“Always Buy Retail”

CAST

White Production Draft
January 14 2009

RICHARD CASTLE
KATE BECKETT
MARTHA RODGERS
JAVIER ESPOSITO
KEVIN RYAN
ALEXIS CASTLE
CAPTAIN ROY MONTGOMERY

MEREDITH
MICHELLE
AZI
ELECTRONICS STORE MANAGER
MUKHTAR BAYLOR
CHARLES ONI
DIANA EDWARDS
JILL BUTTON
AFRICAN MAN
YOGA STUDIO MANAGER
MR. SIMMONS
“Always Buy Retail”

NON-SPEAKING

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SCENE 1
JAMAL BUONSI (DEAD)

SCENES 6 & 7
CSUs
DARCY CHO (DEAD)
UNIFORMED COPS

SCENE 7
PLAINCLOTHES

SCENES 13 & 14
JAMAL’S NON-SPEAKING AFRICAN ROOMMATE

SCENE 16
BULLPEN UNIFORM

SCENE 20
CSUs
UNIFORMED COPS

SCENES 25 & 26
COP IN CHARGE
TAC-TEAM

SCENE 43
CSUs
PARAMEDIC
UNIFORMED COP
“Always Buy Retail”

Locations

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INTERIORS
ABANDONED BUILDING
COURTYARD
BLISSFUL BUDDHA YOGA STUDIO
CASTLE’S LOFT
  BEDROOM
  CASTLE’S OFFICE
  FRONT HALL
  KITCHEN
DIANA’S APARTMENT BUILDING
  BATHROOM
  BEDROOM
  HALLWAY
  LIVING ROOM
DOWNTOWN WAREHOUSE
  OFFICE
JAMAL’S APARTMENT
MARLOWE PREP
  PRINCIPAL’S OFFICE
O&H DISCOUNT ELECTRONICS
PRECINT
  BULLPEN
  INTERROGATION ROOM
  TECH ROOM
  WAITING AREA
STALL
UPPER WEST SIDE APARTMENT

EXTERIORS
CANAL STREET
JAMAL’S APARTMENT BUILDING
  ROOFTOP COURTYARD
MARLOWE PREP (ESTABLISHING)
  COURTYARD
STREET OUTSIDE DOWNTOWN WAREHOUSE
  WAREHOUSE FRONT
FADE IN:

A SERIES OF SHOTS:

A large red cloth... Red liquid sitting in a small glass bowl... Tight on a flame atop a small white candle... The candle is held in a MAN’s hand... its wax has melted over it.

PULL BACK to reveal his face partially illuminated by the flickering candlelight... His open, sightless eyes tell us he's dead.

CUT TO:

INT. CASTLE'S LOFT, BEDROOM - MORNING

Two intertwined bodies roll around in bed. Bare limbs and backs are exposed amidst the twisted sheets.

Suddenly, they disappear over the edge of the bed. THUMP! A beat. Heavy breathing. And then Castle’s head pops up from behind the bed.

    CASTLE
    That was...

And then a WOMAN’s head pops up beside him. This is MEREDITH, late-30s, beautiful, and out of breath.

    MEREDITH
    Oh yeah. Top ten, at least.

    CASTLE
    More like top twenty.

    MEREDITH
    Not top ten?

Castle shakes his head, and counts off.

    CASTLE

    MEREDITH
    That place in the Poconos.

    CASTLE
    Mykonos. Coney Island. Staten Island.

    MEREDITH
    (remembering)
    Mmmmm. Staten Island. Oh, and the hot air balloon.
CASTLE
The Westminster Dog Show?

MEREDITH
That’s only nine.

CASTLE
And the night we made Alexis.

MEREDITH
Yeah. That was a good night.

Meredith smiles, leans in, and gives him a kiss.

MEREDITH (CONT’D)
We have had fun, haven’t we? Makes you wonder why we ever got divorced.

CASTLE
I know, right? I mean, other than the whole having an affair with your director, moving to Malibu, and serving me with divorce papers, we really had a chance.

MEREDITH
(blurts out)
I’m moving back.

CASTLE
Back?

She nods.

CASTLE (CONT’D)
To New York?

MEREDITH
I miss it. I miss Alexis. I miss you.

CASTLE
What about your career?

MEREDITH
LA’s changed. The juicy roles just aren’t there for an actress of my caliber. I need a change. Like Broadway maybe. The legitimate stage.

CASTLE
Whoa. Time-out. Move back? Have you really thought this through?
MEREDITH
What’s to think about? You, me,
Alexis, all living in the same city.
It’s gonna be just like old times...

She starts kissing her way down his body. He tenses up. And
the look in his eye is not lust. It’s fear.

CASTLE TITLE CARD

INT. ABANDONED BUILDING, COURTYARD – DAY

ESPOSITO squats over the dead man from our opening montage.
The victim’s on his back, laid out on a LARGE SQUARE OF RED
FLANNEL. The burned-down WHITE CANDLE is still clutched in
his left hand. A GLASS BOWL OF BLOOD is positioned by his
head.

ESPOSITO
Vic’s an African-American male,
early-20s. Multiple stab wounds. No
ID. Body was discovered by a
homeless guy.

BECKETT looks down at the bruises on his body, as Castle and
RYAN stand behind her.

BECKETT
He was beaten, maybe even
tortured...

RYAN
Looks like some kinda ritualistic
killing.

BECKETT
What gave you that idea? The red
flannel, the candle, or the bowl of
blood?

She looks at Castle. She notices he seems a little lost.

BECKETT (CONT’D)
Castle?

He snaps out of it.

CASTLE
What?

BECKETT
You okay?
CASTLE
I had sex with my ex-wife this morning.

The three of them all just look up at him. He continues as if they wanted clarification...

CASTLE (CONT’D)
My first ex-wife, Meredith. Alexis’s mom.

...which they didn’t.

CASTLE (CONT’D)
She wants to move back to New York. Do you know what that means? It means a very special kind of hell. The hell of a deep-fried Twinkie.

RYAN
A deep-fried Twinkie?

BECKETT
Castle...

CASTLE
That guilty pleasure that you know is bad for you, so you only do it once, maybe twice a year as a novelty. But a deep-fried Twinkie everyday?

He shudders.

BECKETT
Castle!

CASTLE
What?

BECKETT
Crime scene. Dead body. A little respect.

CASTLE
I don’t think he can hear me.

BECKETT
Okay, then. How about a little self-respect?

CASTLE
Fine.

Castle glances over the scene.
CASTLE (CONT’D)
Check his mouth. There’s probably a small pouch inside.

Esposito gently opens the man’s mouth with gloved hands. Using a pen, he draws out a small WHITE FABRIC BUNDLE.

BECKETT
How did you know?

Castle kneels down, now engaged in the crime scene.

CASTLE
Open it.

Holding it gingerly in his palm, Esposito opens it to reveal an ODD-LOOKING SILVER CHARM. There is a MYSTERIOUS SYMBOL drawn in red ink on the fabric of the bundle itself.

ESPOSITO
What does it mean?

CASTLE
It’s Vodun.

ESPOSITO
Vodun? That some kind of Star Trek thing?

RYAN
Dude, it’s a religion. Practiced primarily in West Africa.
(off his look)
What? I read too.

CASTLE
The blood in the bowl is most likely animal blood. Part of the ceremony. The pouch is an offering to the spirits. But I don’t recognize the symbol.

ESPOSITO
If you did, you’d be a suspect. How do you know about all this?

CASTLE
Research for my sixth Derrick Storm novel, Unholy Storm. Vodun’s not just limited to West Africa. It’s also practiced in the Haitian and Dominican communities right here in New York.
BECKETT
Have CSU run the pouch, have the M.E. test the blood, and get his prints in the system and see if we can get an ID.
(beat)
Castle... This ritual - I assume it was performed for a very specific purpose.

