

***BLUJAY***

101

"Heaven Spot"

Written By

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## TEASER

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NYC - NIGHT

An OPEN WINDOW, its curtains dancing in the evening breeze.

We travel past it, up the side of the building, getting higher and higher until we're high enough to make a few stomachs drop, when we land on a **FIGURE** scaling the building, HOOD up, obstructing their face.

They effortlessly find footholds in windowsills, pulling themselves along as they go. The only thing on them is a BLACK BACKPACK.

They pick up speed. Wherever they're going, they're on a mission. They pull themselves to the building's FLAT ROOFTOP.

They assess a small space they need to clear between them and the next roof over. A moment of hesitation before...they JUMP. Almost bringing them face to face with --

EXT. ROOFTOP - NYC - CONTINUOUS

-- **A MAN SMOKING A CIGARETTE** out his window. He turns at the noise, *what was that?* Our figure quickly retreats into the shadows, back flat against the wall, steadying themselves. *Fuck.*

INT. SOTHEBY'S AUCTION HOUSE - NYC - SAME TIME

An **ART AUCTIONEER (50s)** silver fox, happy to be there, stands on stage next to what we can assume is a large piece of art that's covered by a draped sheet. He addresses his jam packed audience, who's dressed to the nines.

ART AUCTIONEER

Welcome friends, to the 45th annual Sotheby's auction. We have a very special piece with us this evening brought to you by anonymous street artist Blujay. And judging by the massive turn out, something tells me you've heard of him...

INT. SUBWAY CAR - NYC - SAME TIME

**CLAM UCELLO (24)** kind face, all innocence lost, is sardined between the 7PM rush. He's jostled back and forth in rhythm with the subway but one thing remains still --

-- his hand, diligently sketching a **YOUNG MOTHER** and her crying **DAUGHTER** Jack Dawson style. She looks too old for her years, her eyes beaten with stress.

ART AUCTIONEER (V.O.)

Blujay has lived in anonymity for years now. Rumor has it he's one man. Although some say it's a group of people. Others don't even believe he exists, rather a one hit wonder who's been kept alive by a band of imposters.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NYC - SAME TIME

Our figure peeks around a wall they're hidden behind, clocking the smoker closing their window.

*It's go time.* They sprint across to the other side of the roof where they're met with a MASSIVE BRICK WALL, or to them, a blank canvas. They remove a SPRAY PAINT CANISTER and a rolled up STENCIL from their backpack.

With a rattle and a low hiss, their gloved hand gets to work, spray painting expertly between their stenciled lines.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - NYC - SAME TIME

The subway stop lights up: 72nd Street. As Clam exits, he anonymously slips the woman his sketch.

We see it now, a breathtaking image of her, capturing all the beauty she once had, the beauty only few could still see. She looks for someone to thank but he's already gone. She looks back down at the sketch, it's UNSIGNED.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NYC - SAME TIME

Our figure puts the final touches on their piece, signing their tag as *PROTÉGÉ*. But before they can sign the last e, the smoker THROWS their window open.

SMOKER

The fuck are you doing? Get out of here!

A *clanngg* rings out as spray paint canisters scatter across the roof. Our figure breaks out into a full blown sprint, jumping back to their original building --

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NYC - CONTINUOUS

-- climbing down as rapidly as they climbed up. The smoker gets a full view of the piece, *A BEE WEARING A CROWN STINGING ITSELF*. His angry brows go from furrowed to raised, *not bad*.

Our figure hurls themselves through the open window --

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NYC - CONTINUOUS

-- finding themselves face to face with the elevator. They press the down button anxiously until the doors open.

EXT. NYC STREET - CONTINUOUS

Our figure walks into a DUNKIN DONUTS.

INT. DUNKIN DONUTS - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Our figure's gloved hands slowly unzip their backpack revealing an expensive GOLD GOWN.

ART AUCTIONEER (V.O.)

I always found that was half the fun of Blujay, the not knowing. That's what he's all about isn't he? Subjective truth. We decide what we believe.

Our figure takes down their hood, revealing she's **RYE HESTON (29)** pretty, professional, don't fuck with me face.

