

CASTLE

“Little Girl Lost” Ep. 109

Written by
Elizabeth Davis

Directed by
John Terlesky

Studio Draft January 29, 2009
Network Draft February 2, 2009
Full White Draft February 4, 2009
Blue Pages February 6, 2009



“Little Girl Lost”

CAST

White Production Draft
February 4, 2009

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

SPECIAL AGENT WILL SORENSON
THERESA CANDELA
ALFRED CANDELA
LUCIA GOMEZ
DOUG ELLERS
JUAN RESTREPO
FBI TECH CRAWFORD
NINA MENDOLA
ANGELA CANDELA
TODD
ASIAN MALE

“Little Girl Lost”

NON-SPEAKING

White Production Draft
February 4, 2009

SCENE 4
UNIFORM COP

SCENES 5 & 6
TECHS
UNIFORM COPS

SCENE 36
BANK GUARD
COPS
FBI AGENTS

SCENE 41
GREEN BACKPACK GIRL
OTHER GREEN BACKPACK WEARERS

SCENES 45 & 46
FEDS

SCENE 47
KIDS PLAYING

“Little Girl Lost”

Locations

Blue Production Draft
February 6, 2009

INTERIORS

~~120 WEST 53RD LOBBY~~ (NOW 1201 1ST AVENUE)
1201 1ST AVENUE LOBBY (PREVIOUSLY 120 WEST 53RD)

BECKETT’S UNMARKED VEHICLE

CANDELA APARTMENT

ANGELA’S BEDROOM

KITCHEN

LIVING ROOM

CANDELA APARTMENT BUILDING

HALLWAY

CASTLE’S LOFT

CASTLE’S OFFICE

KITCHEN

LIVING ROOM

PARKING GARAGE

10TH FLOOR

GROUND FLOOR

NEAR WALL

RAMP (PREVIOUSLY IN STAIRWELL)

~~STAIRWELL~~ (NOW PLAYS ON RAMP)

WALL

PRECINCT

BREAKROOM (PREVIOUSLY IN PARKING GARAGE)

BULLPEN

ELEVATOR

INTERROGATION ROOM

OBSERVATION ROOM

EXTERIORS

1201 1ST AVENUE

CANDELA APARTMENT BUILDING

CITY

MANHATTAN STREET

MEATPACKING DISTRICT

STREET

NINA’S APARTMENT BUILDING

COURTYARD PLAYGROUND

OVER BLACK:

VOICES from a children's cartoon.

SMASH CUT TO:

1 A SERIES OF SHOTS:

1

The morning sun streams through a WINDOW, leading us to a JUICE BOX and some CEREAL strewn across the floor in front of a FLAT-SCREEN TV (playing the cartoon we've been hearing).

CAMERA PUSHES PAST the flat-screen to another room in the apartment as...

WE HEAR aggressive, pulsing HEAVY GRUNGE METAL music as it starts to drown out the cartoon. Its THRASHING BEAT taking us closer to some menace...

And a CU of a white surface:

Suddenly, a VIOLENT SPLASH OF RED hits against this surface. RED SPLATTER running down in DROPLETS. What horrific crime is taking place?

CAMERA MOVES DOWN to a STUFFED BEAR leaning against a nearby wall, as a RED DROPLET strikes the STUFFED BEAR'S FACE.

CUT TO:

2 EXT. MEATPACKING DISTRICT, STREET - DAY

2

Iron industrial buildings with a smattering of low-rise brick and nouveau boutiques.

3 EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - SAME TIME

3

BECKETT finds CASTLE waiting with two cups of designer coffee. He hands her one, along with a bag.

CASTLE

Grande skim latte, two pumps sugar-free vanilla, and a bear claw.

She takes the coffee and bag, surprised he knows her drink.

BECKETT

How did you...

CASTLE

I'm a novelist. It's my job to notice things.

BECKETT

It's Sunday morning. Shouldn't you be slinking home from a scandalous liaison?

CASTLE

Would you be jealous if I were?

BECKETT

In your dreams.

CASTLE

Actually, in my dreams you're not jealous at all. You usually just jump right in and take off your-

Beckett shoves her bear claw into his mouth.

CASTLE (CONT'D)

(as he chews)

Anyway, Montgomery called. He said to come down right away. Must be gruesome, right?

BECKETT

Try not to seem so giddy every time we're at a crime scene, okay?

CASTLE

Just because someone's dead, doesn't mean you have to be grumpy.

BECKETT

You want grumpy? How about the cover art for your new novel?

CASTLE

Nikki Heat cover art? That's only available to...

4 INT. APARTMENT BUILDING, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

4

Beckett and Castle continue walking and talking.

CASTLE

(realizing)

Oh my God. You subscribe to my website? Are you CastleFreak1212? Ooh, or maybe CastleLover45?

BECKETT

You do realize that most normal people would be creeped out by crazy anonymous fans?

CASTLE
Like you?

BECKETT
It was strictly professional
curiosity.

CASTLE
So, what'd you think of your alter
ego, Nikki? Pretty sweet, right?

BECKETT
"Sweet"? She's naked!

CASTLE
She's not naked. She's holding a
gun... strategically.

BECKETT
I comfort myself knowing that if
they're publishing cover art, the
book - and our little partnership -
is almost done.

They reach an apartment door. Beckett nods to a UNIFORM and
they enter...

5 INT. CANDELA APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

5

A room bustling with UNIFORMS and TECHS taking crime scene
photos. We get a sense of urgency. Beckett quickly clocks the
spilled juice and cereal on the floor. CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
approaches Beckett and Castle.

BECKETT
Sir? What's going on?

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
2-year-old girl, Angela Candela,
reported missing by her parents
around eight this morning.

BECKETT
Where'd they find the body?

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
They haven't yet. She was abducted.

CASTLE
Kidnapped? From her home?

BECKETT
I don't understand. If it's not a
murder, why am I here?

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
The Feds requested you for the task
force.

CASTLE
Feds?

BECKETT
FBI has jurisdiction in child
abduction cases.
(to Montgomery)
But I'm Homicide now, why'd they
request me?

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
Maybe because you're the best.

CASTLE
Okay, then why call me?

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
Because I love pissing off the FBI.
And because you think outside the
box; something the Feebs don't do.

Beckett's mind is working a mile a minute.

BECKETT
Sir, who's the Special Agent in
charge?

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
Now, Beckett...

BECKETT
Who?

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
(with meaning)
Sorenson.

CASTLE
Who's Sorenson?

BECKETT
I thought he was-

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
In Boston? Not anymore.

CASTLE
Who's Sorenson?

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
It's not gonna be a problem, is it,
Detective? I mean, we're all
professionals here, right?

CASTLE
Actually, I'm not.

Montgomery eyes Beckett, as does Castle.

BECKETT
No, sir. No problem.

He nods.

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
For what it's worth, the missing
girl doesn't care about your
history, nor do her terrified
parents. All they want is to get
their baby back alive.

BECKETT
Where is he?

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
With the parents. Over there.

Beckett turns to see the parents, ALFRED and THERESA CANDELA (30s, Hispanic), standing with FBI AGENT WILL SORENSON (30s, attractive, charismatic, and smart as hell). He looks up and sees Beckett. They lock eyes. Castle sees it and immediately can tell (as we can) that there's a history.

SMASH CUT TO:

CASTLE TITLE CARD

6 INT. CANDELA APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - DAY

6

Sorenson crosses to Castle and Beckett.

SORENSON
Hello, Kate.

She gives a polite smile and nod, still a little off guard.

BECKETT
Hello, Will. How long you been back?

SORENSON
A couple months.

Beckett nods. "Couple months." He should've called.

BECKETT

Something wrong with Boston?

SORENSEN

If you're not a Celtics or Sox fan,
all that's left is Faneuil Hall,
and fresh lobster gets old fast.
You look good.