ESPOSITO
Only if you’re assuming the guy doing it was rational.

CASTLE
No. She’s right. It may not make sense to you or me, but if we find out why he did this, we might find the killer.

ESPOSITO
(“duh”)
Yeah, that’s kinda how we do it.

BECKETT
This research of yours? You still have it?

CASTLE
As a matter of fact, I do.

CUT TO:

INT. CASTLE’S LOFT, CASTLE’S OFFICE - DAY

We PAN ACROSS Castle’s extensive collection of books and memorabilia.

CASTLE (O.S.)
The purpose of their rituals was to make contact with the spirits and the spirit world. To gain their favor through sacrifice.

We PULL BACK to reveal:

Castle is sitting at his desk, reading from a book. An academic textbook on Vodun perhaps? Then...
CASTLE (CONT’D)
Storm was pretty sure he’d
tsacrifice just about anything when
he saw the amulet swaying
rhythmically back and forth between
the woman’s bare, glistening
breasts.

We PULL BACK to reveal the cover of the book:

BECKETT
Unholy Storm? You dragged me here so
you could read from your own book?

CASTLE
There’s a lot of good stuff in
here, and some of it is factual.

Beckett shakes her head.

CASTLE (CONT’D)
Where are you going?

BECKETT
I have a murder to solve.

CASTLE
That’s what we’re doing.

She heads toward the door.

CASTLE (CONT’D)
C’mon, I was kidding. I have
another source.

BECKETT
And you call your ex-wife the deep-
fried Twinkie.

CASTLE
Trust me. As annoying and intrusive
as you think I am, she’s a million
times worse.

BECKETT
What about Alexis? Maybe she misses
her mom. Maybe having her in town
would be a good thing.

CASTLE
Yeah, right. Once, when Alexis was
nine, Meredith stopped by to take
her to lunch.
BECKETT
So?

CASTLE
In Paris. Paris! And then she acted like there was nothing wrong with it. She’s like Auntie Mame on meth.

Beckett lands at the front door.

BECKETT
If she’s so bad, why’d you sleep with her this morning?

CASTLE
Here’s the thing about crazy people. The sex is unbelievable.

BECKETT
How shallow are you?

CASTLE
Very.

BECKETT
I don’t have time for this.

She opens the door. Standing there is MICHELLE - attractive, early-30s, African-American - holding a food delivery bag with a grin.

MICHELLE
Someone order lunch?

CASTLE
(to Beckett)
Detective, meet my other source.

TIME CUT TO:

INT. CASTLE’S LOFT, KITCHEN - DAY

Castle and Beckett sit at the kitchen table with Michelle. They’re all eating from large bowls of stew. Michelle studies a PHOTO of the symbol and charm from the crime scene.

MICHELLE
The symbol is a “Vever,” a representation of the one who can open the crossroads to the spirit world.
CASTLE
(to Beckett)
Michelle taught me everything I know about Vodun.

MICHELLE
Which obviously isn’t much. That scene with the topless girl and the chicken blood? What was that?

CASTLE
So I took a few liberties.

Michelle looks back at the photo.

MICHELLE
From the design, I’d say you’re not looking at Haitian, Jamaican, or Dominican. This is hardcore Nigerian.

BECKETT
What about the charm?

MICHELLE
The charm’s an offering to a Vodun saint, or Loa, in this case Ogun. He’s usually called upon to help find something that’s been lost.

CASTLE
So our killer’s looking for something.

MICHELLE
(nods)
Something the victim once possessed.

BECKETT
Maybe that’s why he was tortured. Could the kind of ceremony indicate what the killer’s looking for?

MICHELLE
Unfortunately, no.

BECKETT
How do you know all this?

MICHELLE
Because I practice.

BECKETT
You practice Vodun?
MICHELLE
I spent my junior year abroad in Nigeria. Fell in love with the religion and the cuisine.

CASTLE
Michelle owns the best Nigerian restaurant in the city.

BECKETT
Funny, I wouldn’t have pegged you as the occult type.

MICHELLE
Occult is in the eye of the beholder, Detective. As bizarre as Vodun might seem to you, I assure you, the beliefs of Western religions seem just as strange to outsiders.

(beat)
How do you like the Cow’s Foot Stew?

BECKETT
Cow’s Foot?
(to Castle)
You said it was beef.

CASTLE
Technically, a cow is beef.

She grimaces, then turns to Michelle.

BECKETT
So the murder, was that part of the ceremony?

MICHELLE
No. Vodun is a peaceful, deeply-spiritual religion practiced by millions of people across the world everyday.

Beckett shows her another picture of the crime scene.

BECKETT
I doubt whoever did this was peaceful.

MICHELLE
No. But there are extremists in every religion. Your killer may be Vodun, but that’s not why this man’s dead.

(beat)

(MORE)
He was killed because he had something your killer desperately wants. And he’s not going to stop until he finds it.

Beckett’s phone rings...

BECKETT
(to phone)
Beckett.

INT. UPPER WEST SIDE APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Ryan on the phone. UNIFORMED COPS and CSUs mill about. The room’s a wreck. Tables turned over, lamps broken, and a CHANEL PURSE, its lining ripped out, lying on the floor.

RYAN
Yeah. It’s Ryan. We got another one.

CAMERA TILTS DOWN (RYAN’S POV)

Revealing an ASIAN FEMALE positioned in the exact same ritualistic fashion as our first male victim (red flannel cloth, white candle, bowl of blood, and fabric bundle in the mouth).

END ACT ONE
Castle and Beckett move past UNIFORMS at the door and into the apartment’s hallway.

BECKETT
Cow’s Foot Stew?

CASTLE
You liked it.

BECKETT
That was before I knew what it was.

CASTLE
If I’d told you, would you have tried it?

BECKETT
No.

CASTLE
See? I did you a favor.

As they enter the living room, we see it’s been trashed. Ryan and Esposito are with the victim.

RYAN
Victim’s name’s Darcy Cho. Second year lawyer at a firm downtown.

ESPOSITO
Multiple stab wounds. Just like our last guy.

RYAN
Neighbor saw her door open and called the super. This is what he found.

Beckett looks at the victim on the red flannel cloth.

CASTLE
The staging is exactly the same.

Esposito nods to some PLAINCLOTHES across the room.

ESPOSITO
Yeah. When they saw what they had, the Westside boys gave us a call.
BECKETT  
Looks like she put up a fight.  
Defensive wounds on her forearms.

ESPOSITO  
All the same paraphernalia as the  
other murder.

He holds up an evidence bag containing a pouch and charm.

ESPOSITO (CONT’D)  
Found another charm in her mouth.

BECKETT  
Anything from CSU on the first  
scene?

RYAN  
Candle’s basic paraffin, available  
at any bodega. Figure it’s gonna be  
same with this one. Cloth is common  
red flannel. Glass bowl was made in  
China.

Beckett looks at the bowl with the blood in it.

BECKETT  
And the blood?

ESPOSITO  
Chicken blood.

Beckett picks up a shredded Chanel purse, lying on the floor  
next to Darcy, with her pen.

BECKETT  
Must’ve used it to defend herself.

Castle takes in the trashed room.

CASTLE  
Well, we know he didn’t find what  
he was looking for.

RYAN  
How do you know?

CASTLE  
(re: Darcy’s death pose)  
He still needs the spirits to guide  
him.
BECKETT
(to Ryan and Esposito)
Find out what you can about Darcy.
If she knew our first victim. I want to know how these two murders are connected.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARLOWE PREP - DAY
Establishing.

INT. MARLOWE PREP, PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY
ALEXIS enters in uniform, carrying a large calculus book.

