

CASTLE

"Foil Play"

by

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. NEW YORK PARK -- DAY

MEDIEVAL MUSIC and wild costumes abound at what a large sign proclaims to be the ANNUAL MANHATTAN RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL. Stalls sell everything from swords to mead, with the CROWDS dressed as everything from a Viking to Elizabeth the First.

A TOWN CRIER stands on a high platform, calling to PASSERSBY.

TOWN CRIER

Heed me, good people, lest ye miss  
the duel of a lifetime! For verily,  
in mere moments the Queen's Champion  
shall face the evil Red Duke in a  
swordfight to the death!!

EXT. FENCING DEMONSTRATION -- CONTINUOUS

A HUGE CROWD surrounds an area of grass, upon which stands:

ADAM CARVELL (43) - a heroic, gold-clad figure from feathered hat to well-muscled, stockinged legs. He sweeps a bow to the crowd then dramatically brandishes a DUELING FOIL.

ADAM

Red Duke! Thou hast impugned the  
honor of my lady and thou shalt suffer  
for it upon the point of my sword!

The crowd CHEERS - then BOOS as:

The RED DUKE - clad entirely in blood red, face hidden by a mask - makes his villainous appearance with a MATCHING FOIL.

THE RED DUKE

Sir Adam! Prepare to meet thy end!

Both men raise their swords in a salute, then begin to FENCE, battling energetically.

IN THE CROWD: a LADY (20s) and a KNIGHT (20s) stand watching.

KNIGHT

It's totally rigged. The champion  
always wins.

LADY

But shouldn't they wear padding?

KNIGHT

Bet the swords are fake. Couldn't  
hurt each other if they tried.

ON THE GRASS: The Duke YELLS and goes on the attack, but Adam easily deflects him with a mocking LAUGH.

The crowd CHEERS.

The Duke CRIES OUT and charges again...

...But this time his foil thrusts hard against Adam's chest.

The crowd GASPS as Adam staggers back clutching his wound, then BOOS delightedly at the triumphant Duke...

...Though the BOOING FADES as Adam falls to his knees, GASPS and claws at his throat, then slumps forward onto his chest.

LADY

Thought you said the champion always wins?

KNIGHT

Must be part of the act.

The crowd APPLAUDS uncertainly, sensing the end.

*On the ground, Adam's face twitches as he stares into the grass, a trickle of bright red blood running down his chest.*

EXT. NEW YORK PARK -- DAY

DETECTIVE KATE BECKETT ducks under the crime scene tape, heading toward where Adam's body lies on the grass.

DETECTIVES KEVIN RYAN and JAVIER ESPOSITO catch up to her.

ESPOSITO

Victim is Adam Carvell.

BECKETT

The Olympic fencer?

ESPOSITO

Yeah. Now he runs a fencing school downtown.

RYAN

He ran for Congress last year, too, remember? Jenny voted for him.

ESPOSITO

Anyhow... he was in the middle of some kind of demonstration duel when his opponent over there, Doug Taylor, accidentally stuck him with his sword.

Esposito indicates the Red Duke, standing in the distance flanked by TWO UNIFORMED COPS.

ESPOSITO (CONT'D)

Witnesses say Carvell collapsed,  
couldn't seem to catch his breath.  
Few minutes later, he was dead.

BECKETT

They were using real swords?

RYAN

Technically they were antique foils,  
provided by the duel's organizer, a  
Kent Stirling. Guy's the Festival  
King this year, that's his 'retinue'  
over there.

Ryan indicates a GROUP OF PEOPLE IN COSTUME standing just  
outside the crime scene tape.

ESPOSITO

Witnesses say both foils had blunt  
tips when they got here, then Stirling  
added rubber stoppers on top. You  
know, to soften the blows.

They reach Adam's body, where Medical Examiner LANIE PARRISH  
kneels examining it. Beckett stares down at the body.

BECKETT

So how did he get hurt?

ESPOSITO

That's the interesting part. Turns  
out someone had sharpened one of the  
foil tips to a point.

Esposito reaches down and picks up the RED DUKE'S FOIL, now  
wrapped in a clear plastic evidence bag with the rubber  
removed. The tip has a SHARP ONE INCH POINT.

ESPOSITO (CONT'D)

The rubber stopper hid it from view -

RYAN

But the moment it came into contact  
with something solid -

BECKETT

Like the vic's chest -

RYAN

The tip went right through.

BECKETT

Looks too short to hit anything vital.

LANIE

You're right. No internal damage...

Lanie indicates the small amount of blood on the victim's clothes and on the grass.

LANIE (CONT'D)  
...and minimal blood loss.

BECKETT  
Then what killed him?

ESPOSITO  
Maybe he dropped dead of shame at being caught dressed like that.

LANIE  
Some women would find this look very sexy, Javier Esposito.

ESPOSITO  
(riveted)  
Duly noted.

LANIE  
Based on what the witnesses described, I'd say he was poisoned.

BECKETT  
You think the poison was on the foil?

LANIE  
If it was fast-acting, it's possible. Likely, even, given the timing.

RYAN  
Sounds like an old KGB assassination trick.

ESPOSITO  
Bro, you sound just like Castle.

LANIE  
Where is Castle, anyway? I'd have thought this was right up his alley?

BECKETT  
He and Alexis are doing something together. I didn't want to interrupt father-daughter bonding time, so...

CASTLE (O.S.)  
Alexis, wait!

Everyone looks around as --

ALEXIS CASTLE - in a sumptuous 17th century gown - runs toward the crime scene looking upset, closely followed by --

RICHARD CASTLE - dressed unmistakably as one of the Three Musketeers, complete with fake sword flapping at his waist and huge floppy hat over a long, wavy wig.

Ryan and Esposito grin, while Beckett gapes.

BECKETT

*Castle?*

Alexis reaches the tape closely pursued by her PANTING father.

CASTLE

Alexis, don't look.

ALEXIS

Dad, I've seen dead bodies before!

CASTLE

I know, sweetheart, but it's different when it's someone you know.

Beckett waves for them to be let inside the crime scene tape.

BECKETT

Alexis, you knew Adam Carvell?

ALEXIS

No, not really... he won gold the year I took up fencing. He was sort of my hero.

CASTLE

She had his poster up on her wall for years.

ALEXIS

Dad!

CASTLE

What? It's true.

ALEXIS

How would you like it if I told Kate about your poster of Raquel Welch in One Million Years BC?

CASTLE

Number one, she's heard way worse about me. And number two, it was an homage to The Shawshank Redemption.

ESPOSITO

What about your outfit? What's that, an homage to male strippers?

CASTLE  
 Musketeer Aramis, at your service,  
 messieurs!

Castle sweeps a deep bow. Ryan SNORTS with laughter.

CASTLE (CONT'D)  
 What's so funny?

RYAN  
 Nothing.

ESPOSITO  
 Just the thought of you, defending  
 the realm.

CASTLE  
 Oh really?

Castle goes to pull out his sword... but it gets stuck in his belt. Ryan and Esposito crack up even more.

CASTLE (CONT'D)  
 Hang on, it's stuck.....

BECKETT  
 What are you and Alexis doing here?

CASTLE  
 We were just leaving the joust when we heard about this. Turns out a surprising number of Renaissance folk are on Twitter.

BECKETT  
 Espo, see if you can locate the next of kin. Sounds like it's already gone viral, but let's see if we can get to them first.

ALEXIS  
 You mean his wife, Tatiana Ivanov? She was on the Russian fencing team. It was supposed to be strictly no fraternizing, but she broke the rules and fell in love anyway -

Lanie shoots a look at Beckett and Castle.

LANIE  
 Sounds familiar.

ALEXIS  
 (lost in the romance)  
 She had to leave her whole family behind when they eloped, but she said it was worth it to be with him.

Lanie stands up to accompany the body away.

LANIE

I'll try to confirm the poison was on the sword tip as soon as I can.

BECKETT

Thanks, Lanie.

CASTLE

Seriously? A poison-tipped sword, a public setting in broad daylight, *and* a Russian connection? Two words: soviet assassin.

ESPOSITO

(to Ryan)

What did I tell you?

CASTLE

What if Tatiana were actually a Russian spy? She pretends to fall in love with Carvell, marrying him and becoming one of the US social elite, gaining immediate entree to the highest political circles. But after a few years she actually falls for him, and refuses to spy any more, so they kill him as punishment.

RYAN

Wouldn't they just kill *her*?

BECKETT

Regardless of *why* he was killed, we need to find out who could have tampered with that foil.

RYAN

The foils were given to the fencers about half an hour before the duel, so they could get the feel of them.

BECKETT

We need to find out who had access. Let's start with the opponent.