INT. SOTHEBY'S AUCTION HOUSE - NYC - LATER

Rye walks in looking like a new person. Makeup done, gown on, she spies her table. She shuffles along trying not to interrupt the art auctioneer who now stands next to a Keith Haring style painting.

She settles between Clam and **KATO (34)** British, charming, knows it. Her and Kato sidebar.

KATO

One of your little side gigs?

He's met with silence.

KATO (CONT'D)

She won't like it. You spreading your scent around town.

RYE  
What if I said I didn't care?

KATO  
You'd be lying.

Rye eyes Clam.

RYE  
What's the new kid doing here?

KATO  
Not so new anymore.

Clam doesn't take his eyes off the stage.

CLAM  
Hi to you too Rye. Do you mind? I'm  
trying to listen.

She turns her attention back to the art auctioneer.

ART AUCTIONEER  
And now. The moment you've all been  
waiting for. The one...the  
only...new Blujay.

He dramatically rips the sheet off the piece, unveiling the artwork. It's a graffiti print of *A SMALL BOY WITH HIS CHEST HALLOWED OUT, HOLDING HIS OWN HEART* in the middle of a THICK ORNATE FRAME. The audience oos and ahhs.

ART AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)  
Let the games begin.

A woman wearing large **GLASSES** raises her bidding paddle.

GLASSES  
1.5

**BRAEDEN HIGHCORT (35)** smug, shit-stirrer, sits at a table of suits like himself. His paddle lays limp by his side as he shouts across the room.

BRAEDEN  
4 mill.

He catches Rye's eye and winks at her. She looks away.

GLASSES  
4.5.

CLAM  
 (Irish whispering)  
 So, you guys really think she's  
 gonna do it?

RYE  
 Do what?

KATO  
 Clam you right fucker. You're  
 acting like a mouse in a snake pit  
 with a bell on it's tail. Stop  
 ringing it for all to hear.

CLAM  
 (truly in awe)  
 I never understand a word you say.

RYE  
 He said, shut the fuck up - which I  
 second.

A woman a table over shushes them. Kato gives her the finger.

BRAEDEN  
 6 million.

Glasses slams down her paddle, defeated.

ART DEALER  
 Alright then. Sold to Braeden  
 Highcourt. Braeden just hit his new  
 record, now owning twenty-seven  
 original Blujay pieces.

Braeden heads to the stage, shaking the art auctioneers hand.

RYE  
 I didn't think I'd be this late.

CLAM  
 Actually, you're early.

Before he can explain, a high pitched BEEPING noise washes  
 over the audience. Patrons turn to each other in confusion,  
 when suddenly the Blujay piece starts MOVING in its frame.

Gasps break out, even screams, as the piece begins to **SHRED.**  
 Off Rye's shock...

**INSERT TITLE CARD: BLUJAY**

ACT ONE

INT. SOTHEBY'S AUCTION HOUSE - NYC - SAME SCENE

The audience has erupted in applause. Clam is out of his seat whistling like he's at a baseball game. Rye finds herself slowly clapping along, still stunned.

KATO

Blujay knows how to keep us on our toes, eh?

RYE

That does seem to be her specialty.

INT. AFTER PARTY - NYC - NIGHT - LATER

An expensive after party with New York's elite trying their best to seem underground. Champagne flute's are passed along with caviar on crackers.

Rye is at the bar, sipping a martini. She overhears Glasses chatting with another woman, let's call her **BLACK DRESS**.

GLASSES

If I knew it was going to shred I would have upped my bid.

BLACK DRESS

That's why Blujay is timeless, because they're so *fearless*.

Rye downs her martini, interjects.

RYE

Fearless, or careless?

GLASSES

I'm sorry, and you are?

RYE

Ask my NDA.

Before they can respond, she walks away, stealing caviar crackers off a passed tray. She spots Braeden and Kato talking hurriedly. Clam sits off to the side, looking lost.

KATO

It's going out of JFK *tonight*? What are we telling customs?

BRAEDEN

Say it's valued at a hundred bucks.

Kato rubs his hands together. *Fine*. He gets up, and Rye takes his seat. Braeden sizes her up.

BRAEDEN (CONT'D)

You look nice.