ALEXIS
Mr. Simmons. You wanted to see me?

Her headmaster, MR. SIMMONS - 50s, tweedy, academic - moves to her and places a comforting hand on her shoulder.

MR. SIMMONS
Alexis, I’m afraid we have some bad news.

ALEXIS
What? No. Is it my dad? Did he get shot?

We PULL BACK to REVEAL:

Meredith rises from a chair, delicately blotting away tears.

MEREDITH
It’s not your dad, sweetie.

ALEXIS
(confused)
Mom?

MEREDITH
It’s your grandfather. He passed away this morning.

Alexis shoots Meredith a confused look.

ALEXIS
(“who?”)
Grandfather?

Meredith cuts her off.
MEREDITH
I know, it’s a lot to take in.

Alexis sees where this is going.

ALEXIS
Mom, I have a calculus test today.

MR. SIMMONS
Given the circumstances, I’m sure Mr. Brown will let you make it up.

MEREDITH
Thank you, Mr. Simmons, for your compassion in this trying time.
(to Alexis)
Let’s go, honey. Lots to do.

Meredith sweeps up Alexis and they exit...

EXT. MARLOWE PREP, COURTYARD – MOMENTS LATER

As Meredith hurries Alexis along, they talk in hushed tones.

ALEXIS
Mom, Grandpa died six years ago.

MEREDITH
I know, but a death in the family? Always a great excuse to get out of school.

ALEXIS
No. It’s a creepy excuse.

MEREDITH
Come on. I need some Alexis time. Do you realize I’ve been in town a whole week and we haven’t even gone shopping?

ALEXIS
We’re going shopping on Saturday. When I don’t have school.

MEREDITH
But Bendel’s is having its sale now.

ALEXIS
I studied all week for that test.
MEREDITH
Why bother learning math if you
don't get to apply it in real-life
situations? Like calculating your
savings!
(beat)
Come on, what’s the harm? Unless
you really want to go back and tell
Mr. Simmons that your mother’s a
liar...

Alexis gives in.

ALEXIS
Fine. But promise we’re not leaving
the city.

INT. PRECINCT - WAITING AREA - DAY

Ryan sits on the couch next to JILL BUTTON, late-20s.

JILL
It doesn’t make sense. Why would
someone kill her?

RYAN
Ms. Button. Your office manager
said you and Darcy were close.

JILL
We joined the firm at the same
time. Neither of us knew anyone in
the city, so we just sort of became
best friends.

Ryan shows her the crime scene photo of the first victim.

RYAN
Do you recognize this man? We think
he and Darcy might be connected.

JILL
No. I... What happened to him?

RYAN
That’s what we’re trying to find
out.

JILL
Oh, God. Is this what happened to
her? Who would do something like
this?

Off Ryan...
Ryan enters to find Castle and Beckett with CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY. He nods back at Jill.

RYAN
Jill Button, Darcy’s BFF. She says she’s pretty familiar with all of Darcy’s friends and clients, but she’s never seen the vic before. The firm does do some immigration though, but there’s nothing to indicate any involvement in something like this.

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
So our first victim gets killed in some religious ritual, then history repeats itself with this lawyer the very same day.

CASTLE
I’m sure there’s a lawyer joke in there somewhere, I just can’t think of it.

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
And the killer tossed this woman’s apartment, looking for what? Drugs? Money?

RYAN
Far as we can tell, Darcy was clean.

Esposito enters with a file.

ESPOSITO
We got a match on the first victim’s fingerprints. INS database.

Esposito hands the file to Beckett.

BECKETT
Jamal Buonsi?

ESPOSITO
Nigerian national. Entered the U.S. on a student visa 18 months ago. He was enrolled at NYU as an exchange student.

BECKETT
His visa expired a year ago.
CASTLE
Looks like he decided to stay.

Ryan eyes the photo of a dead Jamal.

RYAN
Lucky him.

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
Any word on his last known whereabouts?

ESPOSITO
I tracked down the family Jamal lived with when he was in school. Last they saw him, he was in a cab on his way to Kennedy.

BECKETT
I take it that’s not the end of the story.

ESPOSITO
No. Turns out, Jamal and their 13-year-old son were pretty close. A couple months back, the folks discovered the two of them were still in touch.

Esposito hands Beckett a piece of paper.

ESPOSITO (CONT’D)
Jamal’s cell phone number. It’s billed to an address on East 3rd.

CASTLE
That’s only a few blocks from where his body was found.

RYAN
East 3rd is right near Darcy Cho’s law firm.

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
(to Ryan)
You said Darcy Cho’s law firm did some immigration work?

RYAN
Yeah.
CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
You and Esposito take a ride down there and find out if this Jamal Buonsi was a client. Maybe that’s the connection.

BECKETT
We’ll get a warrant for the billing address.

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
Find out what this guy wants before the son-of-a-bitch kills again.

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING, ROOFTOP COURTYARD – DAY

Castle and Beckett emerge from a stairwell.

CASTLE
Wasn’t really expecting a doorman building. But a six flight walk-up?

BECKETT
Should’ve seen my first apartment. Three flights up, on an airshaft over a restaurant. Whole place smelled like chicken wings.

Clothes dry on clotheslines. A LARGE PIGEON COOP holds a number of cooing birds. Worn LAWN FURNITURE and a small HIBACHI. Are the pigeons a hobby or dinner?

CASTLE
They come here looking for a fresh start and this is what they get. Slum housing in Williamsburg.

BECKETT
Still, for a lot of them, it’s better than what they left.

They reach the closed door. From inside we HEAR muffled voices. MUSIC. They share a look.

CASTLE
Looks like Jamal didn’t live alone.

Beckett knocks. No answer. A beat. Then she knocks louder. We hear people talking in a foreign tongue and then the music lowers. A beat later, the DOOR OPENS, revealing a big AFRICAN MAN in his 20s. TWO OTHER MEN of similar ethnicity are behind him inside the apartment.
AFRICAN MAN
Yes?

BECKETT
(badges him)
Detective Beckett. NYPD.

The men start yelling to each other. The African Man tries to
slam the door on her, but Beckett shoves her foot in between
the door and the jamb.

BECKETT (CONT’D)
Oh no, you don’t.

She shoulders the door open and bursts in...

INT. APARTMENT – CONTINUOUS

...drawing her gun.

BECKETT
Hands. Show me your hands.

They raise their hands. One of them, frightened, yells to
another something that sounds like “Immigration.”

BECKETT (CONT’D)
No. I’m not Immigration! Everybody
just relax!

Beckett moves deeper inside. Twin beds fill the room and not
much else. Castle follows a beat later, at a safe distance.

AFRICAN MAN
If you’re not from Immigration,
then who are you?

BECKETT
I’m a homicide detective.
(off their looks)
I’m looking for information about
Jamal Buonsi.

AFRICAN MAN
We don’t know any Jamal.

BECKETT
Then you wanna tell me why his cell
phone was billed to this address?

The men exchange more glances but remain silent.
BECKETT (CONT’D)
Did you want me to call Immigration
or do you want to cooperate?

That’s when Castle spots a piece of red flannel cloth peaking
out from underneath one of the beds. He indicates toward it.

CASTLE
Detective.

Beckett sees it now, too.

BECKETT
Whose bed is that?

Again, silence. Beckett stares them down.

BECKETT (CONT’D)
I’m not going to ask again.

The African Man glances at one of the other two men - AZI,
20s. A tell. Beckett turns to Azi.

BECKETT (CONT’D)
That your bed?

Azi nods. Castle examines the red cloth.

CASTLE
The same red flannel...

He pauses as he finds a bag.

BECKETT
What is it?

Castle dumps the bag out on the bed. PARAFFIN CANDLES spill
out, along with a GLASS BOWL.