RYAN

I guess he *could* be the killer...

CASTLE

Exactly! Who would suspect him?

RYAN

Uh... well, we just did.

ESPOSITO  
I'll track down the wife.

Esposito heads in one direction, while Beckett and Ryan head for the Red Duke. Beckett calls back to Castle and Alexis:

BECKETT  
Have fun, you two.

CASTLE  
Wait...

Castle's torn between following her and staying with Alexis.

ALEXIS  
I'll be fine on my own, Dad. Go solve a murder.

CASTLE  
You're sure?  
(after she nods)  
Best. Daughter. Ever.

He kisses Alexis on the top of her head, then runs after Beckett and Ryan. Alexis grins as she watches him go.

EXT. NEW YORK PARK -- CONTINUOUS

Castle catches Ryan and Beckett, slightly out of breath again.

CASTLE  
I'm here, I'm here!

BECKETT  
Ryan, could you fetch His Majesty?  
I'd like to know how easy it would have been to sharpen that foil.

RYAN  
As you wish.

As Ryan leaves, Beckett shoots Castle a faintly annoyed look.

CASTLE  
What? Is my wig coming off again?

BECKETT  
Could you at least take off that ridiculous hat?

CASTLE  
*Et tu*, Beckett? I thought you loved it when I dressed up for you. Remember the pirate captain and naughty cabin wench? *Garr*.

BECKETT

Yes, you really shivered my timbers.  
I just keep picturing Captain Gates  
showing up.

CASTLE

Beckett, I knew you were kinky, but -

BECKETT

No: here! You're not exactly dressed  
for a crime scene.

CASTLE

Milady maketh a good point.

Castle glances around hastily, rapidly removing his hat and  
wig as they reach the Red Duke - who with his mask off is:

DOUG TAYLOR (36) - an unremarkable guy with a slightly pudgy  
face and balding head. He looks stressed and very anxious.

BECKETT

Mr. Taylor, I'm Detective Kate Beckett -

DOUG

Please, will someone tell me what  
happened? Did Adam have a heart  
attack? Some kind of stroke?

BECKETT

We'll explain everything, we just  
have a few questions first -

DOUG

Look, I wasn't even supposed to be  
here! They only asked me because  
Dimitri dropped out...  
(seeing their faces)  
Dimitri Shukalov? He's another world-  
class fencer.

CASTLE

Like you and Adam?

DOUG

Me? I'm just an amateur. Dimitri  
and Adam competed against each other  
for years. Kent was furious when he  
called in sick. Their duel would  
really have been something.

CASTLE

Oh, I think yours turned out pretty  
memorable too.

BECKETT

So it wasn't choreographed?

DOUG

No, Kent wanted it to look authentic.  
He gave me the foil and told me to  
do my best to get in a few hits.  
(miserably)

I guess I got carried away. Did I  
hit too hard, break Adam's ribs?

BECKETT

It looks like somebody sharpened  
your foil -

CASTLE

- And then dipped it in poison.

DOUG

*Poison?*

BECKETT

Was the foil ever out of your  
possession?

DOUG

Well... I was practicing outside...  
then I had it with me in my tent.....

BECKETT

Did you ever leave it unattended?

DOUG

No... no, Kent would have killed me!  
He told me how valuable it is.

BECKETT

Did anyone else come into the tent?

DOUG

Uh... no... no, I don't think so...  
(panicking)  
Oh, God - you don't think *I* did this?

EXT. NEW YORK PARK -- MOMENTS LATER

Beckett and Castle watch as Doug is escorted away.

CASTLE

You think he's our killer?

BECKETT

Guilty people usually at least *try*  
for an alibi, or cast blame elsewhere.  
He did everything but confess.

CASTLE

Unless that's exactly what he *wants*  
us to think. The old 'who would be  
that stupid' defense.

BECKETT

I don't know. That's pretty risky,  
and Doug Taylor doesn't seem very.....

CASTLE

Bold?

Ryan comes up to them, along with -

KENT STIRLING (65) - self-important, peevish, and resembling  
Henry the Eighth in terms of both his girth and regal finery.

RYAN

This is Kent Stirling. He organized  
the duel.

Kent NOISILY BLOWS HIS NOSE into a massive lacy handkerchief.

BECKETT

I'm very sorry for your loss. Were  
you close to the victim?

KENT

No, not especially: we ran a charity  
together, "Fence for a Future," but  
that was about it...

(re: his handkerchief)

Oh, you mean this? Allergies. These  
Festivals are always in a damn field!

RYAN

I told Mr. Stirling how someone  
sharpened one of the foils -

KENT

And I'm absolutely livid! Do you  
know what it's worth? The whole  
day's been a PR disaster too. Wish  
I'd never arranged the damn duel!

CASTLE

If it's any consolation, I'm sure  
Adam Carvell regrets it more.

BECKETT

Mr. Stirling, can you tell us how  
easy it would have been to sharpen  
that foil?

KENT

It depends. I'd need to see it first.

EXT. NEW YORK PARK -- MOMENTS LATER

Castle, Beckett and Ryan watch Kent inspect the murder weapon.

KENT

I don't see how anyone would have had time.....! But I suppose, with the right tools.....

BECKETT

And what tools would those be?

KENT

Well... a whetstone, a file.

RYAN

CSU searched the whole area. Nothing like that was found.

BECKETT

Thank you, Mr. Stirling. You can return to your royal duties now.

Kent peers closely at the foil's hilt.

KENT

Wait a moment... this isn't mine.

BECKETT

Are you sure?

KENT

Quite sure. The ones I brought were a dueling pair. Each had an identical etching of a rose, just here.

The area of the hilt Kent points to is BARE.

BECKETT

Someone must have switched out the original foil -

CASTLE

And replaced it with a deadly one.

RYAN

You mean... we're looking for someone who brought a sword to a Renaissance Festival?

The group's gaze sweeps the nearest group of FESTIVAL PATRONS: DOZENS wear a sword at their belt, and the grounds are PACKED.

CASTLE

This could take a while.

END OF ACT ONE

## ACT TWO

INT. CARVELL FENCING SCHOOL, CORRIDOR -- DAY

Castle and Beckett walk down the corridor. Castle's removed most of his costume, but still wears a white ruffled shirt and blue velvet breeches. Beckett studies her PHONE.

BECKETT

Espo's checking for surveillance footage that covers the fencing area, but it doesn't look good.

They pause at a LARGE PAINTING of a smiling Adam Carvell.

CASTLE

Did you vote for him?

BECKETT

No. I don't really trust people who smile all the time.

Castle grins... then realizes he's smiling, and stops himself.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Always seemed like Carvell thought a lot of himself.

CASTLE

Image *is* everything. The guy was probably his own best marketing tool.

BECKETT

So that's why you have your photo on all your book jackets?

CASTLE

Well, I have been told I'm ruggedly handsome.

BECKETT

Really? Huh. I never heard that.

Off Castle's look of disbelief...

SUSAN GLASS (33) - a typical officious secretary type - suddenly appears in front of them, blocking their path.

SUSAN

Can I help you?

BECKETT

Detective Kate Beckett, NYPD.

Beckett shows her police ID. Susan grudgingly accepts it.

SUSAN  
I'm Susan Glass, Mr. Carvell's  
secretary.

She looks down her nose at Castle's apparel.

SUSAN (CONT'D)  
And he is...?

BECKETT  
With me.

SUSAN  
I suppose you're here about the  
burglary. It certainly took you  
people long enough to show up.

BECKETT  
No, actually we're here about  
something else.

INT. CARVELL FENCING SCHOOL, PRACTICE ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Castle and Beckett enter the large room, in which A DOZEN  
PAIRS OF STUDENTS watch as --

TATIANA CARVELL (27) demonstrates the correct stance for a  
particular thrust. Though a wire mesh mask hides her face,  
her white pants and jacket can't conceal Tatiana's shapely  
figure. *Her voice has a faint Russian accent.*

TATIANA  
Remember to raise your head, and -

BECKETT  
Mrs. Carvell?

TATIANA  
Yes? This is private class.

Beckett produces her ID.

BECKETT  
NYPD. I'm afraid this is important.

Tatiana pulls off her mask, revealing an exotically beautiful  
and impeccably made-up face with dark hair that bounces around  
her shoulders IN SLOW MOTION as she casually shakes it free.

CASTLE  
Wow.

BECKETT  
Castle, I'm right here.

CASTLE  
I was talking about her stance.

BECKETT  
Of course you were.

INT. CARVELL FENCING SCHOOL, OFFICE -- DAY

Castle studies the TROPHY CASES and PHOTOS lining the walls. Beckett sits next to Tatiana, who twists a tissue in her hands but seems numb with shock.

BECKETT  
I'm sorry I have to ask this, but is there anyone you can think of who might have wanted your husband dead?

TATIANA  
Of course not! Everyone loved him. He had many friends.

Castle identifies the people in various PHOTOS.

CASTLE  
Giuliani... Obama..... Ooh, Kim Kardashian.....

TATIANA  
My husband was All-American hero; Olympic champion. Everyone wanted to be photographed with him and to support his charitable work.

BECKETT  
Like Fence for a Future?

TATIANA  
Adam believed fencing was about honor and discipline. He started the charity to bring those ideals to schools across New York. He also planned to run for office again.

CASTLE  
So just to be clear, your husband rubbed shoulders with politicians and people of influence, and might even have been President some day...

Castle flicks Beckett a meaningful look.

CASTLE (CONT'D)  
With you right beside him, of course.

TATIANA  
(puzzled)  
I suppose so, yes.

Annoyed with Castle's spy theory, Beckett changes the subject.

BECKETT

How about Doug Taylor, his opponent?  
Can you think of any reason he might  
have wanted to hurt Adam?

TATIANA

*Douglas?* No! The poor thing, he  
must be so upset.

CASTLE

That's very understanding of you.

TATIANA

I do not know what happened, but I  
know Douglas was not part of it.  
Have you met him? I am his fencing  
instructor. He is not brave man.

BECKETT

Well, sometimes appearances can be  
deceiving.

Beckett flicks a glance at Castle, who notices and frowns.

EXT. FENCING SCHOOL -- DAY

Castle looks distracted as he and Beckett head for her car.

CASTLE

Beckett, back there -

BECKETT

Castle, I'm telling you, Tatiana  
Carvell is not a Russian spy -

CASTLE

You said appearances could be  
deceiving, and then you looked at  
me. You think I'm a wimp, don't  
you? Like Doug Taylor.

BECKETT

(taken by surprise)  
No I don't.

CASTLE

Be honest: what did you think when  
you first met me?

BECKETT

(without hesitation)  
I thought you were a shallow, selfish,  
annoying womanizer.

CASTLE

Well don't sugar-coat it.

BECKETT

Is this because Kevin and Espo made fun of your costume?

CASTLE

Maybe a little -

BECKETT

Forget them.

Beckett leans in, murmuring seductively into Castle's ear.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

They're not the ones who need to find you sexy in it.

CASTLE

Actually I'd prefer they didn't.

SUSAN (O.S.)

Detective! Detective!!

Susan catches up with them looking highly distressed.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Is it true? Is Mr. Carvell dead?

BECKETT

I'm sorry. Yes, he is. Were you his secretary for long?

SUSAN

Over four years. I can't believe he's really gone!

BECKETT

Can you think of anyone who might have wanted to kill him?

SUSAN

No! No, everyone adored Adam.

(hesitating)

At least, I know *I* did.

BECKETT

If you know something, Ms. Glass, you need to tell us.

SUSAN

It's just... well, Adam said something last week. I don't think he was completely happy, you know, at home?

BECKETT

He and his wife were having problems?

SUSAN

I shouldn't say.....

(as Beckett just waits)

It's just... they were arguing about everything. Even the missing sword.

BECKETT

Missing sword?

SUSAN

Yes, the one taken in the burglary. Adam told me Tatiana said it wasn't worth reporting, it'd be bad press.

CASTLE

Was it perchance an antique foil?

SUSAN

Yes! How did you know?

INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN -- DAY

Ryan's on the phone.

RYAN

I sent over some photos of the murder weapon. Susan Glass confirms it looks just like their missing foil, but I'll follow up to be sure.

INT. MORGUE CORRIDOR -- DAY

Castle and Beckett head for the morgue entrance.

BECKETT

(into her phone)

Thanks, Ryan.

CASTLE

So the killer stole Adam's own foil, doctored it, and then switched it with Doug's before the duel? Talk about being hoist by your own petard.

As they enter the morgue...

CASTLE (CONT'D)

Though what most people don't realize is, a petard was actually a Medieval *bomb*, so technically -

INT. MORGUE -- CONTINUOUS

Lanie surprises Castle and Beckett with a deep curtsy.

LANIE

Prithee enter, my fine Lord and Lady.

Castle - instantly caught up - sweeps a deep bow back.

CASTLE  
Noble greetings, Mistress Lanie.

BECKETT  
Don't encourage him.

LANIE  
I'm just getting in some practice.  
Javi promised to take me to the  
Festival next weekend.

BECKETT  
How did you manage that?

LANIE  
Did you see the cleavage on display  
in those outfits? Wasn't too  
difficult persuading him.

Lanie leads them over to the body.

LANIE (CONT'D)  
So I found something interesting in  
the autopsy. Adam Carvell had  
Parkinson's disease.

BECKETT  
Parkinson's?

CASTLE  
His wife never mentioned it.

LANIE  
She may not have known. I checked  
with his doctor, and he was taking  
medication that kept the symptoms at  
bay, but it wouldn't have been long  
before he couldn't keep it hidden.

CASTLE  
Maybe that explains how Doug Taylor  
was able to score a hit? It could  
have affected Carvell's coordination.

LANIE  
It's possible.

Lanie TAPS a file containing some more results.

LANIE (CONT'D)  
But this is the real reason I called  
you down here. The lab I D'd the  
poison in the tissue sample I sent.

BECKETT

What was it?

LANIE

Curare.

CASTLE

Curare? As in poison darts and blowguns curare?

LANIE

If you say so.

CASTLE

Didn't you ever see Raiders of the Lost Ark? So cool!

LANIE

Lab tested the sword tip and found it on there, too.

BECKETT

How hard is it to get hold of?

LANIE

Very. The poison itself is a controlled substance, and you'd need special equipment *and* a chemist to extract it from any drugs it's in. On the plus side, the killer wouldn't have needed very much.

CASTLE

Enough to be easily concealed in a diplomatic pouch, perhaps?

Lanie raises an eyebrow.

BECKETT

On the offchance that Castle's soviet assassin theory is wrong, could you send us a list of possible sources in *this* country?

LANIE

Will do.

BECKETT

Thanks Lanie.

As Beckett and Castle head for the exit...

CASTLE

It's okay. When we get to the precinct, you can investigate your theory, and I'll investigate mine.

Beckett swings around, stopping him.

BECKETT

Uh uh. You're not going anywhere near Gates dressed like that.

INT. CASTLE'S LOFT -- DAY

MARTHA RODGERS - loft to herself - sways to LOUD JAZZ MUSIC and sips a martini. She looks up to see Castle enter carrying the remainder of his costume, and TURNS THE MUSIC DOWN.

MARTHA

Richard, darling, back so soon?

Beckett appears behind Castle.

BECKETT

Hi, Martha.

MARTHA

Katherine! I thought you had to work today?

BECKETT

I am. We caught a murder at the Renaissance Festival.

MARTHA

Really? How exciting! Was someone beheaded? No: hung drawn and quartered?

CASTLE

A little bloodthirsty, mother?

MARTHA

Thus speaks the man who writes gory murders for a living.

BECKETT

We just came so Castle could change his clothes.

Castle disappears into his bedroom.

CASTLE (O.S.)

Beckett's ashamed of me.

BECKETT

Castle...

MARTHA

I was rather tempted to attend myself. You know, my very first movie role was as a peasant girl in a swashbuckler.

BECKETT

Really? What was the movie?

MARTHA

La Rivolta dei Maestri di Spada!  
 (helpfully)  
 The Revolt of the Swordmasters. I  
 was seeing a rather lovely Italian  
 film director at the time -

CASTLE (O.S.)

Who never paid you!

MARTHA

Screen credit should never be sniffed  
 at, darling! Besides, it was all  
 terribly exciting. The lead was  
 absolutely dreamy, and so heroic.  
 He made all the extras swoon every  
 time he got out his sword...  
 (naughtily)  
 ...As it were.

BECKETT

I'd love to see it some time.  
 (hastily)  
 The movie, I mean.

MARTHA

Ah, well, that could prove to be a  
 tad tricky.

Castle reappears dressed in regular clothes.

CASTLE

Apparently it was never released due  
 to excessive nudity.  
 (staring at Martha)  
 In *Italy*.

MARTHA

How many times must I tell you I  
 never took a thing off?  
 (to Beckett)  
 Of course, I didn't start with very  
 much *on*...

Castle sticks his fingers in his ears and makes for the door.

CASTLE

La la la la la.....

INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN -- DAY

Castle and Beckett enter to find Esposito and Ryan watching  
 something on a screen on Esposito's desk.

BECKETT

Have you guys managed to track down  
Dimitri Shukalov yet?

RYAN

Still no answer on his phone. We  
were gonna go over there after we  
showed you this.

CASTLE

I love a good movie. Unless my  
mother's half-naked in it.

This gets Ryan and Esposito's immediate attention.

CASTLE (CONT'D)

Forget you heard that.

ON SCREEN: Video from the duel plays. Beckett's impressed.

BECKETT

Where'd you get this?

RYAN

I had uniforms check everyone leaving  
with a cell phone or camera. Someone  
in the crowd filmed the whole thing.

ON SCREEN: The duelists salute then begin to fence. Doug -  
the Red Duke - seems furious as he charges at Adam.

CASTLE

Is it just me, or does the Red Duke  
seem pretty angry?

BECKETT

Could just be acting...

ON SCREEN: Adam deflects a vicious thrust aimed at his neck.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

(wincing)

Or not. That would have left a mark,  
blunt sword or not.

ON SCREEN: Doug drives the foil powerfully home into Adam's  
chest. Adam falls to his knees, chokes then slumps forward...  
*as Doug comes to stand over him, tearing off his mask to  
reveal pure satisfaction as he glares down at the dying man.*

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Wow.

CASTLE

Maybe Doug's bold enough after all?

END OF ACT TWO

## ACT THREE

INT. PRECINCT, INTERROGATION ROOM -- DAY

Doug Taylor sits unhappily opposite Beckett and Castle.

DOUG

You can't believe I really did this!

BECKETT

We saw a video of the duel, Mr. Taylor. You looked pretty happy to see Adam Carvell go down.

DOUG

Go *down*! Not *die*! Look, the guy was a douchebag - just ask his wife!

BECKETT

She says everyone loved him.

DOUG

(briefly at a loss)  
Well, maybe he had her fooled, too.

BECKETT

What makes you think he was such a bad guy?

DOUG

Does embezzling half a million dollars from his own charity count? Tatiana - Mrs. Carvell - she had a feeling something was wrong. She knew I was CFO of a small museum, asked me to take a look at their accounts.

BECKETT

And you found a discrepancy?

DOUG

Not just one, a whole bucketload! Starting two years ago, money started to go missing. It looked like it was being paid out to businesses, other charities, but none of the payments were real.

BECKETT

Did you report it?

DOUG

I was going to... then this happened. I thought if I said anything, you'd think it gave me a motive.

BECKETT

And that's why you were so angry?

CASTLE

White collar crimes don't typically generate that kind of fury.

DOUG

The bastard somehow found out, okay? Came to my tent, told me to forget about it or else. Even grabbed me around the neck...

Doug tugs open his collar.

DOUG (CONT'D)

See? You can still see the bruises!

BECKETT

And what did you say?

DOUG

I told him I wouldn't back down.

CASTLE

Brave of you.

DOUG

Yeah, well, I may not be America's golden boy, but I'm no coward!

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING CORRIDOR -- DAY

Ryan and Esposito KNOCK SEVERAL TIMES on a door.

ESPOSITO

Mr. Shukalov?

They KNOCK again harder.

RYAN

Dimitri Shukalov? This is the NYPD. Please open the door.

DIMITRI SHUKALOV (42) - in a dressing-gown, pale and haggard - finally wrenches opens his door.

DIMITRI

*What?*

ESPOSITO

Detectives Esposito and Ryan. We'd like to ask you a few questions.

RYAN

Can we come inside, please?

DIMITRI

I don't think you want to do that.

Even as Dimitri speaks, Ryan winces and puts his hand to his nose. Even Esposito recoils a little from the obvious stench.

DIMITRI (CONT'D)

I have the stomach flu.

ESPOSITO

That's okay, we can do this out here.

A look of sudden horror crosses Dimitri's face.

DIMITRI

I'm sorry, I don't think I.....

Clutching his stomach, Dimitri flees back into his apartment.

RYAN

Can?

ESPOSITO

Definitely.

INT. PRECINCT, CAPTAIN GATES'S OFFICE -- DAY

CAPTAIN VICTORIA GATES stands behind her desk, Castle looking on, as Beckett argues with her.

GATES

Do you know who contributed to Adam Carvell's charity?

BECKETT

No, sir, but -

Gates indicates her computer screen.

GATES

The list goes on and on: politicians, movie stars, other athletes..... If you're wrong about this, it'll be a PR nightmare for the NYPD.

BECKETT

We're only asking for a warrant to check Doug's story. He claims Adam Carvell's signature is all over the fraudulent documents.

GATES

Well make sure you dot every 'i' and cross every 't'... and then *still* use kid gloves! Any evidence you find needs to be bulletproof.

Beckett's PHONE RINGS. She checks, then puts it on the table.

BECKETT

It's Ryan.  
 (to the phone)  
 You're on speaker.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING -- CONTINUOUS

Ryan talks into his phone.

RYAN

Esposito finally managed to get Dimitri Shukalov's statement. He says the reason he wasn't at the duel today is he came down with stomach flu late last night.

INTERCUT INT. GATES'S OFFICE / EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING

BECKETT

Do you believe his story?

Ryan winces as Esposito gratefully drags in lungfuls of air.

RYAN

Uh, yeah.

CASTLE

Pretty suspicious timing.

GATES

You think someone dosed him to get him out of the way?

BECKETT

If they did, it could only have been so Doug would take his place.

RYAN

I saved the best bit for last. Guess who Dimitri had dinner with last night? His old rival.

GATES

Adam Carvell?

BECKETT

But if *Adam* was the one who wanted Dimitri out of the way -

CASTLE

Then that means he *wanted* his opponent to be Doug.

INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN -- DAY

Castle, Beckett, Esposito and Ryan stand by the MURDER BOARD. Adam Carvell's photo has been added to the SUSPECTS column.

ESPOSITO

So, what, Adam was trying to kill  
Doug, and mixed up the swords?

CASTLE

And in a classic twist, the killer  
became the killee.

RYAN

Is that a real word?

ESPOSITO

(to Castle)

Dude, don't you write for a living?

CASTLE

The victim, then. Point is, the  
plot's straight out of Hamlet!

(beat)

I think. I haven't seen it since  
Mother made me rehearse with her in  
my formative years.

BECKETT

I don't know, Castle -

CASTLE

Doug said Adam came to his tent and  
tried to strangle him, meaning he  
had to put down his foil. Maybe he  
picked up the wrong one when he left?

BECKETT

And didn't notice before the duel?  
Even knowing one was poisoned?

RYAN

I'd have checked.

ESPOSITO

Me too.

CASTLE

So maybe it doesn't make *total* sense -

Gates interrupts them.

GATES

The warrant just came in for Fence  
for a Future's records.

BECKETT

Kevin, Espo: you serve the warrant  
and see what forensic accounting can  
find out.

GATES

And remember: be discreet!

RYAN

(to Beckett)

Where are you and Castle going?

BECKETT

If Doug's telling the truth, I don't  
believe Adam Carvell was the only  
one involved.

CASTLE

Gentlefolk, I believe we are about  
to pay another visit to the King.

EXT. NEW YORK PARK -- NIGHT

Beneath a large canvas, a RAUCOUS MEDIEVAL FEAST seems fast  
headed for a night of drunken debauchery. Everyone is in  
Medieval costume, making Beckett and Castle the odd ones out  
as they walk past a YOUNG MAN drinking from a small goblet  
nestled in a SERVING WENCH's ample cleavage.

CASTLE

Oh we have got to try that out -

BECKETT

Castle. Focus.

CASTLE

Sorry, what?

Kent Stirling sits on a top 'high' table next to the Town  
Crier, both munching their way through vast turkey legs.

TWO AXE-WIELDING GUARDS block Castle and Beckett's path.

GUARD

Halt in the name of the King!

BECKETT

Move in the name of my gun.

Beckett pulls aside her jacket to reveal her GUN and BADGE.  
The Guards hastily back off as Beckett and Castle reach Kent.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Mr. Stirling -

The Town Crier rises to his feet, looking offended.

TOWN CRIER

'Tis Your Majesty or Sire! And how  
didst thou gain entry in that garb!  
Guards! Arrest these - !

Kent puts a hand on the Town Crier's arm.

KENT

Enough, Brian. They're the police.

As the mollified Town Crier sits back down...

KENT (CONT'D)

My apologies, Detective Beckett.  
Please have a seat. And do dig in,  
there's plenty for all.

BECKETT

No, thank you.

CASTLE

But couldn't we just...?

Beckett glares at him. Castle relents, but stares longingly  
at a food-stacked platter carried past by a SERVING WENCH.

BECKETT

Mr. Stirling, we have a few questions  
about your charity's accounts.

KENT

Of course. If you'll make an  
appointment with my office -

BECKETT

We need to discuss it now. It may  
relate to Mr. Carvell's death.

KENT

Really, this is most inconvenient -

CASTLE

Murder does tend to be that way.

KENT

Oh very well. I just have one more  
duty to perform as King... if I might?

BECKETT

Fine. But make it quick.

KENT

I will.

(to the Town Crier)

The gallantry presentations.

TOWN CRIER

Now, sire?

KENT

Yes, now! I'll fetch the awards,  
you do the introductions, alright?

Beckett keeps a close eye on Kent as he heads for an *ALCOVE* containing *SEVERAL TROPHIES*. The Town Crier signals to the *ORCHESTRA*, who immediately fall *SILENT*.

TOWN CRIER

(shouting)

My noble lords and ladies!

The *FEASTGOERS* *CHEER* their support, all eyes turning forward.

TOWN CRIER (CONT'D)

We have this day witnessed numerous  
acts of bravery, courage and heroism  
upon the field of battle!

A *BUGLER* stands and plays a *LOUD BLAST... in Castle's ear*.

CASTLE

OW!!

Clutching his ear, Castle gets in Beckett's line of sight, temporarily blocking her view of Kent Stirling.

BECKETT

Castle, move!

TOWN CRIER

It now falls to our good King to  
bestow suitable rewards on those  
deemed most worthy!

As Beckett shifts position, trying to get eyes on Kent, the Bugler turns sideways and plays another *LOUD BLAST*, causing Castle to move again... again blocking Beckett's view.

BECKETT

*Castle!*

CASTLE

I think I'm deaf!!

TOWN CRIER

I give you: the King!

Beckett finally gets a good view of the alcove again... *and Kent Stirling is nowhere to be seen*.

BECKETT

NO!

As the Feastgoers react in confusion, Beckett takes off, running for the alcove, which is actually an EXIT...

EXT. NEW YORK PARK -- CONTINUOUS

...But when Beckett gets outside, Castle right behind her --

BANG! BANG BANG BANG! BANG BANG!

Castle grabs Beckett, pulling her to the ground.

BECKETT

Castle, let me go!

CASTLE

Someone's shooting at us -

BECKETT

It's just firecrackers!!

Beckett shoves Castle off her and gets up, even as KIDS running past toss more FIRECRACKERS to the ground. Beckett scans in both directions, but there's no sign of Kent.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Dammit! He's gone.

Castle looks unhappy as he receives Beckett's angry glare.

END OF ACT THREE

## ACT FOUR

INT. CASTLE'S LOFT -- DAY

Castle wakes up to find Alexis holding a breakfast tray.

CASTLE

Your grandmother told you what happened, didn't she?

ALEXIS

Does there have to be a reason for me bringing you breakfast in bed?

(at his look)

Okay, yes, she told me. Look, I'm sure it wasn't as bad as all that -

CASTLE

You didn't see Beckett's face. If looks could kill, I'd be dead on one of Lanie's slabs.

ALEXIS

Dad, I'm sure you've done worse -

CASTLE

You're not helping.

Castle sits up anyway and takes the tray.

ALEXIS

You were just trying to be her hero.

CASTLE

I don't think she needs one, sweetie.

ALEXIS

*Everyone* needs a hero, Dad.

Castle picks up his coffee and changes the subject.

CASTLE

So, how was your Renaissance Festival?

ALEXIS

Well... I gave my favor to one of the knights in the final joust.

CASTLE

(suspiciously)

Your... favor?

ALEXIS

You know, my handkerchief?

CASTLE

Oh. Right.

ALEXIS

I mean, obviously when he won I slept with him too.

Castle SPLUTTERS the coffee out. Alexis skips away LAUGHING.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)

Oh Dad, you are *such* an easy target when your head's messed up!

INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN -- DAY

Beckett enters and frowns as she sees Castle's chair is empty. Ryan sits at his own desk.

BECKETT

Is Castle around?

RYAN

Nope, haven't seen him yet.

Beckett walks to the MURDER BOARD. A PHOTO of Kent Stirling now sits at the top of the SUSPECTS column. Ryan joins her.

BECKETT

Any hits on the APB?

RYAN

Not yet. You think Stirling did it?

BECKETT

He was definitely involved in the fraud. Maybe Carvell knew he was dying and wanted to put things right, so Kent decided to kill him first?

RYAN

Would explain why Kent was so mad when Shukalov dropped out. He must have been worried an amateur wouldn't score any hits, particularly as the Red Duke was supposed to lose.

BECKETT

Witnesses said both foils were blunt when Kent brought them, but maybe he managed to switch one when he added the safety tips?

Esposito enters briskly.

ESPOSITO

Talking of witnesses, the canvas finally paid off. Two people saw a figure in a long hooded cloak slip into Doug Taylor's tent right before the duel. Couldn't see a face though.

BECKETT

Doug told us his only visitor was Adam.

ESPOSITO

I just spoke to him. He's still sticking to that story.

BECKETT

We know Doug didn't have a foil with him when he arrived. So if *he's* the killer, maybe the guy in the hood was his accomplice?

RYAN

Brings in a poisoned foil, and takes the other one away at the same time.

BECKETT

But how are we going to I D someone in a hood? Half the people at the Festival were in costume.

Esposito grins and sticks a USB drive into his computer.

ESPOSITO

Yeah, but most of those costumes showed a lot of flesh. Not many people were covered up all the way.

He plays a video.

ESPOSITO (CONT'D)

Tech found this on one of the park surveillance cameras.

ON SCREEN: Fuzzy, black and white footage shows a HOODED FIGURE hurrying along a Festival path.

RYAN

You still can't see a face.

ESPOSITO

Wait for it...

ON SCREEN: The Hooded Figure bumps into someone... and knocks over a table outside a tent. A brief altercation follows between the Hooded Figure and a PERSON sitting there.

ESPOSITO (CONT'D)

Whoever was sitting at that table, they must have seen the Hood's face.

RYAN

I can't make them out. Looks like one of the stallholders, though.

ESPOSITO

That place is a maze. It's gonna take forever to track them down.

BECKETT

I might know someone who can help.

INT. PRECINCT, INTERVIEW LOUNGE -- DAY

The Town Crier sits on the sofa opposite Beckett and Ryan.

BECKETT

We appreciate you coming in.

TOWN CRIER

It's okay, I had today off anyway. Gotta give the pipes a rest!

Beckett shows him a STILL of the person in the video whose table was knocked over by the Hood.

BECKETT

Do you know who this is?

TOWN CRIER

Uh... yeah, sure. Mary Keller, the Fortune Teller.

RYAN

Is that - ?

TOWN CRIER

Her real name? Yeah. Talk about fate, huh?

BECKETT

(to Ryan)

Let's bring her in, get a description -

TOWN CRIER

Ah... you don't wanna do that. Mary's kind of a 'Nordic LARPer' you see.

RYAN

A what?

TOWN CRIER

Half the people at the festival are LARPerS. Live Action Role Players? Mary's just a bit more extreme -

RYAN

More extreme?

TOWN CRIER

She does the total immersion bit.

(MORE)

TOWN CRIER (CONT'D)

You know, stays in character the whole weekend, ignores anything anachronistic... you get the idea.

BECKETT

This is a *murder* investigation.

TOWN CRIER

Won't matter. Some guy in Buffalo accused her of stealing his wallet and she refused to talk to the cops, even when they stuck her in jail. Speak to her tomorrow. Once the Festival's over with, she'll be fine.

BECKETT

This can't wait.

TOWN CRIER

Well, she won't talk to you here, that's for sure.

INT. CASTLE'S LOFT -- DAY

Castle goes to close the refrigerator... then hesitates as he catches sight of his reflection in the mirrored door. He examines his profile, tilting up his chin and trying to look heroic as he angles the door for a better look --

And notices Martha standing behind him, looking amused. Castle spins around, hastily shutting the refrigerator.

MARTHA

I haven't seen you like this since they cast you as a woman in that school play.

CASTLE

Thank you for the reminder.

MARTHA

Oh, darling, you're not still embarrassed about last night?

CASTLE

You remember the kind of guys Beckett used to date?

MARTHA

You mean the FBI agent?

CASTLE

Yes.

MARTHA

And Detective Demming... oh, and that *hunky* surgeon -

CASTLE

Alright, Mother, no need for the complete list.

MARTHA

Well what about them?

CASTLE

What do they all have in common?

MARTHA

I suppose they're all single now!

CASTLE

Actually I heard Demming got engaged... that's not important. What *else* do they have in common?

MARTHA

They're all terribly good looking...  
(reassuringly)  
Of course, so are you.

Martha sees how grim he still looks.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

Richard. You love Katherine, and she loves you. She chose you over them, didn't she?

Castle's PHONE RINGS before he can respond. He answers it.

CASTLE

Castle?  
(listens)  
Thanks, Ryan. I'll be right there.

MARTHA

Richard? Never underestimate charm and wit as the way to a woman's heart.

But Castle doesn't look comforted as he goes out the door.

EXT. FESTIVAL -- DAY

Castle stands in the middle of a path on his phone.

CASTLE

Beckett's still not picking up?

INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN -- CONTINUOUS

Ryan grins into his phone.

RYAN

She said she'd have her phone on  
silent to avoid scaring the natives.  
Tell her I found something interesting  
about where Doug Taylor works.

INTERCUT FESTIVAL/BULLPEN

Castle looks around, scanning the area in search of Beckett.

CASTLE

Okay, I'll pass it on. Hey, did  
Beckett say how she'd be dressed?

RYAN

Some kind of authority figure, that's  
all I know.

EXT. FESTIVAL -- CONTINUOUS

Castle ends the call and looks around again.

CASTLE

Hmm... Boadicea? Amazon warrior.....?

Castle's eyes fall on a TALL FIGURE, half hidden by the crowd.

CASTLE (CONT'D)

(barely breathing)  
Or warrior princess.....

XENA-LIKE MUSIC PLAYS as his gaze drifts up from the ground...

...Over knee-high brown leather boots, firm thighs, a leather-  
thonged skirt with a circular weapon at it's side, a tight  
leather corset supporting firm, rounded breasts...

BECKETT (O.S.)

Castle?

Castle spins around to see Beckett standing behind him, clad  
in a *Robin Hood* outfit complete with jauntily-tilted feathered  
cap and a dagger at her waist. She's also carrying a sack.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

What were you looking at?

Castle moves to block her view of the Xena lookalike.

CASTLE

Nothing.  
(seriously)  
Kate, about last night -

BECKETT

Castle, I know you were trying to protect me. Just remember I'm the one with the gun, alright?

CASTLE

Alright.

Beckett leans in and kisses him on the mouth. Hard. When she pulls back, he's still in heaven for a few seconds.

BECKETT

Now I need you out of those clothes...

CASTLE

Why, Detective Beckett...

Beckett grins and thrusts the sack at his chest.

BECKETT

...And into these.

EXT. FESTIVAL -- DAY

A GREGORIAN CHANT plays as --

Castle emerges from a tent dressed as a Medieval Monk complete with fake tonsure (bald spot). Beckett smothers a LAUGH.

CASTLE

You do realize this is completely emasculating? Why couldn't I wear my Musketeer outfit again?

BECKETT

Wrong period. Come on, Castle, it's not that bad.

CASTLE

I look like Friar Tuck.

Castle scratches at the wig as he follows Beckett away.

CASTLE (CONT'D)

And I hate rented costumes... do we even know who wore this last?

INT. FORTUNE TELLER'S TENT -- DAY

MARY KELLER - made up as an old crone, her true age hard to see - CACKLES as Beckett and Castle enter her dimly-lit tent.

MARY

Be ye in search of your fortune?

BECKETT

No -

Mary grabs Beckett's hand, yanking her into a seat. Her gaze flicks to Castle as he takes a seat next to Beckett.

MARY

I see a fool! He dogs your steps...  
he will not leave you in peace -

CASTLE

Hey!

BECKETT

Actually we seek information.

MARY

Aye? Cross my palm with gold, and  
ye may receive it.

CASTLE

(murmuring to Beckett)  
Used to be silver. Must be inflation.

BECKETT

(murmuring back)  
Doesn't matter, I can't pay a witness.  
(to Mary)  
Ms. Keller...

MARY

I am called Mary... sometimes Wise  
Mary... and in some parts... *Plaguey*  
Mary!

CASTLE

(shuddering)  
I wonder which parts -

MARY

Quiet, monk! Have ye not taken a  
vow of silence?

BECKETT

Yes. Yes he has.

Castle glares at the amused Beckett, but still shuts up.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Wise Mary, I can offer no gold, but  
I beseech your help for the good  
people of... of Nottingham.

MARY

(after a moment)  
Very well. I will give aid if I  
can. Of what crime dost thou speak?

BECKETT

The murder of the Queen's Champion.

MARY

Ah! A terrible deed. But Wise Mary did not witness it.

BECKETT

No, but we believe the killer's accomplice may have fled past your tent.

Suddenly, Castle's PHONE RINGS.

MARY

The chimes of the devil!! Begone!!!

CASTLE

No, it's just -

MARY

Get out!!

BECKETT

Castle, go!

EXT. FORTUNE TELLER'S TENT -- CONTINUOUS

Castle backs hastily out of the tent, accidentally knocking over someone crouched outside it... a HUGE VIKING WARRIOR, who GROWLS as he rises to his full height, dwarfing Castle.

CASTLE

(flinching back)

You wouldn't hurt a man of God?

INT. FORTUNE TELLER'S TENT -- MOMENTS LATER

Looking pleased, Beckett smiles and stands up to leave.

BECKETT

Thank you for your help, Mary.

MARY

(cackling)

Now you may go and rescue your fool!

BECKETT

Castle? Oh, no, he may look a little... defenseless, but actually he can take care of himself.

CASTLE (O.S.)

Beckett...!

EXT. FORTUNE TELLER'S TENT -- CONTINUOUS

Beckett emerges quickly - eyes widening as she sees Castle being spun around high in the air by the huge Viking.

CASTLE  
A little help here!

BECKETT  
Hey! Hey, let him down!

CASTLE  
Beckeeettttt!

The Viking LAUGHS, spinning Castle faster... then FREEZES...  
*as Beckett holds her dagger to his crotch.*

BECKETT  
I *said*... let him down.

Slowly, the Viking lowers Castle to his feet... setting him  
down just as Castle's dropped PHONE RINGS again on the ground.

CASTLE  
Have no fear, 'tis... 'tis not an  
instrument of the devil -

VIKING  
I know that, dumbass!

The Viking sweeps back his long hair to reveal a BLUETOOTH  
HEADSET attached to his ear, then stomps away past them.  
Still dizzy, Castle grabs his PHONE and answers it.

CASTLE  
*What?*

INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN -- DAY

Esposito stands talking on his phone.

ESPOSITO  
Castle? Took you long enough! You  
with Beckett?

INTERCUT BULLPEN / FESTIVAL

Castle puts the phone on speaker.

BECKETT  
Hey Espo, I got an I D on the Hood.  
It was *Tatiana Carvell*.

Esposito glances around to where Susan Glass sits talking to  
Ryan in the Interview Lounge.

ESPOSITO  
That ties in with what the vic's  
secretary just told us. Said she'd  
kept quiet out of respect for her  
boss, but there was something she  
thought we should know.

INT. UPSCALE APARTMENT BUILDING, CORRIDOR -- DAY

Esposito, Ryan, Beckett and Castle walk along a carpeted corridor in protective vests, keeping their VOICES LOW.

RYAN  
 Seriously? He *spun* you?

CASTLE  
 That Viking was seven feet tall! He even had horns!

ESPOSITO  
 You know he wasn't a real Viking, right, Castle?

RYAN  
 I don't know, I hear they're hitting the eastern seaboard pretty hard these days.

Castle looks peeved as Ryan and Esposito crack up again.

BECKETT  
 Okay, guys, enough.

They reach the apartment at the end of the corridor. Beckett, Esposito and Ryan get serious and take out their guns. Beckett listens at the door, then BANGS on it hard.

BECKETT (CONT'D)  
 This is the NYPD! Open the door!

RAISED VOICES and a CRASH sound inside.

BECKETT (CONT'D)  
 (to Esposito)  
 Do it.

INT. UPSCALE APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

The front door BURSTS OPEN as Esposito kicks it in.

BECKETT  
 Police!

ESPOSITO  
 NYPD, put your hands up!

Tatiana Carvell *and* Doug Taylor stand by the sofa next to two smashed cups. Tatiana has an obvious BLACK EYE. Doug steps in front of her, shielding his body with his own.

DOUG  
 Don't hurt her!

CASTLE  
 And they say chivalry is dead.

END OF ACT FOUR

## ACT FIVE

INT. PRECINCT, INTERROGATION ROOM -- DAY

Tatiana Carvell sits at the table opposite Beckett and Castle.

TATIANA

You think I *killed* Adam? I was going to leave him!

CASTLE

For Doug Taylor?

TATIANA

Douglas is a good man. He loves me! I am not just possession to him.

BECKETT

That's how Adam treated you?

Tatiana touches her black eye.

TATIANA

Adam did this.

BECKETT

(realizing)

You were wearing concealer when we spoke to you yesterday.