RYE

Are you crazy? He can't take the piece to the client like that.

(then)

How are you smiling right now? Any sane art dealer would be livid.

BRAEDEN

Because it's brilliant.

RYE

Putting 6 mill through a shredder is high art? That's not brilliant, that's bullshit.

BRAEDEN

You're right, it is bullshit. This is all bullshit. But Blujay is the only one willing to say that. To call us out for spending 6 mill on a fucking canvas.

RYE

And what if the client doesn't think so? What then? You say they're batshit.

BRAEDEN

Since when do you care about the client?

Off Rye's silence Braeden cracks a smile.

BRAEDEN (CONT'D)

This is the week, isn't it? She's passing the baton.

RYE

What does it matter if she ruins her name in the process?

Braeden gets dangerously close to Rye, the chemistry between them palpable.

BRAEDEN  
Congratulations. Does that mean  
you'll finally be *her*?

RYE  
No -- but I could be.

He almost looks like he's going to kiss her, but he pops an  
olive in his mouth instead, leaving her with that.

Clam looks on as Braeden walks away, disgusted.

CLAM  
That still happening?

RYE  
You breathing? Apparently.

A waitress offers him a caviar cracker, he declines.

RYE (CONT'D)  
Most people would kill to be here.  
Don't look so miserable.

CLAM  
(shrugging)  
Not my scene.

RYE  
Please. This is one of the perks.

CLAM  
Making art is the perk.

RYE  
Relax. I'm not wearing a wire.

Just then, a girl VOMITS into a nearby wine bucket.

CLAM  
Yep. I'm out of here. By the way,  
Blujay is looking for you. Second  
car out back.

Rye spits out her caviar.

RYE  
Christ Clam. You should have opened  
with that.

INT. BLACK ESCALADE - NYC - NIGHT - LATER

Rye rides in silence with **JUSTINE ACULAIRE AKA BLUJAY (50s)**  
ice queen, think Miranda Priestly.

RYE

So...are you happy with how tonight  
went?

JUSTINE

Overjoyed.

RYE

Good.

Rye drums her fingers on her thighs. Justine stares, annoyed.

JUSTINE

You have something to say.

RYE

No. It's nothing. Just when we  
talked through the designs you  
failed to mention the destroying  
itself part.

JUSTINE

How dare I not run something by  
you?

Rye exhales, pulls back.

RYE

It's just--did Clam put you up to  
the shredding? I know you like that  
he's so *radical* but--

JUSTINE

--We need to discuss the new piece.

RYE

Now?

JUSTINE

Oh I'm sorry, am I keeping you from  
the party?

Rye shuts up.

JUSTINE (CONT'D)

The client wants it somewhere  
hidden, but public enough to get  
press. Although, it needs to be  
painted somewhere accessible.

RYE  
Right, I'll put Kato on scouting.

JUSTINE  
I need more designs. Something new,  
fresh.

RYE  
I have the few I sent over.

JUSTINE  
I need more. The client wants this  
to be big.

RYE  
Who are they?

JUSTINE  
Not relevant.

Rye studies her, waiting for more of an explanation.

JUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Get designs from Clam too.

RYE  
He's so green...

JUSTINE  
Just do it Rye.

Rye goes back to tapping her fingers.

RYE  
So, we reveal this piece and then  
we reveal me...right?

JUSTINE  
Seems you're already on that. Rumor  
has it *protégé* is tagged all over  
town.

RYE  
(nervous laughter)  
Probably some kid.

They pull up to Rye's apartment.

JUSTINE  
I'll see you at the studio  
tomorrow. Oh and Rye? You have some  
spray paint, just there.

She motions to a spot on Rye's neck. She recoils, *caught*.

She exits the car, rubbing the spot on her neck. Justine addresses her driver.

JUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Train yard.

INT. RYE'S APARTEMENT - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Rye enters her apartment. It's large and elegant, the crown molding tells us it's old New York.

She walks down a long hallway lined with POP ART. Some pieces tagged *BLUJAY*, others tagged *JEWEL*. She walks into --

INT. RYE'S APARTEMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

She pulls a FROZEN DINNER out of the freezer and chucks it in the microwave.

