

vi. the show

When everyone finished with their performance, Merritt was up next for the finale. Backstage everyone watched him as he talked. "At the intermission, we asked you to write down your current bank balance, and seal it in an envelope. Now it's time to take those envelopes out. Everyone take them out. Now, everybody, shout out your name all at once, go." When he said that, everyone in the theater did as instructed. "Clement Frannick?"

A man in one of the balcony seats stood up. "Yeah that's me," he shouted.

"Woah, all the way up there. Okay. Dina Robertson?"

"That's me," Another person in the balcony seat stood up.

"Okay. Names, names, let's go. Josepha Hickey?"

"That's me," A woman a little closer to the stage stood up smiling.

"Josepha, I want you to focus on your balance and count from one to ten out loud."

She started counting and Merritt stopped her at five. "Is the first digit five?" he asked her.

"Yes," she answered.

"Do it again, this time, faster." She did what Merritt told her to do and he stopped her at six. He told her to do it again and stopped her at two. "Josepha, is your bank balance five hundred and sixty-two dollars as of today?"

"Yeah, that's what I got." The audience applauded Merritt.

"Unfortunately, you're wrong," he told her. Josepha looked around in, what seemed like, confusion. He moved on to address the woman on the balcony. "Okay, Dina, um. One, four, seven, seven?"

"Yeah," she answered.

"You think it is but, in fact, you, too are wrong," he told her. "Clement, you do not have sixty-five hundred dollars in your account. In fact, everybody stand up. Everybody. Put your envelopes to your forehead. Focus on your number. This is... Oh, dear. Just as I feared. Oh, this is strange. You know, I hate to say this, but you're all wrong. Every last one of you is dead wrong about what you think is in your account."

Daniel, Henley, and Evelynn all entered the stage as he finished his statement. "Okay, you can sit down now," Daniel whispered something to Merritt. "Oh! Yea, I almost forgot. This evening would not be possible if it weren't for our great benefactor Arthur Tressler. Big applause! Big applause!"

Daniel then started speaking. "Art, actually, why don't you come up on stage for the finale?"

"Come down, Art," Evelynn, Merritt, and Henley encouraged.

"There he goes. Okay, good."

"Now, Art, did you fill out your envelope? Well, no need. We've done it for you."

Evelynn saw Jack come out on stage with a very large envelope.

"Now, Art, I took a guess. North of one forty. Am I right?" H questioned at Henley and Evelynn took out the big paper with his amount in it. "That's one hundred forty million, by the way."

"I'm sorry, Merritt. How can he be right about his balance and everyone else be wrong?" Henley questioned.

"Yeah, it makes no sense," Evelynn added.

"I think possibly because he, too, is wrong. Everybody, take out your paper and using the flashlight under your seat, start to warm up that paper. I think your correct balance will begin to appear. Now, Art, don't worry we have a flashlight for you, too." Evelynn watched Jack as he walked back on stage with a big LED light. He started to wave it around the big piece of paper and the numbers started changing.

"What's going on there, Daniel?"

"Wait, this is weird. A second ago, it said one hundred forty-four million five hundred seventy-nine thousand six hundred fi y-one dollars but now it says seventy thousand dollars less."

"Josepha, can you stand up?" Evelynn called out to her. "Now, what is your new number?"

"\$70,562, now in my account." The audience applauded her and the horsemen.

"Is it possible that Joshepha's balance went up the exact amount that Art's went down?" Henley asked.

"Hey, check it out. It's happening again," Jack informed him.

"Wow, it is," Henley feigned surprise. "Art's balance has gone down another twenty-eight hundred grand."

Evelynn could see Arthur looking at the piece of paper with a face of confusion and worry.

"Dina Robertson? What does yours say?" asked Merritt.

"Two hundred eighty-one thousand, four hundred seventy-seven dollars," she responded in disbelief.

"We have a confession to make," Henley announced.

"She's right, we lied about something."

"Yes, none of you were chosen at random."

"All of you have one thing in common."

"Everyone in this room was a victim of the hard times that hit one of America's most treasured cities."

"Some of you lost your houses, your cars."

"You businesses."

"Your loved ones but all of you were insured by the same company."

"Tressler insurance," they all said together pointing at Arthur.

"You were abandoned."

"You were loopholed."

"-Out of your settlements."

Arthur approached Henley and Evelynn. "This is all for show. Correct?"

"All' meaning we're doing it onstage in front of a paying audience?" started Henley.

"Then, yes! It's for show," finished Evelynn smiling at him.

"Woah, woah, woah!" someone from the audience shouted. "I've got eighty-two thousand in my bank account! It says it right there on my cell phone. Everybody, look at your cell phones right now!" Just then the audience checked and saw that the account number did increase. Everyone started cheering and standing up, ecstatic in the change of directions the show took.

"Hey! Did you do this?" Arthur asked furiously.

"How could we, Art? We don't have your password."

"We'd need access to information we can never get our hands on."

"Ah, yes. Security questions for instance."

"Like, I don't know, your mother's maiden name or the name of your first pet."

"Where would you get that information Art? You certainly would never tell us."

The Horsemen all walked passed him to the back of the stage. Arthur tried to grab Merritt but his foot was cu ed to the floor.

"Hey, we le you the jet and the Rolls," Merritt smiled. Arthur slowly looked back at the audience and they all began to scream at him. Merritt went to the back of the stage and high-fived Evelynn.

Evelynn saw Detective Dylan Rhodes running towards them to the stage. When he neared he screamed "Freeze!" Then the twelve volunteer from the audience that got hypnotized got up and ran towards Rhodes, beautifully tackling him to the stage.

"We are the Five Horsemen," they all said in unison grabbing onto their designated rope. "Good night." They went sailing up to the air, into the top level of the theater.

Evelynn started running to their escape route, along with the others. They le the theater and sprinted throughout the back lot of the theater with the Interpol Agent hot on their tails. They finally made it through the bustling streets of New Orleans. They lost Interpol, and Jack changed into a police outfit. They all nodded at each other and ran di erent directions.

Evelynn ran through the streets until she found a deserted one. She had a call from Jack. "I'm at Rampart Street, where are you?"

"Rampart and St. Louis," Evelynn informed him.

"Got it, I'll be there to pick you up stay where you are." He hung up leaving Evelynn alone looking over her shoulders every once in a while. She placed her hands on her knees to catch her breath from all the running she had to do.

A car pulled up next to her and she opened the door and got it. "You okay?" Jack asked her.

"Yeah, but remind me to do some more cardio. I'm completely breathless," she panted.

"Where are the others?" she noticing the lack of their presence.

"They're getting their own rides. We need to get to the airport and fast."

"Aren't we wanted criminals now? How are we suppose to get through security?"

He winked at her while grinning, "Don't worry about it Beautiful."

At that statement, she looked out the window. Strangeshe thought. What is this feeling,Evelynn just ignored the skip of her heartbeat just then thinking that it was merely the adrenaline rush. She sighed and watched as the buildings passed by.

"At least from now on it'll be a bit easier," she sighed out smiling.

"For sure."

Continue reading next part