BECKETT

Yeah. Been good. Agent Sorenson,
Richard Castle.

SORENSEN

Right. The famous novelist.

CASTLE

That's me. Writer of wrongs.

SORENSEN

Cute. So Captain Montgomery filled
me in on your little arrangement.
And I have no problem with it, as
long as it doesn't interfere with
the investigation.

CASTLE

Don't worry about me. I'm quiet as
a mouse.

Sorenson hands Beckett a PHOTO of an adorable 2-YEAR-OLD GIRL
clutching a stuffed bunny.

SORENSEN

Angela Candela. Two years old.
Abducted this morning between 7:30
and 8 a.m.

(re: the Candelas)

Parents were home at the time.

CASTLE

How could she have been taken with
her parents home?

SORENSEN

Dad got up with the kid about
seven, let Mom sleep in.

(pointing to spot)

He planted Angela in front of the
tube with a juice box and some
cereal...

(points to adjacent room)

...and headed into his art studio.

Beckett takes a look into the art studio.

SORENSEN (CONT'D)
He's a painter.

CASTLE
And he just left his kid?

BECKETT
Did he hear anything at least?

SORENSEN
He was listening to his iPod.

CASTLE
(glances over at Alfred)
Nothing like quality time with Daddy.

BECKETT
So, how'd they make entry?

7 INT. CANDELA APARTMENT, KITCHEN - DAY

7

Beckett, Sorenson, and Castle are standing by an opened window with Theresa and Alfred Candela.

ALFRED
When I couldn't find her, I looked everywhere, and then I saw the window.

SORENSEN
Lock was jimmed from the outside.

ALFRED
I ran outside. I looked for her.

BECKETT
Mr. Candela. You have a ground-floor apartment... Windows facing an alley. Most people have security bars.

THERESA
We were going to. We just...

ALFRED
...never got around to it.

Beckett inspects the floor below the window.

SORENSEN
(re: dirt)
We think that's dirt from outside.

ALFRED
How could this happen in our own
home?

8 INT. CANDELA APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - DAY 8

Beckett, Castle, and Sorenson, working it out.

BECKETT
So he climbs in through the window,
then probably walked her out the
back door.

CASTLE
Just like that?

SORENSEN
We have her photo on the wires and
are issuing an AMBER Alert to Port
Authority and the Tri-State Area.

BECKETT
I'll have my guys run down
registered sex offenders and
residential burglaries. What about
the parents? Any enemies?

SORENSEN
None they could think of. Not that
either of them can think straight
right now.

Castle looks over at the Candelas, shell-shocked, on the
couch. Castle shakes his head.

CASTLE
This thing goes south, they'll
never think straight again.

Sorenson sees a look on Beckett's face and steps closer. A
little too close to be professional.

SORENSEN
This one'll end better. I promise.

CUT TO:

9 INT. PRECINCT, ELEVATOR - DAY 9

Castle and Beckett. The silence is deafening. Then:

BECKETT
Six months.

Beat.

CASTLE
"Six months," what?

BECKETT
We dated for six months.

CASTLE
I didn't ask.

BECKETT
Yeah, I know. You were not asking
very loudly.

CASTLE
I'm like a Jedi that way.

Doors open, delivering us into...

10 INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS 10

Beckett and Castle exit and walk to the bullpen.

CASTLE
How'd you meet?

BECKETT
Kidnapping. 6-year-old boy.

CASTLE
How'd it end?

BECKETT
We got the guy.

But the way she says it, there's clearly more to the story.
We find ESPOSITO and RYAN at their desks. Ryan is wearing a
particularly loud tie.

BECKETT (CONT'D)
So what do we have on the parents?

RYAN
Theresa and Alfred Candela. Married
ten years. One child: Angela-

CASTLE
(noticing, re: tie)
Dude. Wow. Did you come straight
from Chernobyl?

RYAN

Okay. Get it all out. It's a gift from my girlfriend.

ESPOSITO

"Girlfriend"? You've seen her, what, four times?

BECKETT

Already giving gifts, huh?

RYAN

Today's our two-week anniversary.

ESPOSITO

Two weeks! Is that paper... or silk?

CASTLE

I believe it's whipped.

Castle fist-bumps Esposito.

RYAN

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

(continues)

One child: Angela Candela. Age two. Adopted.

BECKETT

Adopted?

RYAN

Two years ago... Mom, Theresa, is a fund manager at Keller Stanton. Dad's a small-time artist. Shows at the Greyson Gallery in Chelsea once in a while. Neighbors say he stays home with the kid.

Beckett hands Esposito a piece of paper.

BECKETT

This is a list of employees who had access to the apartment: baby-sitters, cleaning lady, super. Let's cross-reference them with all registered sex offenders. And see if anyone in the area had a taste for little girls.

ESPOSITO

You thinking some creepy-crawly might have scouted from the inside?

BECKETT

Father said what he did this morning was part of a routine. Which means someone either got very lucky, or they already knew it.

Beckett's cell phone rings.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Beckett.

(listens)

Thanks. We'll be right there.

(hangs up)

It may not be a creepy crawler after all.

They look at her. "Why not?"

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Candelas just got a ransom call.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

11 INT. CANDELA APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - DAY 11

An FBI TECH, late-20s, female, has phone surveillance equipment laid out on the coffee table. Beckett and Sorenson huddle with Alfred and Theresa around the table, as the recording of the ransom call is played. Castle watches from outside the circle.

THERESA (ON RECORDING)
(nervous)
Hello?

SCRAMBLED VOICE (ON RECORDING)
We have your daughter.

THERESA (ON RECORDING)
Please. She's just a child. Please don't hurt her.

SCRAMBLED VOICE (ON RECORDING)
Whether we hurt her is up to you. Whether she lives is up to you. You want your daughter, we want 750,000 dollars. You have twenty-four hours.

THERESA (ON RECORDING)
I want to speak to her. I want to know she's safe.

There's a CLICK, then a DIAL TONE. The FBI Tech hits "stop."

SORENSEN
They used an Internet Voice over IP service.

BECKETT
Meaning it's untraceable.

SORENSEN
Can you raise the 750?

THERESA
It's everything we have.

ALFRED
If it means getting Angela back, we'll pay.

SORENSEN
Then you should start getting your financial records together.

THERESA
(overwhelmed, to Alfred)
Where do we even begin?

BECKETT
Is there someone who can help you?
An accountant, or maybe someone at
your firm?

ALFRED
Nina could help.

BECKETT
Nina?

THERESA
She's my sister. She's a CPA.

SORENSEN
Make the call.

ALFRED
Even if we give them money, how can
we be sure we'll get her back?

SORENSEN
You have to trust me. And you have
to have hope. You have to imagine
your little girl walking in that
front door, safe and sound. Okay?

The Candelas nod, assuaged. Castle's impressed with Sorenson.

CUT TO:

12 INT. CANDELA APARTMENT, KITCHEN - DAY

12

Sorenson studies a transcript of the ransom call. Castle is
nearby.

CASTLE
You do this a lot? Kidnappings? I
mean, you seem to know what to say.

SORENSEN
It's not about what you say. It's
about controlling the situation.
Controlling the emotions.

CASTLE
Controlling emotions?

SORENSEN

So the situation doesn't spin out of control.

But that's not what Castle meant.

CASTLE

No, I mean, you requested your ex-girlfriend for the task force. That doesn't seem to indicate control over your emotions.

Sorenson stops and looks up at Castle. He doesn't like to be analyzed.

SORENSEN

I requested Beckett because she's the best in the city.

CASTLE

Not because you wanted to see her again?

Sorenson sizes Castle up. Smiles, but doesn't mean it.

SORENSEN

How about you, Castle? You've written, what, twenty best-sellers? Why the sudden need to shadow a real detective?

