

CASTLE

“Hedge Fund Homeboys” Ep. 104

Written by
David Grae

Directed by
Rob Bowman

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CAST

White Production Draft
November 24, 2008

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

BRANDON
MAX HELLER
ROMY LEE
SPENCER
AMANDA
MR. KENDALL
MRS. KENDALL
CHRIS MARKUM
MARGO FALCIGNO
KENT SCOVILLE
IAN YANKMAN
MRS. LEE
MR. LEE
MRS. HELLER
SPENCER'S LAWYER

Non-Speaking

White Production Draft
November 24, 2008

SC. 5
UNIFORMS

SC. 10
STUDENTS

SC. 23
WHITE GUYS (6)

SC. 26
CORRECTIONS OFFICER

SC. 48
PEOPLE

Locations

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INTERIORS

CASTLE LOFT

KITCHEN (ACT 1)
ALEXIS'S ROOM (ACTS 2, 6)
CASTLE'S OFFICE (ACT 4)
STAIRS TO LIVING ROOM (ACT 6)

KENDALL APARTMENT

LIVING ROOM (ACT 1)

OUTSIDE KENDALL APARTMENT

HALLWAY (ACT 1)

REDDING PREP

CORRIDOR (ACTS 1, 5)
AUDITORIUM (ACT 2)
CAFETERIA (ACT 4)
CLASSROOM (ACT 5)

PRECINCT

BULLPEN (ACTS 1, 2, 4, 5, 6)
INTERROGATION (ACTS 1, 4, 5, 6)
OBSERVATION ROOM (ACTS 1, 6)
LINEUP ROOM (ACT 2)
LOCK-UP (ACT 3)
CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY'S OFFICE (ACT 3)
STAIRWELL (ACT 4)

LEE LUXURY APARTMENT

LIVING ROOM (ACT 3)

LUXURY BUILDING

HALLWAY (ACT 3)

MORGUE

COLD STORAGE (ACT 4)

BECKETT'S UNMARKED (ACT 5)

OUTSIDE CASTLE LOFT

HALLWAY (ACT 6)

EXTERIORS

BUCOLIC LANDSCAPE (ACT 1)

MANHATTAN

CENTRAL PARK (ACT 1)

CENTRAL PARK

FIFTH AVE (ACT 1)
THE LAKE AT THE BOATHOUSE (ACT 1)
PATHWAY (ACTS 1, 4)

REDDING PREP (ACT 1)

COURTYARD (ACT 1)

PRECINCT

ROOF (ACT 4)

1 EXT. BUCOLIC LANDSCAPE - MORNING

1

We open on a pristine LAKE in a lovely country setting. The glassy surface of the lake is broken by the prow of a ROWBOAT gliding by. A YOUNG MAN'S ARM dangles lazily off the side, his fingers trailing through the water. Peaceful.

But as the CAMERA rises, it tells a different story. We see a dozen CROWS crowded around. Suddenly, the crows scatter. Revealing...

The LIFELESS BODY of a TEENAGE BOY, his shirt soaked in blood. And off this, we PAN UP revealing that we are...

2 EXT. MANHATTAN, CENTRAL PARK - MORNING

2

We see city buildings rising like sentries behind the trees.

3 INT. CASTLE LOFT, KITCHEN - MORNING

3

Breakfast. ALEXIS, dressed for school, sits on a stool eating cereal, reading the paper. CASTLE enters, pours coffee.

CASTLE

Reading the paper? You're gonna blow all your wired-teen-hyper-texting-nano-gizmo street cred.

ALEXIS

I'm a rebel. I kick it old school.

He kisses her, spies what she's reading.

CASTLE

Ah, Style Section. Anything I should know?

ALEXIS

The 70s are back.

CASTLE

They're like the Highlander. They just won't die.

(off her shrug)

Makes you wonder what came back in the 70s.

ALEXIS

(does the math)

Maybe the 40s?

CASTLE

I don't remember any top hats.

MARTHA enters.

CASTLE (CONT'D)
Good morning, Mother.

MARTHA
What are you so happy about?

CASTLE
Top hats.

Martha gives a little look but decides not to pursue it.

CASTLE (CONT'D)
You're dressed early.

MARTHA
I have class.

CASTLE
I believe that's a matter of some
debate.

MARTHA
At the New School, funny man.
(off his look)
Look, it's not that I don't
appreciate all you've done,
insisting I move in after Bernie
ran off with my bank accounts, but
a girl's got to stand on her own
two feet.

CASTLE
What kind of class?

MARTHA
Introduction to Life Coaching. It
was always my desire to make a
difference. On the stage or off.
Look, I had cards made.

She presents him with her card. Castle reads it.

CASTLE
It says I'm your client.

MARTHA
Of course it does. Haven't I been
telling you what to do your whole
life?

She breezes out of the room. Castle is too dumbstruck to
respond.

ALEXIS

Oh, Dad, Julie Schmidt's father's
back in rehab, so a spot opened up
to chaperone the DC trip.

CASTLE

How do you know he's in rehab?

ALEXIS

Must be a wired-teen-hyper-nano
thing. So what do you say?

CASTLE

Love to, kiddo, but with you away,
my chaperoning needs reside here.
Or did you forget about the last
time we left her alone?

ALEXIS

So she had a little party.

CASTLE

There were lime shards embedded in
the walls.

Martha re-enters the kitchen.

MARTHA

It was Cinco de Mayo.

Castle's cell RINGS (Dragnet theme).

CASTLE

(excited)
I hear dead people!
(picks up)
Who died and was it gruesome?

MARTHA

(to Alexis)
He stopped maturing at twelve.
Which sadly means he's better than
most men.

CASTLE

(folds cell)
I'm off to protect our fair city.
Love you.

He kisses Alexis and Martha and bolts.

ALEXIS

(calling after him)
Book 'em, Daddo!

4

EXT. CENTRAL PARK, FIFTH AVE - MORNING

4

A crisp, sunny day. Castle hops out of a taxi just as BECKETT emerges from her car.

CASTLE

Hey, look at this. We're in sync.

BECKETT

We are not in sync.

CASTLE

What? Not a Timberlake fan?

Castle hustles after Beckett into the park together.

CASTLE (CONT'D)

C'mon, admit it. You're beginning to appreciate my mad crime-solving skills.

BECKETT

You're giddy this morning.

CASTLE

The park. Gets me every time. The birds and the bees. Nature taking its course. Young lovers doing what young lovers do. Murders needing to be solved. Life is good.

Beckett looks at him, is about to respond, then just gives up. They duck under police tape to --

5

EXT. CENTRAL PARK, THE LAKE AT THE BOATHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

5

It's an active crime scene with UNIFORMS at the perimeter. ESPOSITO and RYAN approach.

RYAN

Nice day, huh? We gotta get out here more. And not just when someone gets whacked.

BECKETT

Why's everyone so back to nature this morning?

RYAN

We all go back to nature eventually, Detective.