END ACT TWO
ACT THREE

INT. PRECINCT, INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Castle and Beckett sit across from Azi. On the table in front of them is the piece of red flannel cloth and several candles.

BECKETT
Red flannel cloth, candles... You know about these things, don’t you? What they’re used for?

CASTLE
You were invoking the Loa, Ogun. Why? What’re you looking for?

Azi says nothing.

BECKETT
We can link this red flannel to two murders... In this country, that puts you in a lot of trouble.

AZI
I’ve done nothing wrong.

BECKETT
Two people are dead. One was a man you lived with.

She shows him the photo of Jamal’s crime scene.

BECKETT (CONT’D)
Look at the picture. That’s the same red flannel, the same candle.

Azi is clearly upset. Beckett shows him the photo of Darcy’s crime scene.

BECKETT (CONT’D)
And again here. Why’d you kill her, Azi?

AZI
I don’t know this woman. I didn’t kill anyone.

BECKETT
So, you’re saying it’s just a coincidence all these things were found in your apartment. Under your bed.
AZI
They weren’t mine. They were for someone else.

BECKETT
Who?

Azi is silent.

BECKETT (CONT’D)
Do you want to go back to Nigeria? Because I can arrange that with one phone call.

Azi meets Beckett’s eye.

AZI
So can he.

Castle and Beckett exchange looks. Azi’s scared of someone. But as he looks back down at the photo of Jamal, Beckett sees something else. Remorse.

BECKETT
Jamal was your friend, wasn’t he?

AZI
Yes.

BECKETT
Don’t you want us to catch who killed him? Don’t you want justice?

A beat as Azi considers it. Then...

AZI
His name is Charles. Charles Oni.

BECKETT
Charles Oni?

AZI
Immigrants know this man. He owns the apartments where we live. He owns the places where we work.

CASTLE
What about Jamal? Did he work for Oni, too?

AZI
At his stall on Canal Street. But it was only temporary. Jamal was a hard worker. Educated.

(MORE)
AZI (CONT'D)
He was going to save money, then apply for a visa. Become legal.

CASTLE
And Oni had a problem with that?

AZI
No. Yesterday, when Oni came looking for Jamal, he said Jamal had taken something. Jamal was not a thief. But Oni insisted. He knew my father was the priest of our village, so he made me show him how to invoke the spirits.

BECKETT
What did Jamal take?

AZI
Oni didn’t say.

BECKETT
Why didn’t you ask?

AZI
Because I was scared. He would’ve killed me. I’m only telling you now because Jamal was my friend. He did not deserve to die like that. Oni was wrong.

Beckett and Castle trade looks.

INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN - LATER

Castle and Beckett at her desk. Beckett hangs up the phone.

BECKETT
City records show no vendor’s licenses for Charles Oni on Canal Street.

CASTLE
The guy’s exploiting illegals. I doubt he’s gonna use his real name.

BECKETT
Clearly not. The apartment’s owned by a “Robert Burnett.” No listing in the Tri-State area and the address is a P.O. box in Jersey.

Esposito and Ryan enter, crossing to the pair.
ESPOSITO
Law firm’s a dead end. They’ve never heard of anyone named Jamal Buonsi.

CASTLE
That’s perfect, because our suspect’s never heard of Darcy Cho. We still have no idea what our two victims had in common.

Just then, we hear a commotion from the other end of the bullpen. They look up to see...

Meredith, loaded up with shopping bags, is trying to push her way past a BULLPEN UNIFORM. Alexis is behind her, trying to disappear in a shame spiral.

MEREDITH
No, I am not going to wait downstairs. Do you have any idea who pays your salary? Me and my taxes.

Beckett shoots a look at Castle.

BECKETT
Is that...?

CASTLE
Yep.

Meredith spots him and waves.

MEREDITH
Richard! Over here!

The Bullpen Uniform catches Beckett’s eye. Beckett nods and he lets them through. As Meredith hustles toward them with her bags:

ESPOSITO
Deep-fried Twinkie?

CASTLE
‘Fraid so.

As Meredith arrives, Castle eyes her and then Alexis.

CASTLE (CONT’D)
Meredith, what a surprise.

MEREDITH
I know. Isn’t it great?
(to Beckett)
(MORE)
In LA, no one ever just stops by.
Don’t you just love this town?

BECKETT
More and more by the minute.

CASTLE
Meredith - Detectives Ryan, Esposito, and Beckett.

But Meredith only has eyes for...

MEREDITH
Ah, Beckett. Your new muse.
(off Castle’s look)
Alexis told me all about it...

Castle looks at Alexis. Alexis looks away, desperately avoiding meeting his eyes.

MEREDITH
...and I simply had to stop by.
(confides)
You know, I was his inspiration once.

BECKETT
Were you, now?

MEREDITH
Still am from time to time.

On Alexis - “What?”

She turns to look at her dad and now it’s him who avoids her gaze.

MEREDITH (CONT’D)
Right, Pooh Bear?

Ryan and Esposito grin. This is better than Xbox.

BECKETT
(smiling)
Pooh Bear?

CASTLE
I’ve had this dream before, only I was naked and far less embarrassed.
Meredith
Anyway, since we were in the neighborhood and I have a dinner tonight, I thought I’d drop Alexis here instead of schlepping all the way downtown.

Castle
Of course.

Meredith
Just being thoughtful—

Meredith has caught sight of the murder board, specifically the printout of the Chanel purse.

Meredith (cont’d)
Is that SJP’s purse?

Esposito
SJP?

Meredith
(“duh”)
Sarah Jessica Parker? She wore one just like it to the Armani show in Milan. It was on Fashion Scoop Daily last week.

While Meredith takes an even closer look at the photo of the purse, Alexis and Castle make “What happened?” “Why are you here?” and “Isn’t this humiliating?” faces at each other.

Beckett
Well, this one belonged to one of our victims.

Meredith
That is so tragic. More tragic, of course, if it’d been the real thing, but still...

Beckett’s ears prick up.

Beckett
The real thing?

Esposito
You’re saying it’s a fake?

Meredith moves to the murder board and points to the picture of the purse.
MEREDITH
Look at the leather, and the stitching. It’s obviously a knockoff.

BECKETT
(puts it together)
Canal Street.

ESPOSITO
Canal Street?

BECKETT
That’s where they sell all the knockoffs, counterfeit electronics, watches, luggage...

CASTLE
And handbags.

RYAN
Darcy’s office was right near Canal. If she was going to buy a designer knockoff...

BECKETT
She would’ve gone to a stall on Canal.

CASTLE
The one where Jamal worked.

BECKETT
Oni’s stall. That’s what connects our two victims.
(to Esposito)
Get a sketch from Azi. Maybe one of the other vendors can ID his stall.

Castle and Beckett share a look. Meredith puts her arms around Castle.

MEREDITH
See? I always was your lucky charm. Just think of the things we’ll do once I move back.

As Meredith heads out, we stay with Castle and Alexis.

CASTLE
You want to talk about it?

ALEXIS
No. You?
CASTLE

No.

ALEXIS

If school calls, Grandpa died.

Castle nods, understanding.

CASTLE

Yeah, when your mom's around, he dies a lot.

INT. CASTLE’S LOFT, CASTLE’S OFFICE – NIGHT

Castle is at his desk, in his writing position. Behind him on a CLOTHESLINE are freshly-printed pages of his novel, hanging from clothespins. As he tears one down to re-read it, MARTHA steams in.

MARTHA

(re: the pages)

Why don’t you get a corkboard like a normal person?

CASTLE

Why don’t you knock like a normal person?

Touché.

MARTHA

Did you know Meredith kidnapped Alexis from school today?

CASTLE

And we all paid a hefty ransom.