CASTLE

Because the ones on TV seemed oddly fixated on their sunglasses.

SORENSEN

So with all the fat, balding detectives in the NYPD, you just happen to end up shadowing her.

CASTLE

Maybe it's fate.

Beckett enters the room. The boys drop it.

BECKETT

Candelas have pulled their financials and the sister's on her way over. Anything with the transcript?

SORENSEN

It's clear the ransom demand has significance.

(MORE)

SORENSEN (CONT'D)

The kidnapppers make an issue about knowing what the Candelas have.

CASTLE

They said it was everything they had.

SORENSEN

Whoever made the demand knows them well enough to know exactly what they're worth.

13 INT. CANDELA APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - DAY

13

Sorenson, followed by Beckett and Castle, approaches Theresa, who's settled in at the dining table. Financial statements are laid out.

BECKETT

How does it look?

With Theresa is her younger sister, NINA MENDOLA, 30.

THERESA

Detective. Agent Sorenson. This is my sister, Nina.

Nina nods. There's a gravity to her.

NINA

It's doable. We'll market the stocks tomorrow morning, and we'll have to wipe out the retirement account and both pensions. You'll have to pay penalties.

THERESA

I don't care. Whatever it takes.

CASTLE

Where's your husband?

THERESA

In his studio. He paints when he's stressed.

CASTLE

He sell a lot?

THERESA

Some.

NINA

(under her breath)
That's generous.

(MORE)

NINA (CONT'D)
(off Theresa's look)
Sorry.

THERESA
(to Castle)
Why do you ask?

CASTLE
Most artists I know don't have
pension accounts.

NINA
Theresa set up the account for him.
So he'd have something for him and
Angela. Y'know... in case.

Castle's about to ask another question, when Sorenson jumps in.

SORENSON
Mrs. Candela, we think the
specificity of the amount of the
ransom demand suggests the kidnappers
have knowledge of your finances.

Off her confusion...

CASTLE
What he means is, the kidnappers knew
you could come up with the cash.

Sorenson shoots a look at Beckett: "Why's your monkey talking?"

BECKETT
Is there anyone who might have a
grudge against you? Or anyone close
to you who may need money right now?

Searching her mind.

THERESA
No one who'd do something like this.

ALFRED (O.S.)
What about Doug Ellers?

They turn. Alfred's in the hallway, holding his brush.

BECKETT
Who's Doug Ellers?

THERESA
Someone I worked with. But...
(thinking it through)
No, I can't imagine-

ALFRED
(cutting her off)
What about those messages he left
you at work? Remember the
complaints you filed with HR?

THERESA
(snapping at him)
I know what happened, Alfred!

The stress is clearly getting to Theresa. Alfred backs off.

SORENSEN
Mrs. Candela, I know how hard this
is. It's understandable to get
frustrated. But, please, we need to
know everything.

THERESA
Of course. Ellers ran an asset
management group. They weren't
performing, so we let him go.

CASTLE
You mean you fired him.

SORENSEN
Did he ever threaten you?

THERESA
He blamed me for his divorce. He
said his wife left him because he
got fired, and...

Theresa stops, suddenly concerned.

BECKETT
And what?

THERESA
She took both his kids.

Looks between Sorenson and Beckett.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

14 EXT. CITY - DAY 14

We're flying over the city, fast and anxious, slamming us into...

15 INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN - DAY 15

Castle, Beckett, and Sorenson stride through the bullpen toward interrogation.

BECKETT
Ellers inside?

Esposito and Ryan follow.

ESPOSITO
Just brought him in.

BECKETT
Where'd you find him?

RYAN
In line at OTB. Missed his trifecta.

ESPOSITO
ESU just hit his apartment. No trace of the kid.

SORENSEN
That's not good.
(to Beckett)
Pressure interview. I'll take the lead.

Sorenson is about to open the door when he realizes that Castle thinks he's joining. He turns to Beckett.

SORENSEN (CONT'D)
No.

BECKETT
He'll be fine.

SORENSEN
Kate, I don't care how big a fan of his you are. He doesn't come in the room.

CASTLE
Fine. But just for the record...
how big a fan is she?

RYAN
C'mon, Castle. You can watch from
the bleachers with us. See how the
Feebees do it.

As Castle, Esposito, and Ryan head toward observation,
Beckett and Sorenson head into...

16 INT. PRECINCT, INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS 16

Beckett and Sorenson enter to find DOUG ELLERS, mid-40s.

SORENSEN
Mr. Ellers.
(badging him)
Special Agent Sorenson, FBI.

BECKETT
Detective Beckett. NYPD.

ELLERS
What's this about?

SORENSEN
When was your last contact with
Theresa Candela?

ELLERS
Theresa Candela? What's going on?

BECKETT
Just answer the question.

He hesitates.

INTERCUT AS NEEDED: *

16A INT. PRECINCT, OBSERVATION ROOM - SAME TIME 16A *

Castle, Esposito, and Ryan watch the interrogation. *

SORENSEN
Mr. Ellers, we're not playing
games. Now answer the question.

ELLERS
What'd she say about me?

SORENSEN
Let's talk about what you said to
her.

Sorenson pulls out an MP3 player. Hits "play."

ELLERS (ON RECORDING)

I gave you six years of my life. Six years! My profits built your whole damn division. And now you want to bend me over? You want to cut me out? Well, karma's a bitch, Theresa.

(MORE)

*

ELLERS (ON RECORDING) (CONT'D)
*You burn down my house. I'm gonna
burn down yours.*

Sorenson clicks off the recording.

SORENSEN
You left that three months ago,
just after your wife left.

ELLERS
Yeah? So? Every word of it is true.

BECKETT
It's harassment.

ELLERS
What? She gonna press charges now?

SORENSEN
Yeah. Kidnapping. Assault. Breaking
and entering.

ELLERS
What the hell are you talking about?

BECKETT
Someone kidnapped Angela Candela
this morning.

ELLERS
What? Kidnapped?

SORENSEN
Hurting someone else's child isn't
the way to get back your own.

ELLERS
No, no, no. That's not me.
Theresa's not my favorite person,
but I'd never hurt a child.

BECKETT
Your ex-wife wasn't so sure.
According to your divorce papers,
there were allegations of violence.

ELLERS
My ex was looking for a payday.
That's all.

SORENSEN
You're not looking for a payday,
are you, Mr. Ellers?

ELLERS

Look, you have the wrong guy.

(beat)

But here's the irony. Thanks to Theresa, I need a lawyer. Again. Only, guess what? I can't afford one, so this time, it's on you.

Off Beckett and Sorenson...

17 INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN - DAY

17 *

Sorenson and Beckett find Castle, Esposito, and Ryan gathered at Ryan's and Esposito's desks. *

SORENSEN

(to Esposito and Ryan)

Run him down. Where he was all morning and who can vouch.

CASTLE

Pretty clear it wasn't him.

SORENSEN

You a mind reader, too?

CASTLE

C'mon. If he were the guy, he would've downplayed his feelings for Theresa, not worn them on his sleeve.

SORENSEN

A couple dozen best-sellers doesn't make you a criminologist.

CASTLE

And I don't need a weatherman to tell me the sky is blue.

BECKETT

Oh, for godsake, why don't you both just drop your pants and get it over with.

A beat. "Did she really just say that?" Then:

CASTLE

I'm game.

BECKETT

Fact is, you're both right. Most likely he's not the guy, but when a child's life's at stake, we need to be sure.

(MORE)

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Which means you have to question everything you think you know.

(to Esposito and Ryan)

Keep him iced until we can track every second of his morning. Sorenson and I'll head back to the Candelas' and profile their associates and acquaintances.

CASTLE

What about me?

Beckett pulls him aside.

BECKETT

I need you to go home.

Castle looks at Sorenson and then back at Beckett. He understands.

CASTLE

Okay. But if you need me, call.