BECKETT

Yeah, about that...

ESPOSITO

One victim. Donald Kendall, 18. He was a senior at Redding Prep.

They approach the ROWBOAT containing the BODY, which has been pulled to shore. LANIE, in wading boots, attends to the body from the side of the row boat.

RYAN

Someone's gonna miss prom night.

BECKETT

Redding Prep?

CASTLE

(disturbed by dead teen,
thinking of Alexis)
Private school... on Park Avenue.

ESPOSITO

No trust fund baby left behind.

BECKETT

What's he doing in a boat?

ESPOSITO

No idea.

BECKETT

How are you, Dr. Parish?

LANIE

My feet are cold.

BECKETT

What do you got for me, so far?

LANIE

Single GSW to the chest. Fairly large caliber... And from the lack of blood inside the boat, I'd say he wasn't killed at sea.

BECKETT

Someone moved him.

Lanie indicates dirt and grass on the victim's shoes.

LANIE

There's dirt and grass on his Chucky T's... Other than the postmortem voyage, looks like a pop and drop. I'm guessing sometime late last night.

Beckett then notices several rowboats tied up nearby.

BECKETT

(to Esposito and Ryan)

If he was dragged here, it couldn't have been far. Get some Uniforms to do a perimeter walk from those boats there out to Fifth. Tell them, they're looking for a blood pool, maybe a shell casing.

RYAN

Roger that.

Esposito and Ryan get on it, Beckett steps toward the lake's edge, takes it in. Castle joins her.

BECKETT

So why the burial at sea?

CASTLE

Vikings believed that in order to reach Valhalla, you needed a vessel.

BECKETT

Gun-toting Viking? That your theory?

CASTLE

No. Vikings launched their dead with a sacrificial woman.

Beckett turns and gives Castle a sharp look,

CASTLE (CONT'D)

Not to mention some booze and a good horse.

SMASH CUT TO:

CASTLE TITLE CARD

6

INT. KENDALL APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - DAY

6

It's a modest sized room that is a bit too cluttered with furniture. Beckett and Castle sit with MR. KENDALL, victim's father, 50, gaunt, full of regret and MRS. KENDALL, victim's mother, mid 40s, still in shock. Castle is staring at a modern sculpture that takes up a sizeable part of the room.

BECKETT

Do you know what he might have been doing in the park?

MRS. KENDALL

No.

BECKETT

When was the last time you saw him?

MRS. KENDALL

Yesterday, when he left for school.

BECKETT

Do you know where he might have gone after?

MRS. KENDALL

He was usually with his friends.

BECKETT

He didn't come home for dinner?

MRS. KENDALL

Most nights Donny ate out or at someone else's house.

MR. KENDALL

He hung out with a pretty tight crowd at Redding. They've all been together since grammar school.

MRS. KENDALL

We used to have them over all the time...

CASTLE

(then)

Only you've moved recently.

MRS. KENDALL

Yes, um, a few months ago.

MR. KENDALL

I was a partner at Lehman. When it went under, well, we took a big hit.

MRS. KENDALL

It was hard on Donny. You get used to a certain way of living...

(taking husband's hand)

But it was no one's fault.

CASTLE

Do you think he was depressed?

Mr. and Mrs. Kendall look to each other, unsure.

MR. KENDALL

You don't know what it's like.
Donny was strong but to lose
everything you have... We were just
getting by.

BECKETT

(beat)

I'm very sorry for your loss.

7 INT. OUTSIDE KENDALL APARTMENT, HALLWAY - DAY 7

Beckett and Castle head toward the elevator.

BECKETT

How'd you know they moved?

CASTLE

Either the Kendalls really like art
or that sculpture was bought for a
much bigger place. I wonder how
they could still afford Redding.

8 EXT. REDDING PREP - DAY 8

An austere stone building.

9 INT. REDDING PREP, CORRIDOR - DAY 9

Castle and Beckett walk with CHRIS MARKUM, the school
HEADMASTER.

MARKUM

When the Kendalls said they
couldn't afford tuition, we put
Donny on scholarship. The family
had been very generous in the past
and Donny was one of our brightest.
We thought he'd do great things.
Ivy League for sure.

BECKETT

Did you notice anything different
about him recently?

MARKUM

He'd always been a charismatic kid,
people were drawn to him. Some of
that spark was gone.

CASTLE

Any idea why he would've gone to
Central Park at night?

Markum pauses as they enter --

10 EXT. REDDING PREP, COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS 10

STUDENTS hang out, eating lunch, texting, playing PSPs, etc.

MARKUM

None at all. But the truth is, all these kids are icebergs. We only see the tip. If you want to know the rest, you should probably ask his friends.

Markum points out a cluster of FIVE KIDS, all around 18 years of age, gathered around a table.

MARKUM (CONT'D)

Amanda, Romy, Spencer, Brandon and Max.

BECKETT

How are they doing?

Markum gives a sympathetic shrug.

MARKUM

They were very close. Called themselves the six pack. It's strange seeing them without him....

Beckett nods. She and Castle cross toward the kids.

CUT TO:

11 REDDING PREP, CORRIDOR - VIDEO FROM PHONE SCREEN - DAY 11

Donny, 18, Caucasian, model good looks, charismatic, in a school hallway, speaks directly to camera:

DONNY (ON SCREEN)

Breaking news, my mom and dad are off to Abu Dhabi, so I'm in a 'rents free zone. Come over tonight for the "Dancing with the Stars Results Show." Betting opens at 7:30, my dad's Macallan 25 opens next....

We pull back and we are...

12 EXT. REDDING PREP, COURTYARD - DAY

12

Pulling back from the phone, we see the five kids with Beckett and Castle. BRANDON, 19, quiet, thoughtful, smiles and shakes his head as he closes the app on his phone.

BRANDON

That was before they moved and everything....

MAX, 18, a little geeky, looks down, emotional. ROMY, 18, Asian, wipes the mist from her eyes.

ROMY

You hear about this kinda stuff happening to other people, but...

BECKETT

Were any of you with Donny last night?

They shake their heads. SPENCER, 18, explains.

SPENCER

We hung for a bit after school, but we all headed home around five.

BECKETT

Can you think of any reason he might've been in the park?

Silence. The kids look at each other a beat. Castle senses they know something.

CASTLE

We just want to find who did this. We need your help...

Finally, AMANDA, the edgy one of the group, multiple ear piercings, and a small tat peeking out from under her starched white shirt at her shoulder, speaks up...

AMANDA

We loved Donny. We totally just wanted to help.

BRANDON

His family lost everything.

AMANDA

Not that we cared. But we go out, y'know?

ROMY

We like always offered to cover him, but he couldn't deal with it.

SPENCER

Yeah. I mean, he just kinda fell apart.

BECKETT

Fell apart how?

They all look at each other.

CASTLE

It's okay, he can't get in trouble.

AMANDA

He kind of... got into drugs.

BECKETT

Drugs?