MARTHA

It’s outrageous.

CASTLE

Remember your touring production of A Chorus Line? I almost had to repeat the fifth grade.

MARTHA

That was different. I was working and trying to be a mother. I wasn’t just waltzing into town and disrupting everyone’s life.

CASTLE

It’s who she is. You know that.
MARTHA
Have you considered what it’s going to be like having Meredith back in New York? How it’s going to affect you?

CASTLE
You mean how it’s going to affect you.

MARTHA
All of us, actually.

CASTLE
What am I supposed to do, Mother? It’s not like I can ban her from New York.

MARTHA
And this whole "theatre" thing. It’s ridiculous. Did you know she hasn’t landed a role in months?

Castle looks up.

MARTHA (CONT’D)
That’s right. I made some calls. Why do you think she’s moving back? She can’t get arrested in LA.

CASTLE
(considering)
Wonder if she could get arrested in New York. I know people now.

MARTHA
Does she honestly think she’s going to show up with a reel filled with According to Jim guest spots and push aside real actors? Actors who have dedicated their entire lives to the greatest profession in the world? You don’t choose the theatre. The theatre chooses you.

Martha locks eyes with Castle.

MARTHA (CONT’D)
Why the hell did you marry her anyway?

CASTLE
I don’t know, Mother. Maybe she reminded me of you.
Ryan and Esposito walk past busy stalls on Canal Street. Everything’s on sale. Tables are stacked with counterfeit goods, including handbags.

ESPOSITO
All my years on the force, I never understood why we don’t shut these guys down.

RYAN
C’mere.

Ryan grabs a purse and shows it to Esposito.

RYAN (CONT’D)
See? This one’s supposed to be a Louis Vuitton. But if you look close, instead of an “LV,” the initials say “EV.”

Esposito studies the bag.

ESPOSITO
That’s pretty close.

RYAN
But not exact. And that’s what keeps these guys from getting busted. See, technically, it’s not an imitation. It’s an homage.

ESPOSITO
An homage.

Beckett and Castle arrive.

CASTLE
You ladies picking out something pretty for yourselves?

Esposito puts down the purse.

BECKETT
You got the warrant?

ESPOSITO
Yeah. Which one is it?

Beckett indicates a shuttered stall nearby.

TIME LAPSE
CLOSE ON: BOLT CUTTERS

Esposito pops the lock on the shuttered stall. Beckett pulls out her weapon and looks at her guys.

BECKETT
Stay sharp. This guy’s already killed twice.

Ryan lifts the metal garage door and we reveal...

INT. STALL - CONTINUOUS

The place has been trashed. Boxes torn open, bags tossed around, display cabinets smashed, and papers strewn everywhere. A number of Chanel bags have been ripped apart.

BECKETT
The same Chanel.

CASTLE
Shredded.

Esposito sees something on the floor. He pushes aside some papers to reveal:

ESPOSITO
Beckett?

At the center, painted on the floor, is a large Vodun symbol. Beckett examines it.

BECKETT
This one’s different. It’s not the one we found in the victims’ mouths.

CASTLE
I’ve seen this symbol before. It’s the symbol for death.

RYAN
Why would a guy mark his own stall with a death symbol?

CASTLE
He wouldn’t. The symbol was meant for him. Charles Oni’s been marked for death.

END ACT THREE
ACT FOUR

EXT. CANAL STREET - DAY

UNIFORMS and CSUs work through Oni’s stall. Castle and Beckett look at the shredded Chanel purses.

BECKETT
The linings have been cut out.
(thinking it through)
All of this stuff is imported, right?
A knockoff would be a perfect delivery system for a smuggler.

RYAN
Yeah, but what’re they smuggling?

BECKETT
The only guy who can tell us has been marked for death.

Esposito’s eyes fall on the death symbol.

ESPOSITO
If he is alive, he doesn’t have much incentive to stick around.

BECKETT
Notify Passport Control. Get them the sketch and have them put Oni’s name and aliases on the No Fly List.

She turns back to Castle, but he’s gone. She looks around to see that he’s wandering away...

BECKETT (CONT’D)
Castle?

As Castle crosses into the street, he waves his hands. Beckett follows, thrown by Castle’s odd behavior.

BECKETT (CONT’D)
Castle? What are you doing?

CASTLE
I’m on TV.
BECKETT
Are you having a breakdown?

CASTLE

BECKETT
What do you mean “breakthrough”?

He points at the television.

CASTLE
Look behind me.

He steps aside, revealing... ONI’S STALL across the way.

CASTLE (CONT’D)
If that camera’s recording...

BECKETT
...we might be able to see who trashed the stall.

INT. O&H DISCOUNT ELECTRONICS – MOMENTS LATER
A small storefront crammed with audio and visual equipment. Beckett and Castle talk to the STORE MANAGER, 30s, as forthcoming and friendly as a used car salesman.

STORE MANAGER
What can I say? People like to see themselves on television. I’m telling you, you would not believe what people do in front of a camera.

CASTLE
I’m listening.

STORE MANAGER
This one chick... She stands there and right in front of the store she starts to take off her-

BECKETT
Just... show us the recording from the last few days. Okay?

CASTLE
(to the Manager)
It’s the low blood sugar. Makes her cranky.

Beckett looks at Castle.
BECKETT
Zip it, Pooh Bear.

STORE MANAGER
I’m sorry, but I can’t show you the recording.

BECKETT
I could get a warrant.

STORE MANAGER
Wouldn’t help. I sold it.

CASTLE
You sold it? The camera in the window?

STORE MANAGER
Some guy rolls in yesterday. Asked for that one specifically. I told him we got others, ones with boxes. But he wants the one in the window.

BECKETT
What’d he look like?

STORE MANAGER
6 foot. Big. Black. Had an accent.

Beckett takes out the sketch of Oni.

BECKETT
Was it him?

STORE MANAGER
Him? No. He owns the stall across the street.

CASTLE
You know him?

STORE MANAGER
We say “hi.” But this guy... (shakes his head) He seemed heavy. I don’t mean physically. Just something about him. Like he’d seen things. Bad things.

BECKETT
What else?
STORE MANAGER
He paid cash. Retail. At my
prices... I mean, he never once
tried to negotiate.

BECKETT
Would you be willing to work with a
police sketch artist?

STORE MANAGER
Wouldn’t a real picture be better?

BECKETT
You said he took the camera and the
recording.

STORE MANAGER
Yeah, he did.
(off her look)
Lady, this is an electronics store.
I got cameras all over this place.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANAL STREET - LATER

CLOSE ON: A SURVEILLANCE PHOTO OF THE MYSTERY MAN

He appears to be in his late 30s, with the eyes of a shark
and a scar on his face. He stands at the counter of the store
wearing a surplus Army jacket...

Esposito looks at the photo.

ESPOSITO
Yeah. He looks like the kind of guy
who’d paint death symbols on your
floor.

CASTLE
Here’s what I don’t get... Why did
he buy the camera?

RYAN
‘Cause he had the same idea we did.

CASTLE
We wanted the camera because we
were looking for him...

BECKETT
But who’s he looking for?

Esposito’s cell phone rings. He answers.
ESPOSITO
Esposito. Yeah?
(beat)
him in.

Esposito hangs up the phone.

ESPOSITO (CONT’D)
TSA just pulled Charles Oni from a
security line at JFK off our
sketch.

RYAN
Good call, bro.

CASTLE
Where was he going?

ESPOSITO
Nigeria. Under the name Robert
Burnett.

BECKETT
So was Oni running because he
killed, or because he was going to
be killed?

CASTLE
Or both.

23  INT. PRECINCT, INTERROGATION ROOM – LATER

Beckett interrogates ONI, who sits defiantly across from her.

