

See You Soon

By Tiena Prater

Ella and Adam waited in the elevator in silence until the ding signaled it was time to get off on their floor. They both exited the elevator and proceeded to their room.

“334,” Ella said as she looked down at the room key and searched the numbers on the outside doors. “Here we are.”

Ella inserted the key in the slot and then headed inside.

Adam looked around the hallway and waited for a few moments before joining her inside, allowing the door to shut behind him. He checked both of the beds and the bathroom, making sure the room was up to 5-star standards. “Clear,” he said, returning from the bathroom and sitting on the edge of the bed.

“How long should we wait?” asked Ella.

“You’re leaving as soon as Julian catches up,” Adam responded, then laid back on the bed and started to stare at the ceiling, with his hands behind his head. “You should relax, too. Might be a while.”

“What about you?” she asked.

“He’s going to be a while. Like I said, relax.”

Ella walked over to the mini bar and picked up the menu. “These prices are outrageous.”

“Have whatever you want. It’s not like we’ll be here for long.”

Ella sat down the menu and opened the mini fridge to examine their choices. “Very tempting.”

“Pick one out for me,” he said.

She grabbed two mini Jack Daniels bottles from the mini bar, “Catch,”

Adam sat up and caught the bottle and with little force, unscrewed the cap. The sting tickled as the liquid slid down his throat. “Are there anymore?”

“Not Jack Daniels,” she replied, tossing him the other bottle.

“Thanks,” he cracked the second bottle opened and consumed it. “What about you?”

“I’ll be driving.”

“Right,” he said. “For the record, you have always been the responsible one, I admire you for that.”

“I have two reckless brothers I have to keep an eye out for. Would you expect me to be anything less?”

He didn’t respond. He looked around at the room. “I just wanted to say thank you for always having our backs.”

“Again, you’re talking like I would do anything less, Adam, what’s really going on?”

“Once Julian gets here, you two will be heading back home and I will be dropping off the paintings. We’ve already been paid and it’s time to make the delivery. They’ll be expecting me within the hour.”

“That wasn’t a part of the plan,” said Ella.

“Plans change,” he looked at her.

She was clenching and opening her fist as she looked at him. “That wasn’t a part of the plan, Adam.”

“You and Julian will go withdrawal the money and make sure it gets to Mom, no delays. I can handle a drop off.”

“And what if it goes bad?”

“I can handle bad,” he responded.

“And if this time you can’t?” she asked, raising an eyebrow and folding her arms, leaning back in the chair.

“Then, Ma, will have her money and one less problem child to worry about.”

“That’s not funny and I don’t plan on telling her that.”

“Neither do I. I will see you both when I make the drop off.”

Ella frowned. “We didn’t talk about this. Every play is supposed to be ran by the team.”

“Not this one. If we all go to the drop off and something happens, who will be left to take her the money?”

Silence.

Ella checked her phone as it started to vibrate. She pulled her phone from her back pocket and read the text message. “Juls made it downstairs. He’s waiting.”

Adam nodded to the door. “You better get going then.”

“Adam!”

“It’s not up for debate, Ella, you are tired. I can clearly see that. It’s important to know your limits and I have no intentions on testing them.”

Ella snatched her bag up further on her shoulder and stood abruptly. “If you die, I will bring you back to life and kill you myself.”

“I know.”

Ella held out her pinkie to him and he connected his pinkie with hers as they shook. "I'll see you soon, Sis," said Adam.

As Adam heard the clicking sound on the door after Ella's exit, he laid back down on the bed and watched her location on his phone until he fell asleep.

Adam woke up to the vibration of his watch. He sat up and stretched, the smell of liquor on his breath as he gave a drawn-out yawn, then reaching for his phone. He grabbed the room key and headed downstairs to where their unmarked van was parked.

A taller man came from around the corner holding a black briefcase and stood beside Adam as he opened the back of the unmarked van and took the sheet off of the merchandise. The man looked around the silent but well-lit parking garage. There were not many other cars surrounding them. Then the man set down the briefcase and looked inside the back of the van, examining the paintings and their condition. Once finished he nodded to the briefcase. "Well done, our business is finished here."

Adam nodded to him and tossed him the key to the van, then walked off in the opposite direction, back towards the hotel. Just as he was walking, the taller man called out to him.

"Wait!"

Adam swallowed and turned around back towards the man, opening his clenched fists.

"Yes?"

The man nodded to the briefcase. "A gift for your hard work."

Adam hesitated but went back and leaned down and opened it, looking up at him.

"Sir..."

“Buy your mom the house she always talked about getting.”

Adam nodded to him, “Thank you.”

The tall man nodded back to him, then they both parted ways. When he was a good distance away from the man, he sent a picture to Ella, with a text message.

Like I said, see you soon.