BRANDON

He was just really hurting.

CASTLE

If he had money problems, how'd he afford a habit?

A long beat. Amanda looks to the ground.

AMANDA

He started dealing... In the park.

13

EXT. REDDING PREP - DAY

13

Castle and Beckett exit, talking. Head to their car.

CASTLE

Classic tragedy. Prominent family falls into disrepute, scion spirals downwards --

BECKETT

-- and bad things happen.

CASTLE

Of course bad things happen. Otherwise it wouldn't be a tragedy. Did you know that in the original Greek, the word "tragedy" literally means "goat-song?"

Beckett shoots Castle a look - What are you talking about?

CASTLE (CONT'D)

Yeah. It makes no sense to me either, but whatever that first story was, I can't help but think bad things must've happened to that goat.

Beckett turns and puts her finger in Castle's face. She wants to say something, but she doesn't know what. Her CELL RINGS. She bites her lip and shakes her head at Castle as she answers.

BECKETT

(into cell)

Beckett.

Castle leans in close to hear the call, their heads almost touching, intimate. Still on the phone, Beckett reaches with her free hand and grabs Castle's ear, pulling his head away from her.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Where?

CASTLE

Ow...Ouch...

BECKETT

(into cell)

On my way.

Beckett releases him and takes off. Castle hustles after her:

CASTLE

Next time, put it on speaker.

14

EXT. CENTRAL PARK, PATHWAY - DAY

14

At another CRIME SCENE, on some grass behind a PARK BENCH, which sits along a paved pathway. Ryan walks toward a bench with Beckett and Castle. RED CONES mark a trail to the pathway.

RYAN

9-1-1 call came in last night about 50 yards from here. Esposito's following up, but we found this...

CLOSE ON: a semi-dried, gelatinous pool of blood. RED CONES surround it.

RYAN (CONT'D)

I'm figuring he was probably
sitting on the top of the bench,
takes one to the chest, falls over
backward here.

Ryan comes around to CONES marking the divots in the grass.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Then he's dragged toward the lake.

BECKETT

So, what's he doing sitting on top
of a bench at night in the park?

RYAN

Back in my narc days this area was
pretty much an open bazaar,
'specially at night.

BECKETT

So, it's a drug deal gone bad.

RYAN

Fancy private school education
don't mean you aren't stupid.

CASTLE

Neither does a career in narcotics.

BECKETT

What are you talking about?

CASTLE

This blood pool's pretty big.

BECKETT

So? Lanie said the bullet was
large caliber.

CASTLE

Right. But if this kid was dragged
while he was a fresh kill, wouldn't
there be more of a blood trail?

BECKETT

(follows)

He was lying here awhile.

RYAN

Why would someone come back and
move him?

CASTLE

If it's a drug dealer, he realizes the cops are gonna think drug dealer if we find the body here...

BECKETT

...increasing his chances of getting caught.

CASTLE

So he moves the body to throw us off the trail.

RYAN

I dunno, Castle. A smart drug dealer?

CASTLE

Everything evolves. Why not criminals?

15

INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN - DAY

15

MARGO FALCIGNO, 50s, tough, lifelong New Yorker, sits at Esposito's desk flipping through a book of mug shots. She's more than halfway through the book and looking bored. Esposito sees Beckett returning, goes over to her.

BECKETT

(re: Falcigno)
9-1-1 caller?

ESPOSITO

Mrs. Falcigno. Was walking her dog when she heard the shot last night. A few seconds after, she saw a white dude run past her. I got her looking through mug books of dealers arrested in that area.

Then,

FALCIGNO

Hey! Detective, get over here!

Esposito and Beckett move to her.

ESPOSITO

You recognize someone, Mrs. Falcigno?

FALCIGNO

No, I miss your sparkling personality. Yeah!

(MORE)

FALCIGNO (CONT'D)
(pointing at mug shot)
That's the guy I saw, right there.

She points to a MUGSHOT of a white male, 30s (KENT SCOVILLE - think Eminem wannabe).

ESPOSITO
You sure?

FALCIGNO
Whadaya wanna give me a lie
detector? That's him!

Off the mugshot...

CUT TO:

16

INT. PRECINCT, INTERROGATION - DAY

16

KENT SCOVILLE, the Eminem-wannabe drug dealer who Mrs. Falcigno ID'd, sits across from Beckett.

BECKETT
Do you know why you're here?

SCOVILLE
No idea.

BECKETT
The arresting officer says he
observed you making hand to hand
sales of narcotics in the park.

SCOVILLE
Must got me confused with someone.

BECKETT
Really? Is that what you're going
with? All drug dealers look alike?
(off him)
You were arrested with money and
dope. Now given the fact you have
two prior felony sales on your
sheet, you should probably come up
with something better pretty fast.

SCOVILLE
Why you jammin' me up like this?

BECKETT
What were you doing in the park
last night?

SCOVILLE

What makes you think I was even in
the park?

BECKETT

A very reliable witness.

INTERCUT WITH:

17 INT. PRECINCT, OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS 17

Castle and CAPT. MONTGOMERY watch Beckett with Scoville.

CASTLE

Shouldn't she put him on his heels?
Go straight to the shooting?

CAPT. MONTGOMERY

It's not about putting him on his
heels. It's about building a case
for the DA.

BECKETT (THROUGH GLASS)

This witness says she saw you
running toward 72nd Street just
after midnight.

Scoville hesitates a moment, then --

SCOVILLE (THROUGH GLASS)

So I was running in the park, so
what?

CAPT. MONTGOMERY

See? She just got him to put
himself at the crime scene.

Off Castle, learning,

18 INT. PRECINCT, INTERROGATION - CONTINUOUS 18

BECKETT

Well, running isn't illegal, but
shooting someone is...

SCOVILLE

Shooting someone?

Beckett drops a photo of Donny in front of Scoville.

BECKETT

You know this person?

SCOVILLE
Never seen him before.

BECKETT
Really? Because I'm feeling that
you're not being completely
truthful with me.

19 INT. PRECINCT, OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

19

CAPT. MONTGOMERY
Watch her now...

SCOVILLE (THROUGH GLASS)
I want immunity.

BECKETT (THROUGH GLASS)
From what? The measles?
(off Scoville)
Do you know what a three-time loser
is, Mr. Scoville? It's someone
facing a third felony conviction.
Someone just like you, in fact.

SCOVILLE (THROUGH GLASS)
Okay. So I've seen him.

BECKETT (THROUGH GLASS)
Last night?

SCOVILLE (THROUGH GLASS)
Yeah. Last night.

CAPT. MONTGOMERY
Now she's got him with the victim.

Castle watches, impressed, getting into it.

20 INT. PRECINCT, INTERROGATION - CONTINUOUS

20

BECKETT
You sell to him?

SCOVILLE
No.

BECKETT
You're a drug dealer -- how else
you know him? You poker buddies?

He says nothing. Beckett closes her file.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

It was nice chatting with you, Mr. Scoville. Maybe you can drop me a line in about twenty-five years.