ONI
I don’t know what you’re talking
about. I was going home to visit my
family.

BECKETT
Then why was the ticket only one-way?

ONI
My mother is ill. I did not know
when I’d be returning.

From the side of the table, Castle looks up from his notepad.

CASTLE
Must be nice to be able to see your
mother. It’s something Jamal Buonsi
will never get a chance to do.
Beckett lays out Jamal’s and Darcy’s crime scene photos.

**BECKETT**

We know you’re involved in these murders.

(off Oni)

Azi, the young man you intimidated into finding Jamal, is very eager to testify against you.

**CASTLE**

Apparently, he takes his religious beliefs very seriously. Doesn’t approve of using Vodun to kill people.

**ONI**

I didn’t kill anyone.

**BECKETT**

Then why were you looking for Jamal?

Oni remains silent.

**BECKETT (CONT’D)**

What was in the purse?

Oni looks up, surprised by the reference to the purse. Beckett and Castle notice.

**BEckett (CONT’D)**

What were you smuggling?

**ONI**

I want a lawyer.

**BECKETT**

Are you sure? Because if you get a lawyer, you’ll be back on the street in an hour, only I’ll make sure you can’t leave town. And you want to leave town, don’t you?

Beckett slides the photograph of the man who bought the camera at the electronics store across the table to Oni. We see a flash of fear flicker in Oni’s eyes.

**BECKETT (CONT’D)**

You scare a lot of people, Mr. Oni. Immigrants, illegals. Tell me, who scares you?
ONI
(a bad lie)
I don’t know this man.

CASTLE
He knows you. In fact, he’s marked you for death.

Oni is shaken. Beckett applies the thumbscrews.

BECKETT
Jamal worked for you and he’s dead.
Darcy Cho bought a purse from you and she’s dead. Why?

ONI
I won’t talk without protection.

BECKETT
I can’t protect you if I don’t know what from.

Oni draws a deep breath before he spills.

ONI
His name is Mukhtar Baylor. Very bad. Very dangerous. Former Nigerian secret police. They called him the Butcher of Benin.

BECKETT
What’s he doing in the U.S.?

ONI

BECKETT
Why?

Oni weighs his options.

ONI
If I tell you, you will protect me?

INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN – DAY

Our guys grab jackets as they download to Captain Montgomery.

BECKETT
Oni’s a counterfeiter.
CASTLE
He helps illegals get new papers.
Passports, visas, whatever they need. A real friend to the community.

ESPOSITO
Oni also provided Baylor with documents for his traffickers.

They start moving toward the door.

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
(putting it together)
Sewn inside the lining of his purses.

ESPOSITO
Which he kept in the back of the stall.

RYAN
Only he didn’t count on Fashion Scoop Daily.

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
The website?

RYAN
After that article on Sarah Jessica Parker appeared, there was a run on the purses.

ESPOSITO
Our first vic, Jamal, sold bags out front. He didn’t know about Oni’s scam, so when he ran out of the bags, he sold the ones from the back.

RYAN
One of them had Baylor’s documents inside.

They arrive at the elevator, punch the button.

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
Why didn’t he just get Oni to forge new documents?

CASTLE
It takes time and Baylor doesn’t have time.
BECKETT
The papers were for Baylor’s brother in Africa. Nigerian officials are closing in on him and if Baylor doesn't get him to the U.S., he'll be arrested for drug trafficking. They’ll execute him.

The elevator doors open.

CASTLE
Oni says Baylor runs his operation out of a warehouse downtown.

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
Find him before he murders someone else.

EXT. STREET, OUTSIDE DOWNTOWN WAREHOUSE – DAY

Run-down. Nearby, a TAC-TEAM unloads from the van. Guns are checked, vests are donned. Beckett opens her trunk, and as she reaches for her bulletproof vest, she notices a bag.

BECKETT
Where did that come from?

CASTLE
Sorry. That’s mine.

Castle pulls the bag out of the trunk.

CASTLE (CONT’D)
I thought, given everything that’s happened, I should be prepared.

And out of the bag, he pulls his own BULLETPROOF VEST.

CASTLE (CONT’D)
Special order. And look...

He points to the back. Where her vest says POLICE in big, bold yellow letters, his says WRITER.

BECKETT
Writer?

CASTLE
Cool, huh?

BECKETT
No. Not cool. You don’t need a vest!
CASTLE
If you shoot me, do I not bleed?

BECKETT
You’re not getting shot. You know why? Because you’re not going to be anywhere remotely near gunfire. You’re staying here.

CASTLE
Yeah, we’ve seen how that works.

Beckett un-holsters her gun.

BECKETT
Stay. Here. Don’t do anything.

As Beckett moves to the TAC-Team, where the COP in charge is studying the photograph of Baylor. Beckett gives them hand signals and they deploy, Ryan and Esposito following.

A moment later, a vested Castle follows.

INT. DOWNTOWN WAREHOUSE - DAY

Tense. The TAC-Team moves slowly through oil drums, machine parts, and crates, making their way through the warehouse using hand signals. Beckett, Ryan, and Esposito are on point.

A beat after they pass camera, Castle arrives behind them. Creeping along.

The TAC-Team move silently, working their way to the back offices. Tension is thick until...

A loud, OBNOXIOUS MUSICAL RING TONE ECHOES through the room. The TAC-Team turns and we reveal Castle, wincing. His cell phone just received a TEXT MESSAGE. He mouths, “Sorry,” and reads the text: “911!!! - Call Home ASAP!!! Alexis.” Concerned, he turns and creeps out of the warehouse. The TAC-Team continues forward.

EXT. DOWNTOWN WAREHOUSE FRONT - DAY

Castle dials his cell. We hear a muffled, “Hello.”

CASTLE
Alexis? What’s wrong?

INTERCUT AS NEEDED:
INT. CASTLE'S LOFT – CONTINUOUS

Meredith, all excitement, is standing in Castle’s loft, holding the Real Estate Section of the paper.

MEREDITH
Richard! Guess what?

CASTLE
Meredith?

MEREDITH
I found a place! A perfect place! It’s light. Spacious. And only a million six.

CASTLE
The text said “Alexis.” It said it was an emergency.

MEREDITH
Well, how else was I gonna get you to call me back?

Castle checks his phone...

CASTLE
But... Are you at the loft?

MEREDITH
I was in the neighborhood and had to pee, so I had Eduardo let me in. So, I called the realtor, and here’s the thing. I may need you to co-sign the loan.

Castle pinches the bridge of his nose with his fingers and shakes his head.

CASTLE
Meredith, we’re divorced. I’m not co-signing the loan.

MEREDITH
It’s for Alexis, too. I mean, it’s only a one bedroom, but you want her to be comfortable when she visits, right?

CASTLE
Can we talk about this later? I’m in the middle of capturing a very dangerous Nigerian drug lord...
MEREDITH
Okay. Later, then. Hey, Richard?

CASTLE
Yeah?

MEREDITH
Thanks.

CASTLE
For what?

MEREDITH
Putting up with me. I know I’ve been a handful, but once things settle down...

Castle spots an SUV approaching. We recognize the driver...

MEREDITH (CONT’D)
...I think it’s gonna be great.

CASTLE (distracted)
Yeah. Great.

MEREDITH
Are you even listening to me?
Richard? Richard?

It’s MUKHTA BAYLOR.

BAYLOR’S POV – Castle on the sidewalk, wearing a bulletproof vest just like the police, except he’s not the police.

CASTLE
Gotta go.

Castle hangs up his phone.

CASTLE (CONT’D)
Hey! HEY!

Castle runs toward Baylor. Baylor slams the gas and peels out of there.

END ACT FOUR
ACT FIVE

EXT. DOWNTOWN WAREHOUSE - LATER

Beckett, Esposito, and Ryan stare at Castle.

