

iii. the first act

"Merritt McKinney, Daniel Atlas, Henley Reeves, Jack Wilder, Evelyn Park, Arthur Tressler, and the MGM Grand proudly presents, The Five Horsemen!" The intro to their act had just been announced and every one of them walked out onto the stage. For the body of their show, Henley, Jack, and Daniel did stage tricks that were pretty big. McKinney and Evelyn stuck with the mentalism and guessing games, awing the audience.

As their show was nearing the end, their true act was only just beginning. "Thank you. Tonight we would like to try something that will, well, set us a bit apart." Merritt said, starting their next act.

"Very, apart." piped in Evelyn, chucking. Evelyn, like everyone else, was merely walking around their round stage.

"Four our final trick, we're gonna do something never before seen on a Las Vegas Stage."

"Or any stage, for that matter."

"Ladies and gentlemen," Daniel called for attention as he stepped up the higher center stage. "Tonight, we are going to rob a bank." As he said that the audience went wild, you can barely hear yourself think over the crowd's screams. "That's a lot of excitement for a crime." Everyone laughed at that.

"I'm getting excited. What about you people?" The audience was about as riled up as you could get them.

"One, two, three," Jack and Merritt jumped and high-fived each other.

Idiot\$ Evelyn thought as she watched them. Granted, they did get the crowd more riled up, so it couldn't be that bad.

"Now, now. Please, please. Settle down. Now, who here has a bank they would like us to rob?" If Evelyn thought the audience went wild before they absolutely went berserk now. "Okay, wow. That's a lot of people with a vendetta, so we'll choose one at random. My associates will make sure it's random, right?"

Henley, Jack, and Merritt went to grab the containers filled with ping-pong balls and started picking out a random person to grab a ball. Evelyn wasn't needed so she went to the stage and sat down on the corner of the stairs that lead to the higher stage. "In Jack's bowl are ping pongs with section numbers. Jack, could you hand me a section number?" Jack threw Daniel a ping pong ball. "Thank you. We are looking at Section B. Where is Section B? Okay. There. It's gonna be one of you guys, get ready."

"Oh, I don't know why any of you are happy," commented Evelyn.

"It's only them."

"Merritt, can I get a row please?" A ball was thrown towards Daniel.

"Thank you, Merritt. We are looking at row number 5. Where is that? Henley, could I get a random seat number? Oh! Lucky number 13. B-5-13, where are you? Sir, please, stand up. Ah! There you are. Hi. Sir, could you just confirm for me that this is, in fact, your seat? B-5-13."

"Yes," The man with a french accent agreed with Daniel's statement.

"Okay, wonderful," Daniel said throwing away the pin pong balls.

"Now, could you please tell us your name and the name of your bank?"

"Well, my name is Etienne Forcier and my bank is Cred Republicain de Paris."

"French. Okay, ah, we were hoping for something a little more local. A kind of mom-and-pop credit union with no security but that's fine. A promise is a promise. Could you please come up to the stage and we'll rob your bank."

Evelyn got up and began speaking. "While he does that. There is someone here tonight without whom we would just be five magicians working the circuit trying to get, well actually, trying to get here. You probably know this man, if not from one of the many, many companies he put his name on. He is our friend. He is our benefactor. Mr. Arthur Tressler." Evelyn ended that facing said man and holding her hand towards him with a grateful smile adorning her face.

"Please, stand up, Art."

"The only man here with the Queen's cell phone number," Merritt joked.

"Actually, please, stay standing Art," Daniel told him. "I want to say that when we came to Mr. Tressler, we promised that, as a unit, we could become the biggest name in magic."

Henley interrupted, "So we wanted to say, 'Thank you.' and by the way, Art, you notice on the sign out front, we made sure we put your name on top."

"If you turn out to be as good as you think you are, dear girl," He said into his microphone. "That won't be necessary much longer."

"How heartfelt," Evelyn commented.

"We haven't done our closer yet," Henley started. "Why don't you watch and then you can decide for yourself. Ladies and gentlemen, Arthur Tressler!"