(beat)

Even if it's just to talk.

She nods. It's her way of saying "thanks."

18 EXT. CITY - NIGHT 18

PUSHING IN on Castle's loft.

19 INT. CASTLE'S LOFT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 19

Castle drags through the front door and hears MARTHA, passionately confronting a client. He can see a piece of her through the shelves that separate the living room and office.

MARTHA (O.S.)

Todd, honey, I need you to focus on calibrating your creative energy.

Castle rolls his eyes and heads into...

20 INT. CASTLE'S LOFT, CASTLE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 20

Castle pops in and is not at all surprised to see Martha sitting at his desk, her feet up like she owns the place. She's facing one of her sad sack clients: TODD, 35, self-involved. There's a NAME PLAQUE on the desk that reads: "MARTHA RODGERS, LIFE COACH."

CASTLE

Howdy, Mother.

Martha, a bit deer-in-headlights, and Todd turn to Castle.

MARTHA

Oh. Hello. You're here. I'm just finishing up a session in...
("hint-hint")
...my office.

CASTLE

I'm so flattered that you hang my framed book covers in your office.

MARTHA

A coach can never be too proud.

Todd stands and grabs his knapsack. Gets up the nerve.

TODD

Mr. Castle, I just want to thank you for being so honest about your struggle with persistent and chronic writer's block.

CASTLE

Excuse me?

Martha starts to squirm a bit.

TODD

I chose Ms. Rodgers as my life coach because you're a client.

MARTHA

Todd's an aspiring novelist, so I shared your inspiring tale of triumph over adversity.

CASTLE

Really? How... courageous of me. Good luck, Todd.

TODD

Thanks!
(handing Martha a check)
I'd like the year-long package.

MARTHA

Way to be decisive, kiddo. See you next week.

Todd exits.

CASTLE

I guess all those years as an actress really paid off. "Focus on calibrating your creative energy"?

MARTHA

I'll have you know, Todd is a very bright spirit in need of direction.

CASTLE

It's bad enough you're slandering me, do you have to commandeer my office for your new-age coddle sessions?

He grabs Martha's name plaque off his desk and walks into...

21 INT. CASTLE'S LOFT, LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 21

Castle heads toward the kitchen, Martha following.

MARTHA

Richard, you can't expect me to pay Manhattan rates for office space.

Castle sets Martha's name plaque down on the kitchen table.

CASTLE

How 'bout this? You can't beat the location. Its proximity to beverages and sharp utensils.

Castle opens the fridge and grabs a beer.

MARTHA

Sweetheart, as your life coach, I urge you to say nay to your inner naysayer. Good, huh? I call that a *Martha-ism*.

CASTLE

How is it that you don't know who my father is or how your ex-husband took all your money, yet you're giving life-coaching advice?

MARTHA

Mistakes are the building blocks of wisdom. Another *Martha-ism*. Besides, Freud was an addict. Didn't stop him from helping people.

CASTLE

(giving up)
And, sadly, confronted by his mother's twisted-yet-unimpeachable logic, Richard Castle's head exploded.

MARTHA

So, why home so early? You supposedly have two jobs, yet you're pulling banker's hours.

CASTLE

Just needed a breather. We're working a kidnapping. A little girl.

MARTHA

What a world. No wonder you're so surly. Those poor parents, having a child ripped away. I can't imagine how that must feel.

CASTLE

Alexis home yet?

MARTHA

Upstairs.

Castle rises.

CASTLE

I feel a deep-seated need to give her a hug.

MARTHA

Perfectly understandable. We are, after all, all pod-mates.

CASTLE

"Pod-mates"?

MARTHA

Another *Martha-ism*. I really should write a book.

(explaining)

I call it the pea pod bond. The bond that exists between parent and child. Me and you. You and Alexis. We're peas in a pod and, like it or not, everyone who's ever had kids is in the pod forever.

Off of Martha's pod wisdom, Castle has a realization.

CASTLE

"The pea pod bond."

He rises and heads for the door.

CASTLE (CONT'D)
I'll deduct the session fee from
your rent.

MARTHA
(calling after him)
You might want to think about the
yearlong package. It's a bargain.

As he gets to the door, he sees ALEXIS coming down the
stairs. He runs up and ambushes her with a hug.

ALEXIS
What was that for?

CASTLE
It's a pod thing. Gram'll explain.

And then he's out the door.

22 INT. CANDELA APARTMENT, KITCHEN - NIGHT

22

It's quiet. Beckett enters and is surprised to find Sorenson
pouring himself a cup of coffee, somber.

BECKETT
Hey.

SORENSEN
(re: the coffee)
Hey, yourself. Want some?

BECKETT
Thanks.

He hands her a cup.

BECKETT (CONT'D)
Just heard from my team. Ellers was
a dead end. The owner at Paradise
Diner on East 62nd vouched that he
was having his usual poached eggs
this morning.

SORENSEN
Would have been too easy, right? Or
over-easy.

She smiles.

BECKETT

That's something Castle would say. When a story seems too easy, he'll say, "That's a terrible ending." Or, "The reader would never buy it."

SORENSEN

You like him.

She nudges him with intimate familiarity.

BECKETT

No. He's just... I don't know. Interesting.

SORENSEN

So you're not...?

BECKETT

With him? No...

SORENSEN

I meant to call. I must've picked up the phone a dozen times.

BECKETT

You meant to do a lot of things. That's why you left, remember?

SORENSEN

Boston was a great opportunity.

BECKETT

I never said it wasn't. I just said it was a choice. A choice that didn't include me.

SORENSEN

You could've come.

BECKETT

And done what? Join the Boston PD, so you could move to Phoenix? And then Cleveland? And then back here? I know how it works, Will.

SORENSEN

That didn't stop me from missing you. Missing us. Sundays in the park. Those ridiculous neon ice skates at Rockefeller Center.

She laughs and smiles.

BECKETT

I'll have you know those skates
were awesome.

SORENSEN

It wasn't the skates.

Sorenson inches closer. Beckett doesn't pull away.

BECKETT

Will...

Sorenson goes in for a KISS. And it's hot. When they pull away,
Beckett is mortified to see Castle standing in the doorway.

CASTLE

And I thought that cops and Feds
hated each other.

Beckett and Sorenson pull away. AWKWARD!

CASTLE (CONT'D)

They say justice never sleeps. Now
I know why. *

BECKETT

We were just-

CASTLE

Being consenting adults. I'm not
judging.

BECKETT

I thought I told you to go home.

CASTLE

I went home, but then my mother
said something that couldn't wait.

SORENSEN

You live with your mother?

CASTLE

Apparently, we're peas in a pod.
But the important point is that
Angela's adopted.

BECKETT

So?

CASTLE

So, prior to giving up her baby,
the birth mother would've been
given background on the Candelas.

(MORE)

CASTLE (CONT'D)
Specifically, their ability to support the child.

BECKETT
(echoing her earlier point)
Knowledge of their finances.

SORENSEN
Really, Kate? We're going to waste time on the insights of Nancy Drew here?

BECKETT
(amazed to be saying it)
Castle's insights have actually been fairly helpful at times.

CASTLE
(to Beckett)
"Fairly helpful"?
(to Sorenson)
And I'll have you know that Nancy Drew solved every case.

BECKETT
Castle.

CASTLE
Okay. I'm quoting now... "When a child's life's at stake, we need to be sure. Which means you have to question everything you think you know."

BECKETT
I told you he was really annoying.

From the other room they hear:

LITTLE GIRL'S VOICE
MAMA!

23 INT. CANDELA APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 23

Castle, Beckett, and Sorenson enter to find Alfred and Theresa watching a VIDEO of Angela in the park. Tears stream down the parents' faces as they watch the images of their little girl.