She checks her phone: *1 new voicemail*. She plays it.

GRANDMA (V.O.)  
Hi sweetie it's Gran. You have so much to be proud of this year, my little arteest. Investing in you was the best thing I ever did.

Rye eyes the YALE DIPLOMA hanging in her living room.

GRANDMA (V.O.)  
Now for my most popular number...Happy Birthday to you, happy birthday to you...

Rye makes her way into --

INT. RYE'S APARTEMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Where BIRTHDAY CARDS are scattered about her mantel, all signed GRAN.

GRANDMA (V.O.)  
Happy birthday dear Rye Bread,  
Happy birthday to you.

Rye sits, staring into her food. She hits play on the message again as she eats.

EXT. TRAIN YARD - NYC - SAME TIME

Clam, hood up, spray paints the side of a train car freehand. He moves fluidly, his own dance with his canvas.

JUSTINE (O.S.)  
It's beautiful.

Clam jumps.

CLAM  
How'd you know I was here?

JUSTINE  
A piece like this, it eats at you.  
May I?

CLAM  
Please.

He tosses her a spray can. The two work together now, head chef and sous chef. Not knowing their next move but somehow concocting something delicious.

In a series of quick cuts we see how they move around each other, close in on different graffiti lines and colors until we pull out to reveal--

A large mural of *A HEADLESS HOUSEWIFE WATCHING AS HER HUSBAND GIFTS THEIR SON HER SEVERED HEAD.*

The portraits are photorealistic with stark lighting, like that of a fresco.

JUSTINE  
It's one thing to go through something like this, it's another to translate it into your work.

CLAM  
I don't really think about it. It just comes.

JUSTINE  
Exactly. You have a rawness the others don't.

She looks at the art, breathing it in. Clam's flattered but not quite sure what she's getting at.

JUSTINE (CONT'D)

Coming here tonight, being able to bleed on the wall...I see a lot of myself in you. I knew it the second I saw your work.

CLAM

Who knew throwing a piece up on the side of a Bronx overpass would change my life?

JUSTINE

You did.

He's silent, somehow knows it's true.

JUSTINE (CONT'D)

A few years back, I didn't make the best choices. I was drunk with the lifestyle the art world brought. It led me into some bad business. That part of me, I tend to see in Rye.

She wipes her hands and sits, motioning for Clam to do the same. He does.

JUSTINE (CONT'D)

I want to know if anything should happen to me, that my business is safe. That it's in the hands of someone who could carry it on, without the public even knowing there's been any...hand off.

CLAM

Like, how bad of business?

JUSTINE

Bad enough for me to want to feel confident in my protégé.

CLAM

Well Rye is incredible. Her art is--

JUSTINE

Beautiful, but surgical. The more I look at it, the less it has to say. When I set out to do this, I wanted to make art for the people. We did that tonight, thanks to your idea to shred the piece.

CLAM

Oh that was--it was nothing.

JUSTINE  
What if it were you?

CLAM  
Justine, I--I couldn't do that to Rye. She's worked her whole life for protégé. She worships you.

JUSTINE  
Protégé gets twenty percent commission of all my work. Given your circumstances, it would make a difference.

Justine reaches into her pocket and pulls out a small **BLACK BOOK**, holding it out to him.

JUSTINE (CONT'D)  
My main designs for the rest of the season.

Clam stares at it, but doesn't take it.

JUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Think about it.

INT. RYE'S APARTEMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Rye's watching Bob Ross and smoking a joint. She takes out her phone and opens her notes app to a pre existing note.

It starts off: *I know it's been a while, but I wanted to reach out and let you know Blujay named me protégé...*

She copies and pastes the message into a text to her contacts **MOM AND DAD**. She stares at it, then deletes it.

INT. BRAEDEN'S ART GALLERY - NYC - DAY

A high end slick art gallery. Braeden is behind his desk fighting with an older **WOMAN (60s)**. A print is sprawled out between them.

WOMAN  
You authenticated a-a poster!

BRAEDEN  
It's a p-r-i-n-t print. And let's not get hysterical.

WOMAN  
I found the same one on Etsy.