Beckett gets up.

SCOVILLE

Wait... Okay, I sold to him.

BECKETT

You sold to him when?

SCOVILLE

Last night. And lots of other times. Him and his little buddies.

BECKETT

What little buddies?

SCOVILLE

I don't know. Kids. Friends of his.

Beckett looks through the glass toward Montgomery.

BECKETT

Describe them.

SCOVILLE

Coupla dudes, coupla chicks... One was Asian. Kinda hot.

BECKETT

And you're saying they were in the park last night?

SCOVILLE

Yeah. Yeah, they were there.

21

INT. PRECINCT, OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

21

CAPT. MONTGOMERY

And now she's got some witnesses.

CASTLE

Witnesses who lied.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

22 INT. REDDING PREP, AUDITORIUM - DAY

22

Romy, Amanda, Spencer, Max and Brandon sit in the theater seats. Beckett stands in front of them. Looking down on them. Castle stands nearby.

BECKETT

You lied to me.

(off their innocent looks)

You were all with Donny when he was shot, weren't you?

Silence from the kids.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Anyone know what obstruction is?

CASTLE

I believe it's when you deliberately give false information in a criminal case.

BECKETT

You go to prison for it.

The kids look concerned. Brandon shoots a look at Amanda. It's not lost on Beckett or Castle.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Amanda...

AMANDA

Yeah. We were there.

BECKETT

You were in the park?

ROMY

Donny was like out of control. We were trying to get him to stop.

CASTLE

Why don't I believe you?

BRANDON

Guys. Just tell them the truth.

They all shoot daggers at Brandon.

BRANDON (CONT'D)

Sometimes we'd go to the park too.

SPENCER

We'd tell our parents we were hanging out at one of our houses, but we'd go to the park and party. And Donny...

CASTLE

Donny got you whatever you needed.

AMANDA

Y'know, it's not like we're the first kids ever to do drugs, okay?

CASTLE

But it's not really something you want to share with the folks.

BRANDON

Exactly.

BECKETT

So what happened?

BRANDON

We were hanging out, just... having fun. And this guy comes over, and he's all messed up, and he's got this gun. And he's yelling at Donny "Where's my money! I want my friggin money!" Donny was into him for a couple hundred dollars.

The kids are emotional now. As if they're reliving it.

MAX

Donny didn't have it.

AMANDA

And then the guy points the gun.

ROMY

And then there's this loud POP and Donny just kinda crumpled.

SPENCER

It didn't even sound real.

BECKETT

So what'd you do?

MAX

(ashamed)

We ran. We just... ran.

BECKETT

You didn't think to call the cops?

SPENCER

He was dead. We knew he was dead.
Calling someone...

CASTLE

-- Would've gotten you in trouble.

The kids are ashamed.

BECKETT

You get a good look at the guy?

The kids shrug, yeah.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Do you think you can identify him?

SPENCER

It was dark. Donny was on the end
of the bench.

BECKETT

Who was the closest?

23

INT. PRECINCT, LINEUP ROOM - DAY

23

Romy, her MOTHER behind her, stands with Beckett in front of a one-way window with the shade down. Castle's off to the side, with Montgomery. Romy's scared.

BECKETT

(to Romy, gently)

Okay, Romy, this is gonna be easy.
When we raise the shade, they won't
be able to see you.

ROMY

Are you sure?

BECKETT

I'm positive. They have no idea
who's even here. You just let me
know if you see the guy, okay?

Romy, looking scared, steels herself and nods. Beckett presses the INTERCOM.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Raise the shade, please.

The SHADE is raised, revealing Ryan and SIX WHITE GUYS, approximately the same age and height, holding numbered placards facing the glass.

BECKETT (CONT'D)
Number one, step forward.

Number one, steps forward. Romy shakes her head, no.

BECKETT (CONT'D)
Step back one. Number two.

Ryan indicates to Number Two: Scoville, to step forward.

Beat. Romy hesitates. Beckett sees it.

BECKETT (CONT'D)
It's okay, Romy. No one can see you. Do you recognize anyone?

ROMY
(nods, emotional)
Number two.

Beckett looks at Montgomery.

BECKETT
Where do you recognize him from?

ROMY
The park. He shot Donny.

24

INT. CASTLE LOFT, ALEXIS'S ROOM - MORNING

24

It's early. Narrow planks of sunlight stream in around the edges of the shades. Alexis sleeps peacefully for a beat. Then she starts to stir awake, stretches. She opens her eyes and is startled to see Castle sitting, watching her.

ALEXIS
You trying to figure out how to murder someone in their sleep again?

CASTLE
Not this time.
(beat)
You know, when you were little, I used to watch you sleep for a few minutes every night before I went to bed. It's ridiculous how adorable you were. Who knew you'd be just as adorable all these years later?

ALEXIS

What part of snoring and drooling
is adorable?

CASTLE

Well, about every ten or fifteen
breaths, you kind of snort, and
then a little saliva --

ALEXIS

Dad, seriously. What's up?

CASTLE

Do you do drugs?

She giggles.

ALEXIS

No.

CASTLE

Are you sure? You can tell me, you
know.

ALEXIS

Am I lethargic and
uncharacteristically irritable?

CASTLE

No.

ALEXIS

Are my eyes bloodshot for no
apparent reason?

CASTLE

No. Except when you're sick.

ALEXIS

That's an apparent reason.

CASTLE

Right.

ALEXIS

Are my grades plummeting?

CASTLE

No.

ALEXIS

Then according to New York City's guidelines for parents and teachers, it's a pretty good bet I'm clean.

CASTLE

You make a very convincing case.

ALEXIS

Parents are invited to the drug assemblies. You should come next time.

CASTLE

Drug assemblies? Is that what the kids are calling them now?

ALEXIS

They serve cookies.

CASTLE

And which "friends" of yours are going with you on this DC jamboree?

ALEXIS

Taylor, Kelsey and Paige.

CASTLE

How do I know they're not bringing the blow and partying Winehouse-style?

ALEXIS

Um, cause you know them really well, and they're good kids?

CASTLE

What if they're icebergs?

On Alexis - Icebergs?

ALEXIS

Does this have something to do with that Redding kid?

(off Castle's look)

Dad, he was in Central Park really really late at night. I would never do something like that.

CASTLE

But if you did, you'd tell me, right? I don't ever want you to feel like you have to lie.

(MORE)

CASTLE (CONT'D)

Anything you and your friends have done, believe me, I've done worse.

ALEXIS

I know. But the good news is, I'm not you, so you don't have to worry. And if I did ever get in trouble, my friends would be there to bail me out.

CASTLE

(realizing)

Yeah. Because that's what friend's do.

25

INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN - DAY

25

Beckett works at her desk. Castle arrives.

CASTLE

Why didn't Donny's friends just give him the money?

BECKETT

What are you talking about?

CASTLE

These kids always have cash. You gonna tell me none of them could spring a few bucks to save his life?