CUT TO:

24 INT. CANDELA APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 24

Castle, Beckett, Sorenson, Esposito, and Ryan huddle. Esposito reads off his notes. They speak in hushed tones.

ESPOSITO

Birth mother was Lucia Gomez. Got pregnant in high school, had Angela two years ago, and gave her up in a closed adoption.

BECKETT

So she couldn't contact the Candelas without their permission.

RYAN

But a couple of months ago, she submits this to the adoption agency.

Ryan hands Beckett a form. As she looks it over...

BECKETT

Request to contact adoptive parents.

ESPOSITO

Clerk can't say if the information got passed along or not.

CASTLE

Right. But all she would have needed was a quick glance at a computer screen to get an address.

Beckett gives Castle a look: he was right.

BECKETT

Pick her up.

*

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

25 INT. PRECINCT, OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY 25

Castle, Esposito, and Ryan watch as Sorenson and Beckett enter the interrogation room and sit opposite LUCIA GOMEZ, 18.

CASTLE

Now I know why you guys hate the
Feds so much. They're like bouncers
at a nightclub.

ESPOSITO

Only you can't bribe them.

RYAN

Yeah, so we just make fun of their
blazers.

We push in on the monitors, taking us...

26 INT. PRECINCT, INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY 26

Beckett and Sorenson, with Lucia Gomez.

LUCIA

I was a junior in high school. What
was I gonna do with a baby?

SORENSEN

Two years is still a long time to
think about a decision you made
when you were sixteen.

LUCIA

Look, what am I doing here? What's
this about?

BECKETT

It's about your baby and regretting
your decision.

LUCIA

My decision? I don't regret my
decision. I'm in college now. I'll
have kids when I can care for them.

SORENSEN

Then why did you try to find her?

LUCIA

What are you talking about?

BECKETT

You filed this petition with the adoption agency a couple months back.

Beckett pushes the form in front of Lucia.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

It's a form requesting the identity of the adoptive parents.

SORENSEN

A signed form.

LUCIA

That's not my signature.

BECKETT

Lucia-

LUCIA

(pulls out her wallet)
No, really. See for yourself.

She shoves the form and her driver's license to them. Beckett and Sorenson compare the signatures. They're different.

LUCIA (CONT'D)

Why? What's going on? What's happened to her? Is she okay?

BECKETT

Did anyone in your family object to you giving up the baby?

LUCIA

No one. My mom even helped me.

SORENSEN

And the father?

LUCIA

Juan? He was in Iraq when I had her, but we talked. He was cool with it.

BECKETT

You sure about that?

Lucia looks away. No, she's not sure...

LUCIA

Look, we just had sex. It's not like I loved the guy. What was I supposed to do, marry him? It's my body.

SORENSEN
This Juan? He still in Iraq?

LUCIA
Naw. He got back a couple months ago.

Off Beckett and Sorenson...

27 INT. PARKING GARAGE, 10TH FLOOR - DAY 27

Beckett and Sorenson approach JUAN RESTREPO, 21, a car detailer, working on a car. *

BECKETT
Juan Restrepo. Detective Kate Beckett. NYP...

But seeing Beckett's badge, Juan takes off running. Sorenson races after him.

28 INT. PARKING GARAGE, RAMP - CONTINUOUS 28 *

Juan books down the ramp, Sorenson behind him, with Beckett trailing. *

29 INT. PARKING GARAGE, GROUND FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER 29

Juan reaches the bottom and runs right into Castle, Ryan, and Esposito.

ESPOSITO
Hey, bro.

RYAN
(pulling out cuffs)
Lemme see your hands.

Juan puts them up and Ryan moves in to cuff him. A beat later, Sorenson comes charging down, out of breath. Castle pats him on the back.

CASTLE
No wind sprints at Quantico? *

CUT TO:

30 INT. PARKING GARAGE, WALL - DAY 30

Juan Restrepo is now handcuffed. Beckett faces him.

JUAN
I didn't do nothing wrong.

BECKETT

So why'd you run?

JUAN

In my neighborhood, you see a cop -
that's what you do.

31 INT. PARKING GARAGE, NEAR WALL - SAME TIME

31

Esposito and Ryan, wearing latex gloves, inspect the contents of the interior of Juan's beat-up Corolla. Ryan picks through a pile of fast food wrappers in the filthy backseat.

*
*

RYAN

The man details cars, you think
he'd show a little pride with his
own ride.

*
*
*
*

Sorenson, also gloved, inspects the trunk. Castle stands nearby, watching Beckett interrogating Juan twenty feet away.

CASTLE

(re: Beckett and Juan)
What? No good cop, bad Fed?

SORENSEN

The guy did two tours in the Gulf.
I go over there, he'd turn it into
a pissing match. But Kate, she's
got a way of sneaking up on people.

CASTLE

Like last night?

Sorenson doesn't take the bait. He turns back to the trunk.

32 INT. PARKING GARAGE, WALL - SAME TIME

32

Beckett and Juan.

BECKETT

When was the last time you saw your
daughter, Mr. Restrepo?

*

JUAN

My daughter?

BECKETT

Lucia told us about how you changed
your mind. That you wanted to keep
the baby.

Beckett holds up the forged document for Juan.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

This is a form to find your daughter.
Only that's not Lucia's signature.

Juan looks away.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

It's called forgery, Mr. Restrepo.
You can do ten years for it,
especially when a child's involved.

JUAN

I had to give her up, all right? I
just wanted to see her, is all.

33 INT. PARKING GARAGE, NEAR WALL - SAME TIME

33

Sorenson continues looking through the trunk as Castle stands there.

CASTLE

Just saying. Looked like quite a
kiss.

SORENSEN

What, you jealous, Castle?

CASTLE

Me? No. Although, you have to
admit, I was right.

SORENSEN

About what?

CASTLE

Your whole, "she's the best,"
"controlling emotions."

SORENSEN

Some things you can't control. Kate
and I always had that pull. When we
were together, we couldn't keep our
hands off each other.

CASTLE

Dude. TMI.

SORENSEN

You are jealous. That I hooked her.

CASTLE

What's there to be jealous of? You
couldn't reel her in.

SORENSEN

We'll see about that.

Sorenson turns back to the trunk.

34 INT. PARKING GARAGE, WALL - SAME TIME

34

Juan's head is down. The words are flowing now.

JUAN

I was eighteen when Lucia got pregnant. Six months in, I got deployed. I never even got a chance to see her.

BECKETT

But you signed adoption papers.

JUAN

I was eighteen. But bein' over there... you see so many kids. I needed to know my daughter was okay. So I filled out the form and signed Lucia's name.

BECKETT

You got an address.

Juan nods.

JUAN

Dude felt sorry for me. He'd been there, too. Gulf One. He only lost his arm.

BECKETT

And what'd you lose?

JUAN

IED hit my humvee. Shrapnel tore through the floor.
(looks up at Beckett)
Doc said I ain't never gonna have kids of my own. So, yeah, I got an address and I went to find my daughter. She looked happy.

BECKETT

So you kidnap her and ask the people who adopted her for money?

JUAN

"Kidnap her"? Wait. She was kidnapped?

BECKETT

From her apartment. You had the address.

JUAN

You think I'd take her? You think I'd screw up her life like that? I just wanted to know she was doing okay.

35 INT. PRECINCT, BREAKROOM - DAY

35 *

Beckett, Sorenson, and Castle stand together, anxious. Through the door in the bullpen, we see Ryan and Juan seated at Ryan's desk. Esposito pops in from the bullpen.

*
*
*

ESPOSITO

His story checks out. Limo company had him doing their fleet this morning.

*
*
*
*

Beckett nods. Esposito heads back to his desk in the bullpen.

*

SORENSEN

I don't care. He had motive and opportunity.

*

CASTLE

His motive was the instinct of fatherhood. If he took her, he would've been with her. Not at his twelve-buck-an-hour detailing job.