BECKETT
What do you mean, you didn’t get a license?

ESPOSITO
What kind of a car was it?

CASTLE
Big. An SUV, I think.

ESPOSITO
You think...

RYAN
How about the color?

This one Castle knows.

CASTLE
Black... Or was it dark blue.

The three of them look at him.

CASTLE (CONT’D)
Being a witness is harder than it looks. How do you guys ever get a conviction?

Then, they all turn away and walk back into the warehouse.

CASTLE (CONT’D)
You know, I’m usually great with the detail stuff. I was distracted.

BECKETT
Yeah. Rolling calls during a TAC strike.

CASTLE
He was supposed to be inside the building.

Our guys ad-lib giving Castle a hard time as we...

CUT TO:
INT. DOWNTOWN WAREHOUSE OFFICE – DAY

Beckett enters, followed by the others. The room is creepy. Various symbols are on the walls. Bolts of red flannel, glass bowls, jars filled with liquid. A collection of knives and weapons.

ESPOSITO
Weird.

RYAN
Yeah. Really weird...

Ryan’s looking at the desk. It’s covered with yoga brochures and schedules.

RYAN (CONT’D)
Vodun dude was a yoga nut.

CASTLE
Just because you’re a cold-blooded killer, doesn’t mean you can’t take care of yourself.

Opening one of the desk drawers, he finds a VIDEO CAMERA.

BECKETT
The camera from the electronics store.

CUT TO:

INT. PRECINCT, TECH ROOM – DAY

Castle, Beckett, Ryan, and Esposito sit in front of a TV monitor, scrolling through the tape from the video camera.

TIGHT ON: TV SCREEN

PEOPLE pass by on the sidewalk in front of the electronics store, some wave into the camera. In the BG, we see Jamal working at Oni’s stall across the street. (Note – the video has a time stamp.)

CASTLE
It’s Jamal.

On the TV screen, we see a woman come up, greet Jamal...

BECKETT
And Darcy Cho.

We watch as Jamal disappears into the back of the stall and re-emerges with the CHANEL PURSE.
Beckett scrolls forward. Until...

CASTLE
Wait. Go back.

She scrolls back to reveal...

ON THE TV SCREEN:

A WOMAN, 30s, in workout clothes, has a YOGA MAT slung over her shoulder and a CUP OF TAKE-OUT COFFEE in her hand. She buys a Chanel bag from Jamal.

RYAN
Looks like someone else besides Darcy bought a Chanel bag from Jamal.

Ryan freezes the image. Castle points.

CASTLE
And she’s carrying a yoga mat.

Beckett picks up the stack of brochures they found at the warehouse.

BECKETT
(off the brochures)
Baylor’s looking for her.

RYAN
Eight million people in the city. He’ll never find her.

CASTLE
He’s former secret police. He’ll find her.

BECKETT
Not if we find her first.
(off Ryan’s look)
She’s got coffee. From the Java Loft.

ESPOSITO
So?

BECKETT
So, we’re looking for a yoga studio, near a Java Loft, somewhere off Canal Street.

RYAN
Gotta be a dozen possibilities and Baylor’s got a head start.
Castle holds up his phone.

CASTLE
But I have an awesome service plan now.

BECKETT
(to Ryan and Esposito)
We’ve got Yoga Girl. You see if anyone else bought that bag.

INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN – DAY

As Beckett and Castle quickly push through the precinct, Castle’s thumbs are working his phone.

CASTLE
There are four Java Lofts within five blocks of Canal.

BECKETT
Yoga studios?

CASTLE
Time stamp on the video was 3:22. So we need a local studio with a class that ended around 3:00.

BECKETT
Maybe the woman was on her way to a yoga class.

CASTLE
Ever tried a half moon pose cranked up on caffeine? Totally throws off your chi. Trust me, she bought her coffee after class.

BECKETT
A class ending around 3 p.m. would give her enough time to buy her coffee...

CASTLE
But probably not finish it by the time she got to Canal Street.

As they hit the elevator, Castle taps the touchscreen a few more times.

CASTLE (CONT’D)
Got it.

As the elevator doors close...
INT. BLISSFUL BUDDHA YOGA STUDIO – DAY

Beckett slaps a VIDEO CAPTURE PRINTOUT of Yoga Girl down on the reception counter in front of the YOGA STUDIO MANAGER, female, 30s, lithe, and laid-back

BECKETT
NYPD. You know this woman?

YOGA MANAGER
Diana Edwards. What’s she done?

CASTLE
What do you mean?

YOGA MANAGER
You’re the second cop who’s come in looking for her.

BECKETT
Another cop was here?

YOGA MANAGER
He just left a few minutes ago.

BECKETT
Baylor.
(to the Manager)
I need Diana’s address right now.

INT. DIANA EDWARDS’S APARTMENT BUILDING, HALLWAY – DAY

Beckett and Castle race to the door. Beckett pounds on it.

BECKETT
Diana Edwards! NYPD! Open up!

CASTLE
Can I kick it down?

BECKETT
Sorry, Pooh Bear.

As Beckett pounds again...

BECKETT (CONT’D)
NYPD!

From inside...

DIANA (O.S.)
Okay. Okay. Take it easy.
The door to the apartment opens a crack, revealing a wary Diana. Beckett badges her.

BECKETT
Detective Beckett. NYPD. Are you Diana Edwards?

DIANA
Yeah.

BECKETT
We need to talk to you.

Beckett pushes in through the door. Castle follows.

INT. DIANA EDWARDS'S APARTMENT – CONTINUOUS

Beckett, Castle, and Diana stand in the living room.

BECKETT
Diana, we have video surveillance of you purchasing a Chanel purse on Canal Street two days ago.

DIANA
Wow, I know you guys are cracking down on the knockoffs, but...

CASTLE
Where’s the bag?

DIANA
Right here.

Diana moves to the kitchen island, where we now see the bag. She hands it to Beckett. Beckett dumps its contents...

DIANA (CONT’D)
Hey!

...and rips open the lining. She pulls out a PASSPORT and holds it up for Castle to see.

DIANA (CONT’D)
What’s going on?

CASTLE
You’re a very lucky lady.

DIANA
(to Castle)
I don’t understand... Am I in trouble?
No. But from now on... always buy retail.

Suddenly, there’s a knock at the door.

BAYLOR (O.S.)
NYPD. Open the door.

Beckett and Castle look at one another.

BECKETT
It’s Baylor.
(to Diana)
Hide. Now!

Diana runs into the bedroom.

BECKETT (CONT’D)
Castle!

She points to the bathroom. As Castle tucks behind the bathroom door, Beckett slips the passport into her jacket’s breast pocket and draws her gun. Castle cracks the bathroom door and peeks out to see her take position by the front door. The knocking stops and...

BAM! The door’s kicked open revealing Baylor. But as he enters the apartment... WHAM! Beckett slams a crushing elbow to his chest, followed quickly by a backhanded fist to the face. Baylor staggers, stunned. Blood explodes from his lip.

Beckett pivots and levels her weapon, but not in time. Baylor grabs her gun hand and BAM! BAM! TWO ROUNDS EXPLODE into the ceiling!

Baylor grabs Beckett by the throat with his free hand and drives her into a bookcase near the bathroom door. As she smashes into it, all the contents crash down around her. Her head SLAMS back into the case and Beckett loses hold of her gun. She drops to the floor... unconscious.

Baylor picks up her gun and, seeing the purse on the kitchen island, he heads toward it.

As he does, Castle slips out of the bathroom and grabs Beckett. He pulls her back into the bathroom.