Tatiana nods.

TATIANA

When we met, I thought like everyone: Adam Carvell, he is so amazing man. Then we come here, to America... and I realize he is control freak! I can't do anything, go anywhere, talk to anyone. He becomes angry, jealous.

BECKETT

I get it. He abused you. Perhaps you can argue it was self-defense -

TATIANA

No, I told you, I was leaving him!

BECKETT

But weren't you afraid if you left, he'd come after you?

TATIANA

That is why I had Douglas look at charity accounts! I knew something was wrong; I thought if we had proof Adam was stealing, we could use it as leverage.

BECKETT

Except it was *Kent* stealing the money.  
Adam's signatures were all forged.

Tatiana looks shocked.

TATIANA

Only Kent? Are you sure?

BECKETT

Come on, Tatiana. Doug realized it too, and that's when you decided killing Adam was the only way out. You made sure everyone saw Doug wasn't armed when he arrived, then smuggled the poisoned foil into his tent.

TATIANA

No! I came to warn him! That morning when Adam hit me, he said he knew all about affair. He said he would hurt Douglas in the duel!

CASTLE

Why not just call him?

TATIANA

I try, but he never pick up!

INT. PRECINCT, INTERROGATION ROOM -- DAY

Now Doug Taylor sits opposite Beckett and Castle.

DOUG

I mislaid my phone the day before the duel. Haven't replaced it yet.

BECKETT

That's not the only thing you've mislaid recently, is it Mr. Taylor?

DOUG

What do you mean?

BECKETT

It turns out something's missing from the 'Tribes of the Amazon' collection your museum had in storage.

Beckett lays a museum PHOTO OF A BLOW DART on the table.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

A hundred-year-old curare-tipped blow dart.

DOUG

I didn't even know we had one. I'm just the CFO, not a curator!

(urgently)

Look, I swear to you, I didn't take it! I'm being set up!

INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN -- DAY

Beckett, Castle, Esposito and Ryan talk to Gates.

RYAN

We searched the Carvells' apartment. Someone had tried deleting the files, but tech found lots of searches on curare on the vic's computer.

GATES

Which the wife had access to.

ESPOSITO

Lanie says curare's used in anti-seizure meds, so it's *possible* the vic was doing research on Parkinson's drugs.

RYAN

But we also found a paper on how to chemically re-activate curare once it had been applied to something.

CASTLE

Like a blow dart.

ESPOSITO

Looks like they disposed of most of it, but CSU found traces of the right chemicals in the building's trash.

RYAN

Including something that could explain Dimitri's sudden illness.

GATES

I thought he had dinner alone with the victim?

RYAN

Turns out Tatiana Carvell bought the vodka Adam took to dinner with him.

CASTLE

Wouldn't it have made Adam sick too?

RYAN

Alcohol interfered with his meds. He told everyone he didn't drink.

GATES  
 (to Beckett)  
 Looks like a slam dunk, Detective.

BECKETT  
 I don't know. Doug and Tatiana still  
 claim they're being set up.

GATES  
 By whom?

CASTLE  
 Well, Kent Stirling's still out there.

GATES  
 Thanks to you, Mr. Castle.

ESPOSITO  
 Actually, we just got a hit on the  
 APB.

BECKETT  
 Where?

EXT. NEW YORK PARK -- DAY

Beckett, Castle, Ryan and Esposito crouch down behind some  
 STABLES wearing their protective vests. HORSES WHINNY nearby.

ESPOSITO  
 Beat cop spotted him outside a couple  
 of hours ago, but lost him in here.

RYAN  
 Why would he come back?

BECKETT  
 According to his 'retinue' he kept  
 some personal belongings back here.

CASTLE  
 Maybe he knew he might need to get  
 away fast?

RYAN  
 Uh, Beckett?

Beckett looks down to see she's standing in a pile of MANURE.  
 She grits her teeth and lifts her boot out of it.

*A faint yet violent SNEEZE mars the tranquility of the scene.*

Castle looks around... and sees an OLD PEASANT WOMAN hobbling  
 along a distant path, a BASKET clutched to her chest.

CASTLE  
 There he is!

The Old Peasant Woman - *actually Kent Stirling* - hears and makes a run for it, headscarf flying off to reveal a *beard*.

BECKETT

Call it in!

Beckett and Esposito run in pursuit of Kent, while Ryan and Castle bring up the rear, Ryan speaking into his radio.

ESPOSITO

I'll flank him!

BECKETT

Stop! NYPD!

Kent changes direction, sprinting for something. Ahead, Beckett is thirty feet away from Kent, gun drawn...

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Stop right there!

...When Kent springs onto a HORSE with surprising agility.

RYAN

Seriously!?

Ryan, Esposito and Beckett pick up their pace, but now Kent's on horseback he's too fast for them. They slow up, PANTING.

ESPOSITO

(into his radio)

Suspect is on horseback! Repeat, on horseback!

BECKETT

Where's Castle?

A FLURRY OF HOOVES has them all looking around... to see Castle ON HORSEBACK HIMSELF flying past them at high speed.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

What are you *doing*!?

CASTLE

Don't worry! I'm actually pretty good at this!!

Kent looks over his shoulder and sees Castle pursuing him. He spurs his horse on faster, heading for the Festival fence.

Castle glances back to see Beckett, Ryan and Esposito falling well behind. Ahead, he sees Kent aiming for the fence.

CASTLE (CONT'D)

Uh oh.

BEHIND THE CHASE: Beckett watches in horror as Kent *and Castle* race toward the head-height fence.

BECKETT

Don't do it... don't do it!

INT. NEW YORK PARK, THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FENCE -- CONTINUOUS

THUDDING HOOVES - a PAUSE - and then Kent's horse sails over the fence and THUDS down before galloping away. A moment's pause - then MORE THUDDING HOOVES, growing LOUDER, until --

CASTLE (O.S.)

Yeaaagghhhhhh!

Castle's horse sails into view, also THUDDING down heavily, before galloping on after Kent.

Now free of the Festival crowds and tents, Kent gallops away toward the trees that line a LARGE LAKE.

BACK AT THE FENCE: Ryan and Beckett climb over hastily, Esposito having already jumped down. Esposito spots Kent and Castle and puts his radio to his mouth.

ESPOSITO

We need backup now! Suspect is in the park headed for the lake!

RYAN

(worriedly)

Better call an ambulance too.

BY THE LAKE: Kent glances back over his shoulder, seeing Castle through the trees, still in pursuit. He kicks his horse's rump and puts on a burst of speed... but Castle gains on him, bringing his horse *almost* level as they gallop full tilt along the LAKESIDE PATH.

Castle sees the path narrow ahead: Kent's going to beat him there, and he'll be forced to drop back. Castle yells to his horse... and himself:

CASTLE

You can do this! Come on! You've seen it a hundred times on TV.....!

Castle THROWS himself sideways, hurling himself at Kent...

CASTLE (CONT'D)

Arghhhhh!!!

...But doesn't quite make it. Missing the back of Kent's horse by a few feet, Castle flies through the air... and lands with a MASSIVE SPLASH in the lake beyond.

Hearing Castle's CRY, Kent looks over his left shoulder to see an EMPTY SADDLE... then over his right shoulder to see Castle floundering in the lake. Kent LAUGHS...

THWACK!

...And is swept off his horse to land in the mud, having failed to notice the LOW-HANGING TREE BRANCH in his path.

INT. CASTLE'S LOFT -- NIGHT

Beckett eases Castle down into a chair as Martha looks on.

CASTLE

Ow ow ow...

BECKETT

Sorry!

MARTHA

I'll get some ice.

Martha hurries into the kitchen as Beckett's PHONE RINGS. She answers it.

BECKETT

Hey, Espo.

(listens)

No, just some bruises.

(listens again)

Okay, let me know.

She ends the call.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Kent swears Adam didn't know about the fraud so he had no reason to kill him. And Tatiana and Doug are sticking to their story despite all the evidence.

CASTLE

Still no sign of the original sword?

BECKETT

Tatiana must have dumped it somewhere. We'll search dumpsters next, but it could be long gone.

CASTLE

I was thinking about the duel. Doug *had* to be in on it. No one except Adam's opponent could have known for sure that he'd score a hit, and that was vital to the entire plan.

BECKETT

I'd still like a confession.

CASTLE

Then go get one.

(as Kate looks unsure)

Trust me, I'll be fine. The bruise to my back is as nothing compared to the bruise to my ego.

BECKETT

You caught the bad guy!

CASTLE

Technically, a tree did that. I fell in a lake.

Beckett leans in to kiss him.

BECKETT

I don't care. You're still my hero.