"Thank you and of course, once again, the Cardinal of Clairvoyance, Merritt McKinney." The attention now shifted towards Merritt.

"Etienne, what Jack is bringing to the stage now, is what we in the magic world call a teleportation helmet." Jack walked full circle with the helmet in the air to show to everyone. "You will need to wear this, as it allows you to literally fold through space and time to your bank in the... Eight? Ninth arrondissement. Now, once you are there, we will be able to speak with you through this helmet. Oh! Oh, my God, that's beautiful. It has the added attraction of being very stylish. It's about time the French learned from America on that subject. Isn't that a beautiful piece of headgear? It is."

"Thank you, thank you very much." said the Frenchman.

Daniel walked up the stage talking, with Evelyn and Henley following behind closely. "But, before you go anywhere, could you please, pick a card, any card. Not that card," Danie joked. "No, that's an American joke. You can take that one."

"Okay, this one?" Etienne pulled out the card and held it against him.

"Show it to your friends in Section B but not to us," Everyone turned away from the man as he waved his card to his own section.

"Okay, great. Now if you could just sign your name there," Daniel handed a sharpie marker to the Frenchman. "In English, if possible. Put it in your pocket."

"And now for one tiny detail," Henley took out a piece of cloth and threw it towards the middle of the stage. It grew in size and was wrapping itself around the contraption. Everyone acted surprised and was backing up a bit as if not expecting the trick. A er a while, the cloth vanished and the device was shown. The Horsemen applauded for Henley, as did everyone else.

"Now, Etienne, let's step into this cockamamie contraption. I'll step o of it, bonne chance. It's eleven fi y p.m here in Vegas, that's eight fi y a.m in Paris. Your bank opens in less than ten minutes."

"One."

"Two."

"Three," Henley pressed the red button to activated the contraption. As she did, the bottom and the top part of the machine slammed shut together. Evelyn backed up feigning shock, looking around to see that Etienne had indeed vanished. Everyone in the audience was taken aback by the abrupt turn that the show just took.

"What the fuck?" mumbled Merritt.

"Etienne?" the other Horsemen called out.

"It wasn't supposed to happen like that, was it?" Merritt looked around, "I liked that little French guy. Where did he go?"

"Wait, there he is!" Daniel pointed the screen monitors that showed Etienne's face. "No, no, no, please, please, please," He tried to prevent the crowd from clapping for them just yet. "This is Daniel Atlas, can you hear me? Etienne? Are you there?"

"Yes," Answered the French.

"Perfect. What do you see in there?"

"Money." He picked it up to see. "Is this real?"

"Yes. Looks like three million or so Euros' worth."

Evelyn, like the rest of the Horsemen, watched the exchange happening from a distance. Jack and Evelyn shared a glance at each other smirking, knowing exactly what was about to happen.

"Okay, now here's what we're gonna need you to do. I want to take the card that you signed out of your pocket and I want you to take the ticket stub from tonight's show. I want you to put it right in the middle of the money. Now, drop it." Etienne followed the instructions perfectly. "Now, on the side of your helmet, you should feel a button. Now, don't press t just yet. That button activates an air duct that connects Paris to Las Vegas. Okay, good, now press it."

"All right, now, Etienne, hold on tight. You might feel a bit of a vacuum," Jack informed the man. Merritt chuckled at that statement. From, Etienne's camera you can see all of the money getting sucked up into the air ducts.

"Wait a second," Daniel said looking around the room. Money started raining from the air, three million Euros' worth to be exact. The crowd started to collect it and standing up to grab as much as they could as it neared them. They were screaming with joy and whistling and all that good stu .

Evelyn soaked in the glory of money raining on her. She started walking up the stair of the smaller stage with the help of Jack. The Horsemen regroup.

"Thank you, Etienne. Thank you, everyone!" Daniel waved.

With all of them speaking in sync they shouted, "We are the Five Horsemen and good night!" They all grabbed each others' hands and bowed together. Step two was half way done Evelyn thought. She continued to bow with everyone as money rained with a big smile on her face.

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