



FINDERS KEEPERS

Logline

Three of the Washington Arts Institute's best and brightest students are thrown into a world of art crime when their dean is found murdered, with a white rabbit toffee in his mouth, in their now empty exhibition gallery the morning of the International Art Exhibition. They decide to investigate, without the police, to bring the killer responsible to justice and retrieve the stolen artworks.

Premise

A crime drama with a tinge of comedy about three 20-something art students who, after their dean's murder and the theft of their university's art exhibit, investigate the dark underground of the art world in hopes of finding the stolen art and uncovering the mystery of the White Rabbit.

Dramatic Question

What if a group of art students found their beloved dean murdered and their entire art gallery ransacked? Will the group find the killer and the stolen artworks?

Intent

Youths in this day and age have become much more in tune with their artistic selves and yearn for such an outlet, this might just light a fire in someone's heart. The action, drama and comedy in this story will lock the viewer in their seats while portraying the struggles of artists and the importance of art as a medium for change and influence.



Marty Bunt

Marty Bunt, a Fine and Modern art major at the Washington Arts Institute. His apartment is sparse with only the necessary furniture, a mattress on wooden pallets, an old couch from his mom, a mini fridge, induction plate, one set of cutlery, one plate, one bowl, and piles of art supplies and recent art forgery projects in every corner and some cups and glasses if visitors want something to drink. He takes midnight walks once a week to tag buildings, stores or apartment buildings where social injustice is rampant.

He happily visits his mother, four times a year in Aberdeen by the Potomac river. After the divorce she moved there for some change. Marty stayed behind in Washington DC, with a friend for the remainder of high-school. After that he became the resident social justice warrior. When he sees something, he does something. The brave, loyal and impulsive guy he's always been. Unfortunately, after high-school, he got caught up with the wrong people and that is how he found out about the Art Underground, but pulled out quickly before their teeth could sink too deep.

One night he went to a local bar and chose the nicest car he could find and started spraying away. As he was finishing up he heard someone behind him telling him how good his graffiti was. It turns out that it was none other than Harold Wizer, the dean of the Washington Arts Institute. He tried running but stayed after Harold offered to buy him a drink. That night was a night he never expected, because this man offered him a full scholarship, but with the exception of having to work for him part-time. That is how he ended up as an art student.



Hank Sterling

Hank Sterling, a Interactive design and Computer science major at the Washington Arts Institute. His apartment is spotless, each magnet on his fridge is spaced and leveled to a T, his closet is colour coordinated and always neat.

Since he was a child, he was studious, concerned with the pursuit of knowledge and perfection. His family was quite wealthy, but on the day of his 10th birthday his parents received disconcerting news of a company take-over that left them with only that which they owned at that moment. As time went on it seemed that bad luck followed them on every and any business venture they undertook, thus his father took a managerial desk job and his mother a teaching position just to keep their heads above water. Hank took up coding as a hobby at first but it quickly grew to become one of his greatest talents.

His first day of high school was a nightmare, and to top it off it was because everyone was aware of his parents' history. Thus he struck back by hacking into multiple banks and their clients' pension accounts. He started syphoning money by the nickel and happened upon an account for Harold Wizer. Harold found a discrepancy in his funds and tracked down the culprit. He saw talent in a boy who tried to rise up from his hardships, however negative the means. He saw a good heart and offered Hank a full scholarship along with a part-time job in the library at the Washington Arts Institute.



Carl Benowitz

Carl Benowitz, a special effects make-up major at the Washington Arts Institute. His apartment feels lived in, two worn out couches, mannequin heads litter the area, clay and make-up supplies on almost every surface, a large fridge with fresh ingredients and is always stocked with his favorite liquor, El Dorado rum. His closet is private since it has two sections, boys and girls.

He ran away from home when he turned 16 to get away from his conservative family. He moved to Washington, the closest city to the small town of Fredericksburg. He grew up in a family of mechanics, builders and masons. He was quite adept at the more burly side of things, but was more inclined to drawing, reading and trying on his sister's dresses. This was not something the family felt too proud of. They made a point of it to suppress this side of him as best they could, until he decided enough was enough. He tried different places, but nowhere was far enough from his deep seeded guilt. For now he is in Washington DC.

