. “You will soon get it, Vada, but first we must discuss business.” When we arrived inside the art gallery, my mind went to ease.

After looking around for twenty minutes, we stopped at a particular artwork. “Stunning isn’t it.” the man had replied to it. “It is, if only I were able to afford it.” I said in a voice of disappointment. “Good thing you don’t have to pay for it.” I looked at him with confusion and responded with “What do you mean?” “You’re gonna help me steal it.” he had said. At that moment all my questions were answered. “My mother did this, didn’t she?” I said hoping for a reply back. “Yes she did, but the question is, are you going to follow her footsteps?”

The next two months, it was a lot of planning. We had other people in on this. Derek Wilfire, he is the one who makes the replica of the art pieces. William James, he is our code guy, without him we wouldn’t be able to get into the gallery. He studies the guards and workers for weeks non stop. Benjamin Barrett, he studies the building, he creates blueprints to help us get easier access on where things are. Last but not least Sebastian Amery, after my mother passed away he became the official head of the group. Not too long after he took me to the Tate Modern

gallery he told me his name, and things about my mother that I never knew of. Him and my mother were very similar and basically shared being the head while she was alive.

In order for Derek to replicate Landscape with Antiquities (Lamorna) by Ithell Colquhoun, he went to the gallery multiple times to study it. It is not simple to recreate a piece like that. You must know the type of paint the artist used, the way she used the paintbrush, or maybe she even used her hands. Tons of research is required in order to do this project. William is very handsome, you would be surprised at how many women and men go chasing after him. He became close with the workers at the gallery, he has a way with his words. Benjamin, but he prefers to be called Barrett. Took on a fake name, Noah Smith, he was hired as a guard at the Tate Modern for five months now, way before Amery came to Cave Springs and met me, he had been earning the workers trust and studying the building since he had been hired. He has a photographic memory.

The day has arrived, Barrett has an overnight shift as planned, while Barrett distracts the other guards, William will contain a key card allowing us to go inside the building without triggering any alarms. I don't even wanna tell the story on how he got access to the card. Derek will be in a boat near the building being prepared and waiting for us to arrive back. All five of us had to study the blueprints carefully, the building was rather huge, and we were under a time limit. Before we were allowed in, we had to get a signal from Barrett, letting us know the cameras were turned off. As soon as Barrett gave us the signal, me, Amery, and William arrived inside the building. William had met with Barrett a few moments later, while me and Amery were locating the room. After locating the room, Amery and I switched the paintings. William met with us at the door, letting us know he deleted the entire footage and glitched the cameras for

the night. Before we knew it, we were off. My name is Vada LeCoultre, and I am my mother's daughter.

## Works Cited

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