Beckett - Not a bad point.

ESPOSITO

Castle, some demented drug dealer's waving a gun, they coulda froze up.

CASTLE

All of them? The guy wasn't asking SAT questions, he wanted money, something these kids probably count in their sleep.

ESPOSITO

Look, this Scoville's a bad dude, and we got more than enough.

RYAN

Yeah, with the girl, it's a slam dunk.

CASTLE

And who gave you the girl?

BECKETT

Scoville.

RYAN

So the guy's not a genius.

ESPOSITO

Okay, say you're right, why would these kids peg the wrong guy for a murder?

CASTLE

Simple. One of them did it.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

26 INT. PRECINCT, LOCK-UP - DAY

26

A CORRECTIONS OFFICER unlocks a cell door, lets Beckett and Castle inside. Scoville, looking pissed off, is with his Legal Aid lawyer, IAN YANKMAN, 30s, who's chewing gum.

YANKMAN

Hey, Beckett. Who's the sidekick?

BECKETT

He's a...

CASTLE

Consultant.

YANKMAN

Yeah? Well, shouldn't you consult with a consultant before you arrest the wrong guy?

BECKETT

I'm not sure I have the wrong guy yet.

YANKMAN

Well, my client is not happy. He gave you potential witnesses and then you use one against him.

BECKETT

Your client hasn't exactly been totally forthcoming... But I am willing to reconsider, if he tells me everything he knows.

SCOVILLE

Don't trust her.

CASTLE

Considering you're facing a murder charge and a life sentence for a drug sale, why not just go with the flow.

YANKMAN

I want to smack him, but Consultant-Boy's right. You got nothing to lose.

BECKETT

(beat)

The night Donny was killed, did you sell to him and his friends?

SCOVILLE

No.

BECKETT

No?

YANKMAN

Dude... This is not really how to get her to reconsider.

SCOVILLE

I didn't sell to them... They were working for me.

BECKETT

Working for you?

SCOVILLE

I supplied that punk. Some of his friends bought off me too. They'd play "dealer" selling to the upscales in Sheep's Meadow.

BECKETT

They sold drugs for you?

SCOVILLE

Donny, yeah. But the others, it was like a goof. Walk on the wild side, truth or dare kinda crap.

BECKETT

Where were you when Donny was shot?

SCOVILLE

With some of my boyz hangin' by that Alice in Wonderland statue. We didn't see nothin', but when we heard the shot, we all took off.

BECKETT

What about the gun?

SCOVILLE

I told you, I don't pack.

Yankman flips the large criminal record.

YANKMAN

Criminal record with no firearms convictions does sorta give it the ring of truth. If past is prologue, how we doin' on reconsideration?

Off Beckett, Castle,

27

INT. PRECINCT, CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY'S OFFICE - DAY

27

Beckett and Castle with Montgomery, mid-argument.

CAPT. MONTGOMERY

You gotta be kidding me. I already told the brass we got the guy.

CASTLE

I can see that being a little awkward.

CAPT. MONTGOMERY

(overlapping)

The Mayor even called to thank me.

(to Castle)

He's in for the Knicks game, by the way.

CASTLE

Sweet.

BECKETT

Look, I know everyone likes the violent drug dealer for this--

CAPT. MONTGOMERY

No. We love the violent drug dealer for this.

BECKETT

Only the violent drug dealer's story makes more sense than our witness's story.

CASTLE

Plus, and I know I'm new, but aren't you supposed to arrest the right guy?

CAPT. MONTGOMERY

(angrily giving in)

Go talk to the girl again. But my drug dealer stays right where he is until I say so.

Beckett and Castle sit with Romy and her MOTHER and FATHER in their high rise with panoramic views of the city.

BECKETT

So this dealer asked Donny for the couple hundred he owed, right?

ROMY

Yeah.

BECKETT

And Donny said he didn't have it?

ROMY

Right.

BECKETT

Do you mind if I see your purse?

MRS. LEE.

Her purse? For what? Why?

BECKETT

If you want I can get a search warrant.

Romy reluctantly hands Beckett her expensive purse.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Carlos Falchi.

She opens it up and pulls out a wallet.

ROMY

What does my purse have to do with anything?

BECKETT

If Donny was such a good friend, Romy, why'd you let him get shot?

ROMY

Let him?

Beckett pulls several hundreds out of her wallet.

BECKETT

You had more than enough to pay off the guy. I bet you all did. And yet Donny's dead. Why didn't any of you front him the money?

MR. LEE

What are you implying?

CASTLE

She's not implying. She's saying your daughter lied about what happened that night.

BECKETT

There was no guy, was there?

ROMY

I... I didn't do anything.

MR. LEE

Romy...

She looks at her Dad; teary...

BECKETT

What really happened to Donny?

ROMY

It was an accident.

(beat)

We were all playing this game.

BECKETT

Game?

ROMY

Like Russian Roulette.

MRS. LEE

(horrified)

Romy! With a gun?

ROMY

We did it all the time. It was only for fun.

MR. LEE

For fun?

BECKETT

Where did you get the gun, Romy?

ROMY

Spencer had it... But we never meant for there to be bullets, we'd just point it at each other and pull the trigger, just to see what it felt like. But not for real, never for real.

BECKETT

Then how did Donny get shot?

ROMY

Spencer bought some bullets. We drove out to his summer house in Montauk and shot at like cans and stuff. ... One must've got left in there by accident.

BECKETT

Who, Romy? Who shot him?

Romy breaks down again.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Romy, look at me. Who shot Donny?

ROMY

Max. It was Max.

29

INT. LUXURY BUILDING, HALLWAY - NIGHT

29

Beckett POUNDS on the door. Ryan, Esposito and Castle stand behind her. MRS. HELLER, Max's mother, answers the door --

BECKETT

Detective Kate Beckett, NYPD, I'm looking for Max Heller, is he here?

MRS. HELLER

(seeing the others)

No. I'm his mother. What's going on?

BECKETT

I need to see him right now. Where is he?

MRS. HELLER

I don't know, what is it?

BECKETT

I have a warrant for his arrest.

MRS. HELLER

A warrant? Oh my God, for what?

BECKETT

He's wanted for murder, Mrs. Heller. Do you understand?

MRS. HELLER

Murder?

BECKETT

You need to call him on his cell phone, find out where he is, and tell him not to move... Everything will be alright, but you need to do it now, Mrs. Heller. Detective Esposito will go with you.

(to Esposito)

Get a photograph for the APB.

Beckett's CELL RINGS. Mrs. Heller heads into the apartment, followed by Esposito. Beckett answers her cell.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Beckett.

(stunned)

What? Where?

Esposito exits the apartment, with Max's PHOTOGRAPH.

ESPOSITO

Kid's not answering his cell. Mom thinks maybe he went to the park.

BECKETT

Yeah, he went to the park... And killed himself.

MRS. HELLER

(reappearing at door)

So what now? What should I do?