Baylor picks up the purse and sees that the lining has already been ripped out. Pissed, Baylor turns in time to see Castle slam the bathroom door shut.
INT. DIANA EDWARDS’S APARTMENT, BATHROOM – CONTINUOUS

Beckett lies on the tile floor, eyes closed. Castle gently shakes her.

CASTLE
Beckett. Beckett! Wake up!

There’s no response. Beckett’s still out cold. Castle looks to the locked door. The knob is rattling. Baylor wants in.

END ACT FIVE
Baylor pounds on the door. Castle looks around the bathroom, searching for some way to defend himself. But there’s nothing. BAM! BAM! BAM! Shots splinter the bathroom door.

Castle grabs the unconscious Beckett and hoists her in the bathtub to protect her from gunfire. He reaches inside Beckett’s jacket’s breast pocket...

CASTLE
If you can hear me, I’m not trying to touch your boobs. I swear.

...and removes Baylor’s passport. He tucks the passport in his pants pocket, then pulls the shower curtain closed, concealing the tub and Beckett.

BAM! BAM! The doorknob shatters. Castle looks to the far end of the bathroom. There’s a second door.

Baylor kicks open the bathroom door...

...and storms in, gun drawn, to see Castle slipping out the far door. He FIRES, his bullet shattering the doorframe.

Castle, moving quickly through the bedroom. He sees Diana cowering by the bed. He motions to her to:

CASTLE
(whisper)
Get under the bed.

Diana crawls underneath the bed. Castle races to the doorway. Baylor appears behind him across the room. He FIRES again.

Castle dives over a sofa and crawls behind the large, concrete kitchen island. Hanging over the island is a rack of pots and pans.

BAYLOR (O.S.)
Give me the passport!
CASTLE
I don’t know what you’re talking about.

Baylor moves to the center of the room so he can keep an eye on the bathroom, bedroom, and Castle, while preventing anyone escaping out the front door.

BAYLOR
I have a gun. I will shoot you.

CASTLE
I don’t have it!

BAYLOR
Then you die.

He levels his gun and fires a shot that bounces off the kitchen island.

CASTLE
Okay. Fine. I have it.

Baylor crosses to the island and begins circling. Castle, in a crouch, tries to stay a step ahead of him.

BAYLOR
Give it to me.

CASTLE
No.

Baylor fires another round that bounces off a hanging pot, inches from Castle.

BAYLOR
I’ll kill you.

CASTLE
I know.

Baylor’s getting exasperated chasing Castle.

BAYLOR
Give it to me and I’ll let you live.

CASTLE
Really? ‘Cause you keep shooting at me.

Castle moves to the other side of the island, keeping the island’s bulk between himself and Baylor.
BAYLOR
Just give me what I want.

CASTLE
Come on, pal. I’ve written this scene like a hundred times. I give you what you want, I know how it ends. Badly. And by “badly” I mean me dead.

It’s a bit of a standoff until, from the bathroom, we hear a soft moan... Baylor hears it too and it gives him an idea.

BAYLOR
Tell me where it is or your girlfriend dies.

Baylor, keeping his gun trained on Castle, walks backward toward the bathroom.

CASTLE
She’s not my girlfriend.

BAYLOR
Are you sure?

INT. DIANA EDWARDS’S APARTMENT, BATHROOM – CONTINUOUS

Baylor reaches the doorway and raises his gun.

CASTLE
Wait!

But Baylor fires three rounds through the shower curtain, into the bathtub. He whips the shower curtain open, but the bathtub is empty! A GUN enters frame, the muzzle pressing against the back of Baylor’s head.

It’s Beckett. She’s got a cut on her forehead, but the hand holding her backup piece is steady.

BECKETT
Missed me.

TIME CUT TO:

INT. DIANA EDWARDS’S APARTMENT – LATER

A UNIFORM takes Diana Edwards’s statement. CSUs collect evidence. A PARAMEDIC finishes up with Beckett and moves off. She holds an ice pack to the butterfly-taped cut on her head as Castle approaches.

CASTLE
How you feeling?
BECKETT
Don’t remember much after hitting the bookcase.

CASTLE
I was very heroic.

BECKETT
Is that how I ended up in the bathtub?

CASTLE
(grins)
You can read all about it in my next book.

BECKETT
-serious-
Getting me to safety like that. You probably saved my life.

CASTLE
“Probably”? I totally saved your life. And you know what that means. You owe me.

BECKETT
Owe you what?

He nods as he moves closer to her, suggestively.

CASTLE
Whatever I want. And you know what I want, don’t you? You know what I’d really like you to do.

He leans in for what seems like a kiss, but he actually whispers in her ear.

CASTLE (CONT’D)
Never, ever call me Pooh Bear.

He turns and walks out of the apartment. Beckett looks after him and smiles.

INT. CASTLE’S LOFT, CASTLE’S OFFICE - NIGHT
Alexis enters to find Castle writing.

ALEXIS
Dad?

CASTLE
Yeah, sweetie?
He looks up as she takes a seat.

ALEXIS
Hypothetically... is it okay to
love someone but not want to have
them around all the time?

CASTLE
Mom?

ALEXIS
I love her. I do.

CASTLE
I know you do. And I’m glad you do.

ALEXIS
But, Dad...
(like it’s a big
confession)
She drives me crazy.

Castle smiles.

CASTLE
Yeah. That’s what mothers do.

ALEXIS
But if she lives here...

From O.S., we hear the front door open.

MEREDITH (O.S.)
Richard? Alexis?

Castle and Alexis trade looks.

CASTLE
Your secret’s safe with me.

Castle and Alexis head out.

INT. CASTLE'S LOFT, FRONT HALL – CONTINUOUS

Castle and Alexis, joined by Martha, find a very excited
Meredith, bubbling with news.

MEREDITH
You will not believe what happened!
I got a call from my agent. I’ve
been offered a huge role in a new
indie film.
ALEXIS
Wow. Mom, that’s great.

MEREDITH
It is. But, here’s the bad news.
I’m going to have to put my plans
to move back to New York on hold.

MARTHA
How ever will we manage?

CASTLE
Indie film? Sounds artsy.

MEREDITH
Totally. It’s a part I can really
sink my teeth into. Besides, it’s
not like Broadway’s going anywhere.
I can always do theatre when I’m
too old for High Def.

Castle, gently but firmly, places a hand on Martha’s arm,
before she kills her former daughter-in-law.

ALEXIS
When do you have to be back in LA?

MEREDITH
Tomorrow. I need to get back to my
hotel and pack. But I wanted to
tell you the good news.

She moves to hug Alexis.

MEREDITH (CONT’D)
There’s so much fun stuff we didn’t
get to do. But I’ll be back soon, I
promise.

Alexis, much more relaxed knowing she can love Meredith from
a distance.

ALEXIS
Can’t wait.

Meredith hugs Alexis again.

MEREDITH
Be a good girl. And don’t forget to
shop.

Meredith and Martha exchange “air kisses.”
MEREDITH (CONT’D)

Good-bye, Martha.

MARTHA

Meredith.

Finally, Meredith hugs Castle, gives him a kiss.

MEREDITH

Next time... top ten.

Castle opens the front door, Meredith sweeps out, and he closes the door behind her. Castle turns to find Alexis and Martha staring at him.

ALEXIS

Okay, Dad, spill.

CASTLE

What?

ALEXIS

What did you do?

CASTLE

Nothing. Oh, but my business manager had a great investment opportunity for me. A small, artsy independent feature.

MARTHA

That’s my boy!

CASTLE

Actually, she was perfect for the role. I’m doing them the favor. I think.

(to Alexis)

Hope you don’t mind.

ALEXIS

Raising one parent’s hard enough. I don’t know what I’d do if I had to raise two.

Castle smiles. He loves this girl. As he pulls her into a hug, we...

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW