

Moment

by

Michael Bettencourt

67 Highwood Terrace #2, Weehawken NJ 07086

201-770-0550 • 347-564-9998 • michaelbettencourt@outlook.com

<http://www.m-bettencourt.com>

Copyright © by Michael Bettencourt

Offered under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike License

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>

DESCRIPTION

Roger shoots his mouth off while the bank is being robbed, and the robber shoots his gun to keep him quiet. Such things can take a lifetime.

CHARACTERS

- ROGER, bank customer
- MAN
- WOMAN
- ROBBER 1 & 2
- THREE POLICE OFFICERS

SETTING

- Bank—waiting line

* * * * *

A line of people in a bank on Saturday, waiting at the one teller. Security guard to one side. ROGER is dressed nattily, perhaps even wearing a hat. He should look genteel and patrician, as if born with leather elbow patches and always speaks in a superior tone. People are exasperated

MAN

This line moves as slow as two old people making love!

WOMAN

I don't know why I do my banking here.

ROGER

(condescendingly)

What good does it do to complain? It doesn't make the line move any faster, and it makes it unpleasant for everyone else. Perhaps you could simply talk to each other about the latest wrestling match or something fascinating like that.

Two men walk into the bank and look around briefly. Then they take out ski masks, pull them over their heads, and pull out guns. As ROBBER 1 speaks, ROBBER 2 walks over to the security guard and, almost casually, hits him over the head and knocks him out. He then takes a short iron bar he has under his coat and slips it through the handles of the front doors. Lastly, he walks to the teller and motions her to begin filling a bag he hands to her.

ROBBER 1

All right, everyone! This can go easy if you all cooperate.

Pulls a large piece of cloth from his pocket and puts it on the floor.

ROBBER 1

Throw your money and wallets on the floor. Let's move with a little more alacrity, if you please.

ROGER

Alacrity. You have a vocabulary. But it's "easily," not "easy." "This can go easily."

Walks up to ROGER and shoves the gun against his head.

ROBBER 1

You have a death wish? Shut up. Understand that, fag-boy?

WOMAN is struggling to open her purse.

ROBBER 1

Let's hurry it up.

ROBBER 2 has the bag from the teller in his hand.

ROGER

Tell me, for people like you, is this easier than playing the lottery?

Presses the gun even harder against ROGER's temple.

ROBBER 1

Last time, professor. Shut the fuck up.

MAN

Man, just keep quiet!

ROGER

Why? Is there an etiquette about being robbed? From them?

ROBBER 1

All right. That's enough.

Without a moment's hesitation, ROBBER 1 fires the gun.

The following action should appear realistic but it should also be choreographed so that the audience will get the sense that there is a subtle stylization to it. Apparently ROBBER 1's point-blank aim is off because ROGER twists out of the way at the last minute, and as he does so, he swings his arm against ROBBER 1, knocking his gun arm up. The gun goes flying. With a few deft punches he disables ROBBER 1. By this time ROBBER 2 has dropped the bag of money and stepped up to take care of ROGER, but again, with a few quick movements, he incapacitates ROBBER 2. While all this is happening, one of the customers takes the iron bar out of the door and three POLICE OFFICERS rush in, easily subduing the ROBBERS. While two OFFICERS escort the ROBBERS out of the bank, the third OFFICER comes up to ROGER. The other customers stand around with looks of admiration on their faces.

OFFICER 1

That was quite a brave—and stupid—thing you did back there.

ROGER

It's what any concerned citizen should do. Unless we all take responsibility for ensuring the quality of our lives, we will go back to the barbarians.

During the last sentence, ROGER's voice begins to slur and falter, as if a tape were slowing down, and when he finishes it he falls to the floor unconscious. Everyone clears away, and the MAN leans over him and says, "Jesus Christ!" As he says this, the action the audience has just seen quickly runs in reverse, as if a tape is being rewound, until the scene ends up with ROBBER 1 pointing his gun at ROGER's head.

ROBBER 1

All right, that's enough.

Without a moment's hesitation, ROBBER 1 fires the gun. ROGER falls to the ground, shot through the head. There need not be any special effects for this. ROBBER 2 gathers up the cloth and starts for the door. ROBBER 1 looks at ROGER, then up at the customers.

ROBBER 1

He "easily" pissed me off.

The ROBBERS leave. The MAN walks over to the body, leans over it.

MAN

Jesus Christ.

BLACKOUT