*

SORENSEN

Doesn't matter. I want ESU on his place.

BECKETT

Will, it's not him! We're at square freakin' one, and we've got nothing. Send ESU wherever you want, but I'm not going to lose this one.

She walks away from them into the bullpen, frustrated. Off Castle, seeing the depth of how she feels, as she walks off.

*

CASTLE

What'd she mean, "lose this one"?

SORENSEN

The case we worked.

CASTLE

I thought you caught the guy.

SORENSEN

We did. But the kid was already dead.

Sorenson's phone rings. Beckett looks over. "Bad news?"

SORENSEN (CONT'D)

(picking up)

Sorenson.

(beat, looks at Beckett)

On my way.

(MORE)

SORENSEN (CONT'D)
(ends call)
Another call. About the ransom.

It's good news. They hurry out, reenergized...

36 INT. CANDELA APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - DAY 36

A BANK GUARD unloads thick PACKETS OF \$100 BILLS onto the dining table. The FBI Tech downloads to Castle, Beckett, and Sorenson.

FBI TECH
They asked for seventy-five packs of hundreds; randomized serial numbers and they warned about bait money, dye packs, and trackers.

CASTLE
Sounds like they know your playbook.

Beckett notices a GREEN BACKPACK on the table.

FBI TECH
They were detailed, right down to the color, make, and model of the backpack.

BECKETT
Drop instructions?

FBI TECH
We wait for their call.

SORENSEN
All right, let's get the money set and be ready to move.

FBI Tech moves off to load the packets of \$100 bills into the backpack. But Theresa and Alfred come over.

THERESA
It's good they called, right?

BECKETT
Very good.

ALFRED
But why didn't they tell us where to bring the money?

BECKETT
They're testing you. It's not unusual.

SORENSEN

Which means, before we make the drop, we'll need to test them. We'll need proof that they have Angela and that she's okay.

Alfred takes Theresa's hand.

ALFRED

(frightened)

What if they don't give any? What if they refuse?

Theresa pulls her hand away from him.

THERESA

(snapping)

How can you think like that?

ALFRED

I just mean, if-

THERESA

You think she's dead?

ALFRED

No. Of course not.

THERESA

I should've gotten up. I shouldn't have let you watch her-

ALFRED

Don't say that-

THERESA

Don't you tell me what to say! Tell me, Alfred, was it worth it?

She points into the art studio off the living room, to the big canvas with the red paint splatter - the one Alfred was working on during the montage. Theresa picks up a vase and hurls it at the painting. It slams against it, knocking it down.

THERESA (CONT'D)

Was it worth our little girl?

Beckett crosses to Theresa.

BECKETT

Mrs. Candela? Theresa... You can't give in to your fear. Neither you or your husband is to blame.

The phone rings. AGENTS and COPS spring into action, pulling on headsets and flipping on monitoring equipment. Theresa pushes toward the phone.

SORENSEN

(to Theresa, reassuring)
Remember, no proof, no money. We need to be firm on that.

*

Theresa wipes away her tears and nods.

SORENSEN (CONT'D)

(to Theresa)
Okay, here we go.

*

Theresa answers the phone.

THERESA

Hello?

SCRAMBLED VOICE (SPEAKER)

Listen carefully. Any deviation and your daughter dies.

THERESA

I understand.

SCRAMBLED VOICE (SPEAKER)

A civilian, not a cop, must make the drop or we kill the girl. We see police or FBI and she dies. You have the money?

THERESA

Yes. 750. Just like you asked.

SCRAMBLED VOICE (SPEAKER)

Put it in the backpack and bring it to the northeast corner of 1st Avenue and 47th. There's a mailbox there with a cell phone taped underneath. We'll text further instruction once you're there. When we have the money, then we'll call with the girl's location.

*

*

BECKETT

(whispering to Theresa)
Ask for proof that Angela's okay.

THERESA

You're not getting any money until we know my baby's okay.

A tense silence. Theresa looks over at Sorenson. Beckett and Castle look concerned. Then:

LITTLE GIRL'S VOICE (SPEAKER)
Mama.

THERESA
Hi, sweetheart!

LITTLE GIRL'S VOICE (SPEAKER)
(a little more scared)
Mama!

SCRAMBLED VOICE (SPEAKER)
You have one hour.

The call ends. It's emotional. FBI Tech shakes her head.

37 INT. CANDELA APARTMENT, KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER 37

Castle, Beckett, and Sorenson. There's a sense of urgency. Sorenson studies a map on the kitchen counter.

BECKETT
(checking her watch)
We're north of twenty-four hours
and she's still alive.

SORENSEN
Doesn't guarantee a safe return.

CASTLE
Even if you give 'em the money?

SORENSEN
Once they get paid, there's no
incentive to keep her alive. Which
means, I'll make the drop.
(opens map)
Figure we'll place our people at a
one-block radius from the mailbox-

ALFRED (O.S.)
No. They said no cops.

The three turn to see Alfred there, having overheard.

SORENSEN
It's okay. I've done this before.
They won't know I'm an FBI agent.

ALFRED
And if they do?

BECKETT

Mr. Candela, we need this to go as smoothly as possible.

ALFRED

She's my daughter and we're going to follow their instructions to the letter. They said no cops.

(off them)

Look, I'm her father and I can do this. Do I make myself clear?

Alfred turns and leaves.

SORENSEN

No way we can send the father. Too many things could go wrong. He's too emotional.

BECKETT

What other choice do we have?

CASTLE

(beat, then)

Me.

BECKETT

What?

CASTLE

I'm not a cop. And I'm certainly not emotional.

SORENSEN

No. Absolutely not.

CASTLE

The NYPD has a signed waiver from me. Plus, I don't like saying this, but you're running out of time.

BECKETT

Castle's right.

SORENSEN

You can't be serious.

BECKETT

He's followed me on cases. He's good under pressure. I hate to say it, but he's our best shot.

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

38 INT. CANDELA APARTMENT, ANGELA'S BEDROOM - DAY 38

Angela's "big girl" twin bed, with several stuffed animals and a safety rail, is against a wall. Another framed PHOTO of Angela in her bed, holding a stuffed bunny, is on a dresser. FBI Tech works on wiring Castle, as Beckett steps in.

BECKETT

Okay, this is where I'd ask if you've really thought this through, but then I remembered you never think things through.

FBI Tech threads a wire under Castle's shirt. He cackles.

CASTLE

Ooh, cold hands. Cold hands.

FBI Tech smiles, shakes her head, keeps working.

BECKETT

These people are dangerous. You need to stay focused and alert.

CASTLE

"Focused and alert," got it. Wait. What?
(off her look)
Just kidding.

FBI Tech finishes inserting a tiny microphone into his ear.

FBI TECH

You're good to go.

FBI Tech exits. Castle looks at Beckett, sees her concern.

CASTLE

It's gonna be okay.

BECKETT

(beat, then quietly)
Look, about last night, in the kitchen...

CASTLE

You don't have to explain.

BECKETT

(a little thrown)
I don't?

CASTLE
Not unless you want to.

Beckett looks at Castle, searches for some insight; quickly realizes none's coming. So, she covers.

BECKETT
I just thought for the character,
you know, for Nikki Heat...

CASTLE
I think I understand Nikki better
than you think I do.

Beckett shifts gears. She fixes his shirt.

BECKETT
Be careful, okay?

CASTLE
Do I detect actual concern for my
well-being?

BECKETT
Screw this up and I'll kill you.

CASTLE
That's more like it.

CUT TO:

39 EXT. MANHATTAN STREET - DAY 39

A MAILBOX. Castle carries the green backpack toward it.

CASTLE
(enjoying the lingo)
Okay, I have eyes on the target.
Over. Are you reading me?