(sees Beckett's face)

What? What?

Off Beckett, then Max's PHOTOGRAPH.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

30 INT. CASTLE LOFT, CASTLE'S OFFICE - MORNING

30

Castle is sprawled in his chair, having fallen asleep working. The screensaver on his laptop scrolls: YOU SHOULD BE WRITING. Castle wakes to find Alexis staring at him. He's not quite awake and trying to keep it that way.

CASTLE

If you need money for lunch, my wallet's on my nightstand.

ALEXIS

I lied to you, Dad.

CASTLE

Can this wait?

ALEXIS

No. You need to know.

He sits up.

CASTLE

Okay.

ALEXIS

Remember the holiday formal, how Kelsey and I went to Taylor's house after? When we left, it was already raining, and we tried for like half an hour to get a taxi but couldn't, and we were so soaking wet and cold that finally we took the subway even though it was way after 10:00.

CASTLE

Well, considering getting a taxi in the rain is like winning the Powerball jackpot, I forgive you.

ALEXIS

No. Listen. The "nine" was coming and Kelsey went through the turnstile and was running down the steps to hold the door but when I swiped my card, it was empty and there was no time to add money and Kelsey was screaming for me to come, and I was so tired and desperate to get home that I... I don't even want to say it...

And now he's wide awake.

CASTLE

What?

ALEXIS

...I jumped the turnstile.

CASTLE

(beat)

Did you make the train?

ALEXIS

Yes, but the point is I didn't tell you. Even after you were so sweet and concerned yesterday. I'm sorry.

CASTLE

You actually jumped the turnstile?

ALEXIS

But I swiped my card twice the next day and didn't even ride.

CASTLE

Baby bear, if that's the worst thing you've done, I'm a happy happy man.

ALEXIS

But I lied to you. Shouldn't you punish me?

CASTLE

You're right. Mandatory ice cream for breakfast. No excuses.

ALEXIS

I'm serious. If you don't, I will.

CASTLE

I'm serious about the ice cream.

ALEXIS

Fine, I'm grounded for a week.

CASTLE

You're tough but fair.

ALEXIS

...After the DC trip.

CASTLE

That's my girl.

ALEXIS

Thanks, Dad.

She kisses him and runs off. Off Castle, loving that kid --

31 INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN - MORNING

31

Beckett, somber, fills out a form at her desk. Castle enters.

CASTLE

Hey. Watcha doing?

BECKETT

Paperwork to dismiss the homicide charges against Scoville.

(tosses him a file)

Ballistics. Confirms the same gun used to kill Donny in the park that night was the one Max used on himself.

(beat)

I'm usually better at reading people.

CASTLE

You spent half an hour with Max. There's no way you could have seen this coming.

BECKETT

Poor kid must have been a mess. Imagine shooting your best friend then having to lie about it.

CASTLE

He did more than just lie about it.

BECKETT

What do you mean?

CASTLE

He went back later and moved his friend's body.

Castle and Beckett are struck by this. They look at each other, trying to reconcile it. It doesn't smell right.

BECKETT

(thinking it through)

Having the presence of mind to move the body is not really consistent with a guilty conscience, is it?

CASTLE

It's more like the act of a cold-blooded killer.

BECKETT

And a cold-blooded killer wouldn't suddenly feel guilty enough to commit suicide, would he?

CASTLE

Not in any story I write.

BECKETT

So, if we're right, and Max didn't move Donny's body, who did?

32

INT. MORGUE, COLD STORAGE - DAY

32

Lanie enters with Beckett and Castle, pulls out a drawer with Max's corpse.

LANIE

Looks like your basic, garden-variety suicide.

BECKETT

But you said on the phone there was something that wasn't consistent with a suicide?

LANIE

Looks like suicide, but...

(nods to hand)

His shooting hand; more specifically his right index finger. There's a slight abrasion - - visible only under the scope. Department autopsy protocol doesn't even call to look for that kind of thing.

BECKETT

And the abrasion means what to you?

LANIE

That someone may have "helped" him pull the trigger.

(off Beckett's reaction)

Plus, toxicology has his blood alcohol content at point two eight.

BECKETT

He was drunk.

CASTLE
Wayyy drunk.

LANIE
At point two eight, he may not even
have been conscious.

BECKETT
So, Max was murdered.

33 INT. PRECINCT, STAIRWELL - DAY

33

Beckett and Castle walk up the steps and theorize.

BECKETT
Whoever staged Max's suicide wants
us to believe that he killed
himself out of guilt over shooting
Donny. Which makes me think that
Max may not have killed Donny after
all.

CASTLE
The other kids corroborated Romy's
story that Max pulled the trigger.

BECKETT
I didn't say Max didn't shoot
Donny. I said he didn't kill him.

CASTLE
(confused)
Is that like a Zen koan one-hand-
clapping kinda thing?

BECKETT
These kids play a game pretending
to shoot each other, only one of
them wants Donny dead for real.
What better way than to have
someone else pull the trigger?

CASTLE
You think one of the kids put a
bullet in the gun without Max
knowing?

BECKETT
That's our real killer.

34 INT. PRECINCT, INTERROGATION - DAY

34

Spencer, scared shitless, sits with his LAWYER, 50s, at the
table. Beckett stands over him.

BECKETT

You bought the bullets, Spencer.

SPENCER

It was just to screw around.

BECKETT

Well, if screwing around means intentionally putting a bullet in the chamber, knowing Max would shoot Donny, then we're in total agreement.

SPENCER'S LAWYER

Detective Beckett --

BECKETT

No. If the whole point of the "game" was to "shoot" each other without bullets, why would you have bullets unless your intention was to use them?

SPENCER

I told you, I didn't know there were any bullets in the gun.

BECKETT

Well, someone did. And I think it was the same person who killed Max.

(off Spencer)

Your gun, your bullets. From where I sit, you're it. So, Spencer, where were you last night between 6:30 and 9:00?

SPENCER

At my dad's club, The Century. With Brandon.

BECKETT

You better hope Brandon can corroborate that.

Beckett exits, leaving Spencer looking sick --

35

INT. REDDING PREP, CAFETERIA - DAY

35

Brandon sits at a table by himself, sipping a large cup of black coffee. Beckett and Castle join him.

CASTLE

Big cup of joe. Someone's trying to stay awake. Long night?

BRANDON

Look, I know Romy and Spencer told you guys everything and that we're all in big trouble. But I'm glad.

BECKETT

You're glad.

BRANDON

Yeah. We should've just come clean after the accident.

BECKETT

You're damn right you should have.

BRANDON

I know. But we didn't wanna screw Max over.

CASTLE

So you finger the drug dealer cause he's expendable, right?

BRANDON

I told Romy it was wrong, but she wanted to protect Max. And that guy was the one who got Donny into dealing in the first place.

CASTLE

And where were you when Max was killed?

BRANDON

With Spencer, at his Dad's club. Ask him. He'll confirm it.