He works as a waitress, named Carla, at the local bar, the owner is quite open-minded. When his customers cause trouble he doubles as a bouncer. One night a greying man stumbled into the bar and opened a tab with Carl. He drank and drank until he thought it would be a good idea to hit on Carl after he mentioned that he was Harold Wizer, the dean of the Washington Arts Institute. Carl and Harold had a wonderful night, peculiar selfie poses and drinks galore. After the hangover had left the poor man, Carl came by his office and demanded a full scholarship in exchange for his silence about the previous night. The Dean accepted as he saw the go-getter attitude he admires in some of his students.



Jacqueline Wizer

Jackie Wizer, an old beauty and beloved sister of Dean Harold Wizer. She lives in the Woodland Acres suburb of Washington. Her house is a warm inviting place with soft couches with blankets over the backrest, a multitude of artworks on every open wall.

Shelves filled with a plethora of art history and theoretical works can be found throughout the home. It always smells of some freshly baked treat. However, the basement is completely off-limits.

She and Harold grew up in a very loving family. Their father, a lawyer, and stay at home mother always told them to do what makes them happy, whatever it could be.

Strangely enough the art bug bit both of the children hard. Harold was the practical one while Jackie had a knack for theory and history. As children they were very close, even into adulthood they shared a tight bond.

Never having children of her own she spent her time giving guest lectures and doing research at the Institute. Unfortunately the two siblings didn't have the time to see each other as much as they would have liked, but their bond stayed true.



Procedural

Each episode will have a set goal to achieve, an artwork to find, a lead to follow, and a lighter B story with a connection to the character arcs.

Serial

With each episode a clue must be found that will further the team's investigation and closer to the killer.

Setting, Style, Tone and Cinematography

Set mainly in present day Washington DC and the surrounding area, the group does however travel all over the country. They return to DC to bring back the paintings that were stolen the night of the murder, and for their classes of course.

The style will be modern, with a dash of vintage and a sprinkle of the classic. As is the deal with hipsters, there will be notes of vintage and classic in the background and costume design relating to each character.

The pacing of each episode will start slow and build along with the story.

The tone will follow a rollercoaster rhythm with ups and downs as the series continues. There will be losses in the A stories, or B stories, depending on how badly these youths need a wake-up call.

With every episode the tone will systematically grow darker, but not to the level of Dexter.

The cinematography will be a mix of artistic framing and shot compositions, along with free flowing tracking shots and textbook techniques to effectively invoke the necessary ideas and intended reactions.

Genre

The crime is the murder of, Harold Wizer. He was the dean of the Washington Arts institute and the charitable benefactor of our three main characters and the brother to Jacqueline Wizer. He was found murdered in the middle of the exhibition gallery on the morning of an international art exhibit. All the paintings have been stolen. This leads our characters on a “outside the law” investigation to find the perpetrator.

The drama between team members and the drive for justice will fan the flames in each episode. As the characters open up to each other about their pasts we will learn how these very contrastive people can work as an unstoppable force.

Where apt, comedic bits are used to lift the mood or foreshadow an act change.

Structure

The overall structure of the series will follow a procedural format with a few tweaks here and there as to integrate the serial overarching story. Each episode will follow the team as they go deeper into their investigation of the underground.

Each episode will follow a three act structure based on Blake Snyder’s Beat sheet theory, but will be edited to suit an episodic narrative. However, each episode will call for slight changes in what types of beats will occur. Some episode won’t have a certain element or have an extra element, depending on what the goal of that episode is.

Story

We see a body face-up, blood pooling around it. Harold Wizer, the dean of the Washington Arts Institute is found murdered. A single White Rabbit toffee is discovered inside his mouth.

The three scholarship students who were recruited by Harold decide to investigate on their own, without the police. They go to Jackie Wizer, the dean’s sister, for her blessing and so unintentionally recruit another member to their unlikely team.

