

**Title:** *People v. Johnson*

**Scene:** The courtroom, Day 2 of trial. Defense is presenting its case.

**Characters:**

- **Judge Patricia Reyes** (The Judge)
- **Mr. Brown** (Prosecutor)
- **Ms. Lee** (Defense Attorney)
- **Alex Johnson** (Defendant)
- **Jordan Tate** (Defense Witness, Gallery Assistant)
- **Court Clerk**

**Court Clerk:** All rise. Court is now in session, the Honorable Judge Patricia Reyes presiding.

**Judge:** Please be seated. Ms. Lee, you may proceed with the defense's case.

**Ms. Lee (Defense Attorney):** Thank you, Your Honor. The defense calls Jordan Tate to the stand.

**(Jordan Tate, a young gallery assistant, takes the stand and is sworn in by the Clerk.)**

**Ms. Lee:** Mr. Tate, could you please state your occupation for the court?

**Jordan Tate:** I'm a gallery assistant at the Blue Horizon Gallery. I help with everything from organizing exhibits to monitoring security.

**Ms. Lee:** Thank you. Now, Mr. Tate, could you tell us about the night of April 12, when the painting went missing?

**Jordan Tate:** Sure. That night, Alex—uh, Mr. Johnson—was working on an installation at the gallery. I was there late too, doing some closing duties, and I saw him leave with his toolkit after he finished.

**Ms. Lee:** And did you notice anything unusual that evening?

**Jordan Tate:** Yes. About an hour after Alex left, I saw someone else moving around near the back storage area. It was our previous gallery manager, who'd been let go a week earlier but still had access to the building.

**Mr. Brown (Prosecutor):** Objection, Your Honor. Speculation—Mr. Tate's testimony about this other person's access is irrelevant.

**Judge:** Overruled. I'll allow it, but proceed carefully, Ms. Lee.

**Ms. Lee:** Of course, Your Honor. Mr. Tate, did you observe anything else involving this former manager?

**Jordan Tate:** Yes. When I came back in the morning, the painting was gone, and I remembered

seeing them in the storage area near the painting the night before. I told the gallery owner, but he didn't want to report it.

**Mr. Brown:** Objection. Hearsay, Your Honor.

**Judge:** Sustained. The jury will disregard Mr. Tate's last statement. Ms. Lee, let's keep it relevant.

**Ms. Lee:** Understood. Mr. Tate, thank you. No further questions, Your Honor.

**Judge:** Very well. Mr. Brown, would you like to cross-examine?

**Mr. Brown:** Yes, Your Honor. Mr. Tate, you mentioned seeing this former manager, but you can't confirm they took anything, correct?

**Jordan Tate:** Correct, but it seemed odd that they were there after hours, without any legitimate reason.

**Mr. Brown:** Thank you. That will be all.

**Judge:** The witness may step down. Ms. Lee, do you have any other witnesses?

**Ms. Lee:** No, Your Honor. The defense rests.

**Judge:** Very well. Court will adjourn for the day. We will resume tomorrow at 9 a.m. to hear closing arguments.

**Court Clerk:** All rise.

**(Everyone rises as Judge Reyes exits the courtroom.)**