INTERCUT AS NEEDED:

40 INT. BECKETT'S UNMARKED - SAME TIME 40

Beckett and Sorenson watch Castle from a distance. They talk to him over the radio.

BECKETT
We don't have to read you, we can
see you. Now shut up and focus.

CASTLE
Roger that. Five by five.

SORENSEN

Quite a guy. If he only knew how a big a fan you really are.

BECKETT

He's not going to know.

SORENSEN

You never told him how you stood in a line for an hour just to get your book signed? How his novels got you through your mother's death?

BECKETT

Is there anything you don't remember?

SORENSEN

Not when it comes to you.

As they share a look, Castle gets to the mailbox, crouches down, and reaches under.

CASTLE

I feel like Michael finding the gun taped behind the toilet.

He rips the phone away from the bottom of the mailbox and pulls the tape off. The phone beeps.

CASTLE (CONT'D)

Hey. Have Esposito and Ryan hang back. They just sent a text. It says, "We're watching you."

SORENSEN

It could just be a ruse.

CASTLE

Nope. Just got another one. It says, "You're wearing jeans and a tan coat."

*

It's correct. Castle is wearing jeans and a tan coat.

*

BECKETT

Okay, so they're watching you. It doesn't change anything.

Beckett then gets a text on her phone. She pulls it up: "U GUYS MAKING OUT?"

SORENSEN

(seeing the text)
Tell him to stop fooling around.

BECKETT
Like that'll help.

Castle reads the next text...

CASTLE
They want me to cross the street
and head west on East 47th. *

Castle walks a few steps, stops.

CASTLE (CONT'D)
That's left, right?

BECKETT
Right.

CASTLE
Right, right? Or right, left?

BECKETT
Castle! Left! Go left!

Castle heads across the street and gets another text.

CASTLE
"1201 1st." It's just up ahead. *

As Castle heads toward the building, behind him we reveal Esposito and Ryan trailing at a distance. They're also wired.

ESPOSITO
Got it. We see him.

We're back with Castle as he enters...

INTERCUT AS NEEDED:

41 INT. 1201 1ST AVENUE, LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

41 *

Castle enters into a CROWD inside the building's lobby.

CASTLE
(reading text)
They want me to leave the backpack
at the shoeshine stand and exit out
the side. *

Ryan and Esposito enter the lobby. They look through the crowd for Castle, but can't see him.

RYAN
I don't see him.

CASTLE

I'm at the shoeshine stand.

SORENSEN

They could still be watching him.
Make the drop.

BECKETT

Leave the bag, Castle. Make the
drop and walk away!

Castle leaves the backpack and keeps walking.

CASTLE

I just left it. I'm heading out.

BECKETT

Esposito, Ryan, you got him yet?

Esposito and Ryan push through the crowd, starting to
separate from each other.

ESPOSITO

I see the shoeshine stand.

RYAN

Wait. I got the backpack.

Ryan spots an ASIAN MALE, 20s, jeans and a brown shirt, with
the GREEN BACKPACK, heading toward the exit!

RYAN (CONT'D)

Asian male, jeans, brown shirt.

BECKETT

Stay with him.

ESPOSITO

I got him now, too.

They push past people as Asian Male heads outside. *

41A EXT. 1201 1ST AVENUE - CONTINUOUS

41A *

Esposito closes in and tackles him.

ESPOSITO

Where's the girl?! Where's Angela?!

ASIAN MALE

What girl? I don't know what you're
talking about!

Esposito grabs the backpack and opens it up to find... ONLY
NEWSPAPER. And then:

ESPOSITO

Ryan!

He points to a GIRL with the SAME BACKPACK. Ryan chases her down, rips her pack off, and opens it. More newspaper. He sees ANOTHER PERSON with the backpack, and ANOTHER, and ANOTHER.

42 INT. CANDELA APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - DAY

42

Castle, Beckett, and Sorenson are with Alfred and Theresa, the tension between them since the blowup still lingering.

BECKETT

The kidnapppers posted the ad on Craigslist. Said it was a performance art piece for YouTube.

SORENSEN

They sent out nearly two dozen of the backpacks. The poster used an IP anonymizer, making it impossible to trace.

ALFRED

So we just do nothing? We just have to sit here and wait?

BECKETT

We're doing everything we can.

THERESA

What? What are you doing?

CASTLE

I was able to slip the phone they gave me into the backpack.

THERESA

I don't understand.

CASTLE

Before I did that, I sent a text to Detective Beckett.

BECKETT

Phone's under a bulk account so we can't trace the owner, but we can trace the phone's ID.

SORENSEN

So far, we've pinged the phone to a twenty-block radius on the Lower East Side.

ALFRED

Twenty blocks? But that could be fifty thousand people!

SORENSEN

We need another few hours to narrow it down. In the meantime, I moved a team into the area. They'll work the streets and be ready to move when we have more information.

43 INT. CANDELA APARTMENT, ANGELA'S BEDROOM - DAY

43

Castle's finished being de-wired by FBI Tech. Beckett approaches.

BECKETT

You okay?

CASTLE

I keep thinking that if I'd only seen whoever took the bag...

BECKETT

That wasn't your job.

Castle's gaze falls on the framed picture of a beautiful, smiling Angela clutching a stuffed bunny.

CASTLE

I can't even imagine if something like this ever happened to Alexis.

BECKETT

We'll have her back soon.

They're interrupted by Sorenson, looking disturbed.

SORENSEN

Not as soon as we hoped. They must've found it. Taken the batteries out.

BECKETT

What?

SORENSEN

We just lost the signal from the phone.

END ACT FIVE

ACT SIX44 INT. CASTLE'S LOFT, CASTLE'S OFFICE - PRE-DAWN

44 *

Castle, in his robe, his laptop on his lap, scrolls through PHOTOS he took on his phone of the Candelas' apartment. A few photos come up at a time. Alexis, in her pj's, enters, sleepy.

*

*

ALEXIS

*

Hey.

*

CASTLE

*

Hey. Why up so early? Stressing about finals?

*

*

ALEXIS

*

American Lit's today. I was having nightmares about Hester Prynne.

*

*

CASTLE

*

The irony for you is, not getting an "A" is cause for shame.

*

*

She gives him a look as she comes around his desk.

*

ALEXIS

*

So why are you up?

*

CASTLE

Looking for a white rabbit.

ALEXIS

Lewis Carroll or *The Matrix*?

CASTLE

I'm not sure yet.

ALEXIS

What did Beckett tell you about taking phone photos at the crime scene?

CASTLE

I don't know, I wasn't listening. See all the stuffed animals on the bed?

ALEXIS

Aw. It looks just like mine used to. Remember when I used to have all those animals?

CASTLE

If by "used to have" you mean
Monkey-Bonkey - who mysteriously
appears between your pillows from
time to time despite having been
washed so many times he looks more
like a freaky squirrel - then, yes,
I remember.

ALEXIS

(best poker face)
I have no idea what you're talking
about.

CASTLE

Then I guess you won't mind if I
throw him out next time I see him.

She pokes at him.

ALEXIS

Don't you dare.

CASTLE

Fine. I won't. I won't.

Alexis notices one of the photos on screen: a close-up of a
framed photo of Angela with the bunny.

ALEXIS

You think the bunny has something
to do with the case?

CASTLE

I'll let you know after I go down
the rabbit hole.

Castle looks at the Angela-bunny photo. Off the photo...

45 INT. CANDELA APARTMENT, ANGELA'S BEDROOM - DAWN

45

It's very early. Some light seeps in around the window
shades, but it's pretty dark. Beckett is asleep on a rocking
chair. We see some FEDS in the background in the living room.

Beckett stirs to find Castle pulling up the blankets on
Angela's bed, searching for something.

BECKETT

Castle?

CASTLE

Go back to sleep.

BECKETT

What are you doing?

Beckett flips on the lights, groggy.