BECKETT

You guys always have your stories straight don't know. "We weren't in the park." "It was a drug dealer." "It was Max." You're all always in sync. Maybe that's why I don't believe you.

BRANDON

You don't have to believe me. I have proof.

Brandon takes out his phone.

BRANDON (CONT'D)

We'd take videos, y'know. Just for laughs. Doing crazy stuff.

(MORE)

BRANDON (CONT'D)

Romy's dad, Mr Lee? He's like this big IT guy. He hooked us up with a file share over bluetooth, so we'd all have the files. Amanda took this that night.

BECKETT

What is it?

BRANDON

A video. Of Donny getting shot. We promised to erase it.
(scrolls around his phone)
But I knew if the truth came out, we'd all be screwed. And after what happened to those kids in that Duke case? I just didn't wanna end up like them.

He hits play and hands it to Beckett. We PUSH IN tight over Beckett and Castle and INTERCUT between PHONE VIDEO and Castle and Beckett reacting, cutting around kids taking drags on joint as needed:

36

EXT. CENTRAL PARK, PATHWAY - NIGHT

36

The "camera-work" is jerky. It's the same pathway where we saw the blood pool earlier. We're TIGHT on BRANDON as he raises a joint to his lips.

ROMY (O.S.)

Suck it, B.

CAMERA whips over to her.

ROMY (CONT'D)

Suck it!

BRANDON

*(cracking up)
I lost my hit, you bitch.*

AMANDA (O.S.)

Poor, Brandy.

Spencer snags the joint from Brandon. The camera catches his eye.

SPENCER

Great, Punk'd is back. Hi, Mom!

DONNY (O.S.)

Alright, let's do this, baby!

Camera swings over to Donny.

*DONNY (CONT'D)
Blast me, Max-oh. Take me out!*

The others crack up. Spencer passes the joint to Romy, but before she can take a drag, Max, already holding the gun, snags it from her.

*ROMY
Hey! You pulled my mom's Harry
Winston tennis bracelet.*

*MAX
That you stole.*

*ROMY
Borrowed.*

*DONNY
That's worth more than my family.*

*SPENCER
Cue the violins.*

*AMANDA (O.S.)
My arm's tired, c'mon.*

*DONNY
(puffing out his chest)
Okay, let's do this.*

He stands like NEO in the MATRIX.

Max holds the gun straight out at Donny's chest.

*MAX
(a la The Matrix)
Goodbye, Mr. Anderson.*

We cut away from the video back to...

37 INT. REDDING PREP, CAFETERIA - DAY 37

Beckett and Castle's faces as... BANG! The gun goes off. We watch their reactions as Donny gets shot. We hear the scrape and bustle of RUNNING, the kids SHRIEKING. Cries of "Oh my God." "Donny." "No!" And it ends.

38 EXT. PRECINCT, ROOF - DAY 38

It's cold, but Beckett and Castle, disturbed, need air.

BECKETT

You okay?

CASTLE

I was just thinking about Donny's parents. What they'll go through when they watch that video...
(off her empathetic look)
Guess it's not too often you get a murder caught on tape.

BECKETT

He was smart to keep it. Without it, they all might be looking at a Manslaughter charge.

Which gets Castle thinking...

CASTLE

That was pretty smart when you think about it, wasn't it?

BECKETT

I know that tone, Castle.

CASTLE

I'm just saying it's pretty lucky they filmed the game that night.

BECKETT

People post crazy stuff on YouTube.

CASTLE

I get filming their little game the first few times. It's exciting. But the tenth time? The fifteenth? What was so special about that night?

BECKETT

(realizing)
Donny got shot.

CASTLE

So the only reason to film it--

BECKETT

Is because you know what's going to happen.

CASTLE

Amanda knew....

END ACT FOUR

CASTLE

When was the last time? Before that night?

AMANDA

I don't remember. Look, I thought you said you saw what happened.

CASTLE

We did. We're just not sure why we saw what happened.

BECKETT

Your decision to make a video that night doesn't make sense. Unless you knew something was going to happen.

AMANDA

You think I knew? It was totally an accident! There's no way I could've known Donny was going to get shot.

BECKETT

Sure you could've. If you put that bullet in the gun.

AMANDA

What?

CASTLE

We talked to Donny's parents. We know you guys were dating.

BECKETT

We also know he ended it with you about a month ago.

AMANDA

Oh my God.

BECKETT

It gives you a motive, Amanda.

AMANDA

It's not what happened. Yes, Donny broke up with me. But only because he found out that I hooked up with Brandon.

BECKETT

Brandon?

CASTLE

You also never signed him in as a guest... which probably let your old man skate on the guest fees, but I doubt that's why you did it.

Spencer looks like he's caught in headlights.

CASTLE (CONT'D)

This case is a D.A.'s wet dream. A bunch of rich kids, high on dope, screwing around with a loaded firearm? Your Dad's money isn't gonna save you, it's gonna bury you.

Off Spencer...

43

INT. REDDING PREP, CORRIDOR - DAY

43

The door opens and Spencer, ashen, exits to find Brandon sitting on a bench. As they lock eyes, the look on Spencer's face tells Brandon that Spencer gave him up. Spencer skulks away. Beckett and Castle approach Brandon.

CASTLE

Your comrade just gave up your alibi for Max's murder.

BRANDON

You mean Max's suicide, don't you? And last I checked, I wouldn't need an alibi for that, would I?

BECKETT

The medical examiner concluded Max's death was a homicide.

Brandon smiles. It's kind of chilling.

BRANDON

I'm sure there are any number of experts we can hire who'll disagree with a city employee.

CASTLE

Expert witnesses. Scrambling for alibis. Sounds like you're already building a defense.

BRANDON

You guys have been running around accusing everyone of murder.

(MORE)

BRANDON (CONT'D)

I figured my turn was coming and I better be ready.

BECKETT

Only now we know it was you. Your three friends all have solid alibis for the night Max was killed.

Brandon sits back, cool, unfazed.

BRANDON

You say killed. I say suicide.

BECKETT

Where were you that night?

BRANDON

I took a walk. I knew you wouldn't believe me so I asked Spencer to cover for me.

CASTLE

And that's what you guys do, right? Cover for each other?

BRANDON

Exactly. Look, Detective, you're hot and everything, but if you had any actual evidence, you'd have already arrested me. Me? I have a video that proves Max killed Donny. You think a jury's gonna believe he didn't get drunk and off himself?

BECKETT

This is just another game to you. Like selling drugs in the park.

BRANDON

If it were, looks like I'd be winning. But, hey, if you think I did it, let's see you prove it.

Brandon casually walks away. Off Beckett and Castle --

END ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

44 INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN - DAY

44

Castle and Beckett sit at Beckett's desk reading case files.
Castle closes a file-

CASTLE

You know it's really tedious
actually having to prove stuff.

BECKETT

Welcome to my world.

CASTLE

Brandon had this all planned. He
gets Max to shoot Donny, then gets
Max drunk and kills him.

