

The Lady and the Thief

The darkness of the room was parted only by the light emanating from the small tungsten bulbs of the display lights. Even now the bright canvases jumped from the stark white walls. Even now the lifeless eyes seemed to watch, watch the vast darkness of the room. There was an extra pair of eyes in the room tonight, not new eyes, no; these eyes had been here before, these eyes had been coming so often lately. By day these eyes watched the lifeless scenes, watched and wondered at what they saw. Yet this was a first. The eyes had never lingered here so long; in fact when the room went dark there wasn't meant to be any living eyes at all.

It hadn't been particularly hard to remain unnoticed. All she needed to do was hide in the ladies toilet until the lights went out and the guard made his routine checks. She emerged from the toilets and looked at her watch. Twelve o'clock. She knew by now the guard had nodded off to sleep so she walked quietly down the dark hall and into the display room, where she found her regular spot. She had been coming here all week, just to look of course. The piece was late Victorian, beautifully crafted and would certainly fetch a hefty price.

Through the darkness the pale blue eyes watched as they always did, over the autumn scene. The scene was of a noble lady of common appearance. She stood amidst a sea of swirling gold and brown. Her face pale white and her eyes blue, though not as blue as those eyes which watched from the darkened room. She held a smiling child within her arms and she smiled back at it. Her hair fell lightly upon her left shoulder and corseted her fine summer clothes. She was happy in her own blissful image of motherhood.

"I hate it" she thought as she stared across the darkened room. She had been coming all week but only now did she realize she truly hated this woman. She knew why too, it was here smile, her eyes, damn it was her whole face. How could this woman be so blindly happy? So far from the dark world she knew.

From the shadows she watched and thought "Oh happy fool, what I would give to be as blind as you". Though she knew it wasn't her fault she was happy. But that didn't make it fair. What did she know of motherhood? From the darkness she watched those fake, painted and lying eyes thinking "my eyes would never look at you like that, I know what sacrifices love asks us to pursue". In the darkness of the room she thought of him. The innocent babe she had once held each night, for him she would do anything. She would sell this fake scene to lying eyes and it would be just.

She emerges from the darkness and into the aura of the paintings light. She raises her hands and takes the frame in both hands. After carefully removing it from the wall she pausing briefly, takes a breath and starts off running down the hall, disappearing into the darkness. The alarm bells sound and the police are alerted. The lady nor her blue eyed thief are never found. The silent witnesses of the crime remain as such and from then on they continue to watch for pale blues eyes in the dark of night.