CASTLE

When Alexis was little, she had this stuffed monkey she couldn't sleep without. Monkey-Bonkey. Once she forgot to take him on vacation, so I bought another one, but she knew it wasn't Monkey-Bonkey.

BECKETT

So?

Castle picks up the framed photograph of Angela clutching her bunny in bed. He holds it up to Beckett.

CASTLE

There are two more pictures of her holding the bunny out there. So where's the bunny?

Now Beckett is fully awake.

BECKETT

You think whoever took Angela knew her well enough to take the bunny, too.

Castle taps his nose: "Bingo."

BECKETT (CONT'D)

But we've been through the Candelas' list. A few teenage baby-sitters, the cleaning lady... We cleared them already.

CASTLE

Only not all baby-sitters are teenagers. Sometimes they're people close to us. Sometimes they're family. When did we lose the phone's signal?

BECKETT

Right after we told the Candelas we were tracking it. You don't think...?

On Castle. Clearly, he does think...

46 INT. CANDELA APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - DAWN 46

Beckett and Castle walk out and see Alfred and Theresa at the dining table having coffee. They look up. But Beckett discreetly approaches Sorenson.

BECKETT
Theresa's sister, Nina? You got an address?

Sorenson pulls it up on his LAPTOP. He turns the laptop slightly for Beckett and Castle to see.

CLOSE ON THE ADDRESS ON THE LAPTOP: 329 Clinton Street.

CASTLE
Lower East Side.

47 EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING, COURTYARD PLAYGROUND - MORNING 47

It's a private playground, surrounded by buildings, not seen from the street.

A few KIDS play on swing sets. CAMERA FINDS a shy little girl, ANGELA, holding her stuffed bunny. Watching her is a smiling Nina. We RACK FOCUS past Angela to reveal Beckett, Castle, and Sorenson walking across the playground.

Nina looks anxious, but as she rises and turns, she sees Ryan and Esposito closing behind her.

When they reach Angela, Beckett bends down. Sorenson keeps walking to Nina.

SORENSEN
Nina Mendola, you're under arrest for the kidnapping of Angela Candela.

On Beckett and Angela.

BECKETT
Angela. I am so happy to see you.

Beckett scoops her up.

BECKETT (CONT'D)
Let's go see Mommy and Daddy.

Sorenson glances over at Castle, nods: "Nice job." Castle nods back. The hatchet is buried. Then both men turn and watch Beckett comforting Angela.

48 INT. CANDELA APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - DAY

48

Theresa and Alfred sit at the dining table. Beckett enters carrying Angela, who is clutching her bunny. Sorenson and Castle follow right behind.

ALFRED

Oh my God, Angie!

Beckett sets Angela down as Alfred, overcome, runs to his little girl and scoops her up, giving her hugs and kisses.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Mi corazon! Are you okay? Oh, God.

You look perfect, just perfect!

(then, to Beckett)

Is she okay?

BECKETT

She's fine.

ALFRED

Thank you. Oh, God, thank you so much. How did you find her?

Beckett doesn't answer. Alfred, smiling ear-to-ear, turns to Theresa. Curiously, she's still at the table, stone-faced. Numb.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Honey, what are you doing? She's here! She's home!

(off her silence)

What is it? What's wrong?

But Theresa remains statue-like. Alfred looks back to Beckett, Sorenson, and Castle, whose serious expressions reveal that something is amiss.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

What's going on?

BECKETT

You should ask your wife, Mr. Candela.

Alfred turns back to Theresa, who now has a deer-in-headlights look.

ALFRED

Theresa? Terry?

Theresa's silence tells him everything.

*

THERESA

(finally turning to him)
Don't look at me like that. Don't
you dare judge me.

SORENSEN

(to FBI Tech, indicating
Angela's room)
Crawford, can you take Angela...?

FBI TECH

(kneeling down)
Come on, sweetheart.

FBI Tech takes Angela to her room.

ALFRED

What did you do?

THERESA

I worked fourteen-hour days. Year
after year, killing myself to give
us a life. And what'd you do? You
painted. All you did was paint!

ALFRED

That's a lie.

THERESA

Oh, really? What about the job you
were going to get so I could cut my
hours? Was that a lie, too?

ALFRED

I was taking care of Angela.

THERESA

"Taking care"? You left her there!
In front of the TV! Every day!
(to the others)
Do you know how many times I woke
up to her screams while he was in
the next room, blasting music into
his ears? How many times did I come
home to a dirty house, dirty
clothes, and dirty diapers?

BECKETT

That doesn't give you the right to
kidnap your own child...

THERESA

How is it kidnapping? She's my
daughter.

BECKETT

Mrs. Candela, you had your sister climb through the kitchen window and take her.

THERESA

She had my permission.

BECKETT

It doesn't matter. You violated your husband's custodial rights.

THERESA

"Custodial rights"? He didn't even notice she was gone! What kind of father leaves his two year old like that?

ALFRED

Why would you do this? Why would you put us through that?

She doesn't answer, but Castle knows.

CASTLE

Because... she was planning to divorce you.

ALFRED

Then for godsake, why not just divorce me?

THERESA

So I could pay you alimony? So you could take half of everything? So you could get custody of her because I work all day and you can "be there for her"? No. I've seen what happens to the guys at work. What happened to Doug Ellers. No way I was gonna let that happen to me.

CASTLE

You were paying the ransom to yourself.

THERESA

Nina and I had it all planned. Once Angela returned, I'd file the divorce papers. There'd be nothing left for him to take.

BECKETT

And if Angela was kidnapped while Alfred was supposed to be watching her...

THERESA

The lawyer said if I could show he was negligent, I'd get custody. I wouldn't have to move out of the apartment I paid for, so that he could live here with my daughter. Do you know how hard it was to adopt Angela? How much it cost? It was all on me. It's always been all on me. Ten years together. How many paintings have you sold, Alfred? How many?

ALFRED

What you put me through... How could you hate me so much?

THERESA

You made it easy.

Beckett and Sorenson share a glance. Beckett goes to Theresa.

BECKETT

If you agree to go quietly, we won't cuff you and you can say good-bye to Angela.

Alfred watches, devastated, as Beckett leads Theresa toward Angela's room...

49 INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN - NIGHT

49

Beckett sits at her desk, doing paperwork. Sorenson walks up and takes the seat next to her desk.

SORENSEN

How do you think she'll do?

BECKETT

Depends on how many mothers are on the jury.

SORENSEN

So now that it's over... now that I'm back... I was thinking, maybe we could give it another shot?

Beckett looks at him a beat, then shakes her head.

BECKETT

What happens when you leave again?

SORENSEN

You come with me.

She shakes her head. A beat. He nods.

SORENSEN (CONT'D)

Think about it.

As she watches him walk away, Castle takes a seat.

CASTLE

Nice guy. I can see why it didn't work out, though.

BECKETT

Really?

CASTLE

Sure. He's handsome, square-jawed, by-the-book.

BECKETT

And that's a bad thing?

CASTLE

He's like the male you. Ying needs Yang, not Ying. Ying-Yang is harmony, but Ying-Ying? That's just, like... a panda name.

BECKETT

Any other bits of wisdom, Obi-Wan?

*

CASTLE

Nope. That's all for today. What say we grab a drink and celebrate.

BECKETT

Can't. I have a date.

She rises and grabs her jacket.

CASTLE

A date? You date?

She nods, "Yeah." He swallows his momentary jealousy.

CASTLE (CONT'D)

Who?

BECKETT

That's why they call it a "private life." Because it's private. Unlike you, I don't live my life on Page Six.

Beckett grabs her purse.

CASTLE

You're a very mysterious woman.

BECKETT

Maybe there's more Nikki Heat in me than you think.

She shoots him a mysterious smile as she heads out of the precinct, his jealousy of this mystery man building...

END OF SHOW