As the team travels the country and more paintings are recovered, they find clues in each episode that leads them closer to discovering the White Rabbit’s identity.

Through many trials and betrayals the team gets as close as they can in one season, only to discover that the White Rabbit isn't a person, but an organization of high-society art thieves and mercenaries with a vast network that spans the entire globe.

Pilot

Act 1

After a long day of classes and setting up for the international art exhibit Marty, Hank and Carl bid their beloved benefactor, Dean Harold Wizer a good night.

The next day the three students meet up in front of the campus gate and make their way to the exhibition gallery. Inside they see none of the art pieces, but the Dean of the Washington Arts Institute murdered, with a White Rabbit toffee in his mouth.

The police arrive on the scene and do what they do while the boys are interviewed. Each has only, more-or-less, nice things to say about the man they called Dean. Outside they meet Jackie, the Dean's sister. Polite greetings are exchanged.

Later, in Carl's apartment the boys, with some protest from Hank, decide to begin their own investigation due to their lack of trust in the police's investigators.

Act 2

They go over to Jackie's house to learn more about the Dean's connections with GAU(Global Art Underground). Here Jackie decides to join the team.

A week goes by of Marty investigating and canvassing some of his old Underground buddies. He learned that the Mazoni sketch that was stolen has already been sold to the CEO of a major law firm - Crown Holdings.

The team starts planning and preparing for their very first heist, and so their respective talents reveal themselves along with some unexpected ones as well.

The night of the heist arrives. Marty and Carl infiltrate the building with the help of Hank's technical support via earpieces and gadgets that he whipped up.

Act 3

Almost everything goes according to plan. They snatch the Mazoni from the CEO's top floor office. On their way to the ground floor a guard spots them before Carl can secure his fake facial features. They end up running like hell.

They manage to make it outside, their pursuers still hot on their tail. Marty devises a quick plan of attack while Jackie drives her van to the rendezvous point. After making quick work of half of the pursuing party, the two thieves haul ass to the van as the rest of the guards come running.

Unfortunately Marty gets shot just as they get into the van. Hank lets something slip which raises some questions later. Marty's wound bleeds profusely. Luckily Jackie has a friend who can help.

At Jackie's book club friend, Ursa's house the team notices something odd on the package containing the Mazoni. A stamp that resembles a white rabbit.

Episode 2

Marty, Hank and Carl, guided by Jackie, investigate the late Dean's Global Art Underground connections. In doing so they find the stolen De Humani sketchbook in the office of the CEO of a large legal firm.

Episode 3

Marty follows up on a lead and meets his graffiti idol. This idol leads an unknowing Marty down a dark path. Carl worries the Marty may not come back from this. Hank finds a part-time job and meets a young art teacher.

Episode 4

Marty and Carl, as Carla, attend an underground gala at which they plan to retrieve another artwork. Their drinks get spiked and things get steamy. Hank and Jackie must jump in to salvage the mission.

Episode 5

Due to some awkwardness between Marty and Carl, infighting ensues. Hank and Jackie decide to complete a mission on their own. This tests the loyalty of Marty and Carl.

Episode 6

Marty gets arrested for drug possession and is sentenced to community service at a local church, where he makes an unlikely friend. Jackie learns that one of the late Dean's students' parents are members of the GAU. She enlists the help of Hank and his new 'friend', Diana to investigate.

Episode 7

After some interesting bank statements show up during Jackie's investigation, the group infiltrates a shell company being used to clean the GAU's dirty money. They find a startling clue connected to the White Rabbit.

Episode 8

Since it's Jackie's birthday, the team decides to grant her wish. They undertake a harrowing adventure to break into the Smithsonian archives to see Jackie's favorite painting in person.

Episode 9

Carl senses something off about Diana and decides to investigate. This plunges the entire team deeper down the rabbit hole when Diana reveals that her father is a former member of the GAU.

Episode 10

The team discovers unnerving information on the White Rabbit, which could put them in more danger than even they can handle.