BECKETT

There's no such thing as a perfect
crime, Castle.

CASTLE

Not yet. But one day I'm gonna
write it.

Esposito and Ryan enter.

RYAN

Okay, so we canvassed every store,
stand, and homeless guy from the
park entrance at 72nd to the scene.

ESPOSITO

No one remembers seeing Max or
Brandon last night.

BECKETT

If we can't link Brandon to Max's
scene, the D.A.'ll never move.

Castle picks up Max's phone.

CASTLE

These kids were hooked on video
sharing, there has to be something.

RYAN

I already scrolled through every
video, photo, audio and text file
on that thing.

ESPOSITO

Guess we weren't lucky enough to have Max take a video of Brandon killing him.

CASTLE

The irony is, if he did, Brandon would've known. It would've popped up in Brandon's shared folder when their phones...

BECKETT

Synced. Synced.

Beckett snatches the phone from Castle.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

If they were together when Max was murdered, their phones would've automatically synced. There'd be a record.

Beckett scrolls deep into the phone's menu system and pulls up a sync history with dates, times and cell numbers. Beckett stops cold.

ESPOSITO

Well?

45

INT. PRECINCT, INTERROGATION - DAY

45

Brandon sits alone at the table. Castle and Beckett enter.

BECKETT

You have the right to have your lawyer present, Brandon. If you can't afford a lawyer, one will be appointed for you.

CASTLE

C'mon, he can afford like a million lawyers.

BRANDON

She still has to advise me of my rights, right?

BECKETT

Right.

BRANDON

Anyway, that's cool. I don't want a lawyer. This is way more fun.

Beckett puts a piece of paper and pen in front of him.

BECKETT

Maybe you just want to sign a confession then?

BRANDON

Sure.

(takes pen)

I confess I'm dying to cop a feel under your cop blouse.

(dropping pen)

There. Now I feel so much better.

Castle takes out his phone.

CASTLE

You sure you don't wanna call your parents or something?

BRANDON

Why would I wanna worry them?

CASTLE

You know, I made a phone call to my bookie a little while ago.

BRANDON

Sweet.

CASTLE

It was while I was waiting for my car outside Nobu.

BRANDON

Yeah? I love that place.

CASTLE

Black squid pasta's awesome. Anyway, I was standing on the sidewalk talking, when the valet pulled up with my car. All of a sudden my call cut off. That's when I realized that the bluetooth in my car had automatically picked up my call. You know, 'cause it linked.

Off Brandon, hearing something he HADN'T thought of.

BECKETT

You told us all your phones auto-share media files via a bluetooth link, right?

BRANDON

So?

CASTLE

So your phone "coupled" with Max's phone the night he was killed.

BECKETT

It's a digital fingerprint that puts you within twenty feet of Max at the time of his murder.

Brandon is ruffled.

CASTLE

You did say if she had actual evidence, she should arrest you.

BECKETT

You took advantage of Max's guilt over Donny and got him black-out drunk, then you put the gun in his hand, pressed it to his head and pulled the trigger.

BRANDON

And why would I do that?

BECKETT

Cover your tracks over killing Donny.

BRANDON

Why would I kill Donny?

CASTLE

Amanda.

BRANDON

Amanda was with me, not Donny.

CASTLE

Right, but only after Donny lost all his money.

BECKETT

Which makes you the consolation prize.

CASTLE

And that must've eaten you up. Knowing Amanda had been with Donny.

BECKETT

'Cause he'd gotten way more than
under her blouse, right?

Brandon starts to brood, not laughing them off anymore.

BRANDON

I still have that video that shows
Max shot Donny, not me.

CASTLE

Yeah, arranging that was pretty
impressive.

(off Brandon)

I mean fooling Spencer, Romy and
Amanda wasn't that hard because
they didn't handle the gun. But Max
was a different story. He'd
actually pulled the trigger, and he
just couldn't let it go, could he?
And then he remembered you gave him
the gun. So he called you and
asked you to meet him.

BECKETT

We have a record of the call.

CASTLE

You could tell something was up, so
you brought the gun and, what,
Vodka? Or is Max a Scotch man?

(drawing Brandon in)

He knew all about you and Donny and
Amanda. And he had to wonder: "Did
you set me up to kill my best
friend?" And when he realized you
had, he wasn't gonna keep quiet,
was he? Even with you telling him
that you'd all go to jail.

(beat)

If only Max had been strong enough
to just man up... If only Donny had
understood that he didn't belong
with you guys anymore, that it was
over between him and Amanda, none
of this would have been necessary.
But weak people don't always get
it, do they, Brandon? Sometimes
they have to be led to the truth.

BRANDON

(quiet)

Exactly.

Castle then immediately snaps out of the act, and Brandon realizes his mistake.

CASTLE
(to Beckett)
Did you just hear him say,
"Exactly." "Cause I just heard him
say, "Exactly."

BECKETT
Yup. I heard him, too.

BRANDON
He tricked me.

BECKETT
Whatever. It's still called
"admission against interest."

CASTLE
Which is just a fancy term for a
confession.

Beckett gathers her things.

BECKETT
Pretty sweet, huh?

CUE MUSIC. Brandon stares blankly, his bravado extinguished.

BECKETT (CONT'D)
Oh, and the funny thing? You
probably thought it was really
clever to go back and move Donny's
body, right? But if you hadn't, we
never would've figured it out.

CASTLE
She never would have figured it
out.

BECKETT
Like you would have figured it out.

CASTLE
I definitely would have....

Brandon's eyes widen slightly. He'll have plenty of time to think about that. Beckett and Castle exit.

We see Brandon through the window, then PAN to REVEAL Amanda, Romy and Spencer, shell-shocked, being processed...

Suddenly the DOORBELL rings. Castle gives Martha a look.

CASTLE
Any of *your* fun, you mean.

MARTHA
It's not what you think-

Castle opens the door and a STREAM OF PEOPLE enter the loft.

CASTLE
No, it's exactly what I thought.

MARTHA
Does this look like a wild party?

Castle looks at the very buttoned-up, conservative group.

MARTHA (CONT'D)
For your information, I'm hosting a seminar for my life coaching class. "Be the Change You Wish To See."

CASTLE
How very Zen of you.

ALEXIS
Dad, be supportive. She's trying to help people-

CASTLE
To my liquor cabinet.

MARTHA
It's going to be a completely civilized affair. You have my word.

Castle gives her a look - Alexis drags him out of the loft. When the door shuts, Martha turns to her guests with a smile.

MARTHA (CONT'D)
Okay. So who wants a drink?

Martha takes off her jacket to reveal a sexy top. She pulls out a bottle of champagne from behind a potted plant-

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INT. OUTSIDE CASTLE LOFT, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

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Castle and Alexis hear the POP of a champagne bottle and the sound of CHEERING. Castle and Alexis trade looks, and share a smile. They just keep walking.

END OF EPISODE