Castle's wounded pride is very apparent.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Castle, look at me.

When he doesn't, Beckett kneels beside him, forcing him to.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Do you know why I say that and mean it? Because it doesn't matter if I'm putting up walls, or teasing you... or even standing on a *bomb*. Other guys would run away -

CASTLE

(grudgingly)

Maybe for that last one -

BECKETT

But you stay. And that, Richard Castle, is why you will *always* be my hero.

She leans in and kisses him fully, passionately on the lips. The kiss lasts several seconds, and by the end Castle is feeling no pain. Beckett smiles as she finally pulls away.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Better?

CASTLE

Much. The Kate Beckett pain relief system is greatly recommended.

BECKETT

I'll come give you a booster shot  
later tonight.

Castle smirks in pleasure at the thought as Beckett EXITS.

MARTHA (O.S.)

Whew!

Martha reappears holding a bag of ice.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

I really do have tears in my eyes.

CASTLE

You were listening... of course you  
were listening.

MARTHA

Well what do you expect, darling?  
You did buy an open plan home.

CASTLE

For myself and Alexis.

MARTHA

Come on, scoot around.

Martha sits by him. Castle swivels so she can apply ice.

CASTLE

Ouch! That's cold!

MARTHA

Remember it the next time you decide  
to perform some ridiculous act of  
bravery. You already got the girl!

CASTLE

I did, didn't I?

MARTHA

Of course it did take four *long* years.

CASTLE

I was wearing her down.

MARTHA

I know, darling. It took a long  
time for Katherine to lower her  
guard... though of course one really  
can't blame her.

CASTLE

What did you say?

MARTHA

Richard, you're my son and I love you, but you have to admit that with your track record she left herself wide open to getting hurt...

Castle twists around in the chair, wincing in pain as his back protests, and kisses Martha.

CASTLE

Mother, you're a genius!

MARTHA

Richard?

Pushing himself painfully up, Castle walks quickly - but gingerly - toward the door. Martha watches, nonplussed.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

Glad I could help.

INT. PRECINCT, INTERROGATION ROOM -- NIGHT

Tatiana sits opposite Beckett, looking tired and miserable.

BECKETT

Tatiana, the evidence is stacked against you. Take a deal and confess.

TATIANA

But we didn't do it!

BECKETT

Think about Doug. You take a deal, it'll help you both. You might actually be able to have a life together, after all this.

Tatiana seems to be weakening... when the door flies opens to reveal a grinning Castle leaning on Ryan's arm.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Castle, what are you doing?!

CASTLE

I know who the killer is.

END OF ACT FIVE

## ACT SIX

INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN -- NIGHT

Beckett follows Castle and Ryan to where Esposito waits.

BECKETT

I can't believe you interrupted me  
in the middle of an interrogation!

CASTLE

Really?

BECKETT

Okay, I can believe you'd do it.  
(to Ryan and Esposito)  
I just can't believe you let him!

RYAN

The man did just fall off a horse  
taking down a suspect.

ESPOSITO

Or at least trying to. We figured  
he earned himself a break.

CASTLE

Thank you, gentlemen.

Castle picks up a remote and hits play. VIDEO from the duel  
appears. He fast-forwards to moments before the fatal hit.

CASTLE (CONT'D)

I said only one person could possibly  
know that Adam Carvell would be hit.

BECKETT

Right. His opponent, Doug Taylor.

CASTLE

No. I was wrong. There was one  
other person who knew. In fact,  
given the disparity of skill between  
them, this person was actually the  
only one who knew *for sure*.

ON SCREEN: IN SLOW MOTION, Adam *stumbles very slightly*, and  
Doug's sword slides into his chest.

Beckett realizes as she watches it.

BECKETT

*Adam Carvell himself.*

CASTLE

Adam made Doug angry beforehand,  
then lowered his guard at a crucial  
moment in the duel. Which means it  
wasn't murder.

BECKETT

It was *suicide*.

CASTLE

And an ingenious frame.

RYAN

Even if you're right, how do we prove  
it?

CASTLE

Ah, there's the rub. Dead men can't  
confess.

BECKETT

You know what else they can't do?  
Tidy up when they're already dead.  
We only found two foils at the crime  
scene.

CASTLE

Right! We assumed the killer brought  
in the poisoned one... and then took  
the other one away.

BECKETT

But if it was *Adam* who switched the  
foils -

CASTLE

- Then how did the original one leave?

EXT. NEW YORK PARK -- DAY

Castle, Beckett, Esposito and Ryan stand in the fencing area.  
Mid-week, the Festival is EMPTY, though the tents remain.

RYAN

He could have thrown it in the trash.

ESPOSITO

No trash cans close enough.

BECKETT

And except for his visit to Doug,  
Adam pretty much stayed in his tent.

Castle limps over to peer in Adam's tent. Nothing but grass.

RYAN

CSU already swept the whole thing.

CASTLE

But how deep did they dig?

INT. PRECINCT, CAPTAIN GATES'S OFFICE -- DAY

Gates stares at a PHOTO showing the grip of a foil half-buried in the earth, the blade evidently concealed in the ground directly below it. A square of grassy sod lies to one side.

BECKETT

Adam buried the poisoned foil there before the Festival began, then swapped it for his own on the day -

CASTLE

- And then swapped *that* foil for Doug's when he went to his tent to threaten him.

GATES

And the curare?

CASTLE

We think Adam took Doug's museum key card from his locker at the school.

BECKETT

Turns out that's how Susan Glass knew about the affair.

CASTLE

She caught Adam searching Doug's wallet, but he claimed he was after incriminating receipts.

GATES

I still don't understand why a man like Adam Carvell would be so willing to die. Parkinson's isn't a death sentence.

BECKETT

According to his doctor, he was having trouble dealing with his diagnosis, refusing to discuss long-term treatment options.

CASTLE

In Adam's mind, he was going to lose everything: first Tatiana, then his fencing skills, and eventually control of his whole body.

GATES

But he could have had many more good years... decades, even.

BECKETT

Crazy as it seems, this may have felt like the ultimate win for him.

CASTLE

He frames Tatiana and Doug for his murder, they go to prison, and he's still ruining both their lives long after his own death.

GATES

Unbelievable. You know I voted for the man? I suppose it's those we place on the highest pedestals who have the furthest to fall.

BECKETT

I wouldn't know, sir. I prefer my heroes...

Beckett grins, catching Castle's eye.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

A little more down to Earth.

INT. CASTLE'S LOFT, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Castle - in full Pirate Captain regalia, complete with eyepatch - attempts a sexy pose on his bed. He hears his FRONT DOOR open and close again.

CASTLE

(loudly)

Avast, me beauty, I be in here!

ALEXIS (O.S.)

Dad?

CASTLE

(panicked)

Alexis!?

Hearing FOOTSTEPS approaching, Castle leaps off the bed and climbs under the blankets, hastily ripping off the eyepatch and tossing it across the room.

Alexis appears in the doorway and frowns in concern.

CASTLE (CONT'D)

Alexis! I wasn't expecting you.

ALEXIS

I was a bit worried. I haven't seen you since you hurt your back.

Alexis comes over and sits on the bed next to Castle.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
 Are you okay? It must still hurt if  
 you're in bed this early.

CASTLE  
 Oh, you know...  
 (feigning pain)  
 Just twingeing a little bit.

ALEXIS  
 I know, I'll cook you dinner!

CASTLE  
 No, no! Alexis -

ALEXIS  
 Don't worry, Dad. Remember, you  
 taught me to cook, not gran!

Alexis frowns suddenly, feeling something beneath her. She reaches under the comforter to pull out a BRIGHT GREEN PARROT.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)  
 Dad... why do you have a parrot in  
 your bed?

INT. CASTLE'S LOFT -- MOMENTS LATER

Beckett enters the loft, wearing a coat, as Alexis rushes past her to the door.

BECKETT  
 Alexis, what is it?

Alexis averts her eyes from Beckett as she leaves.

ALEXIS  
 Don't worry, I'm not staying. Bye!

INT. CASTLE'S LOFT, BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Beckett enters and finds Castle sitting on the bed, absentmindedly plucking feathers from the parrot.

BECKETT  
 Castle, what are you doing?

CASTLE  
 Apparently I'm driving my daughter  
 to seek therapy.

BECKETT  
 I think she can handle it.

Beckett puts her hand to her belt.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

So, are you ready? Close your eyes.

Castle closes his eyes. We see Beckett's coat fall to the floor around her ankles.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Okay, you can open them now.

Castle opens his eyes... to find Beckett standing in a sexy - but perfectly modern and respectable - nightgown. She grins and climbs onto the bed, helping him remove the pirate gear.

CASTLE

Uh... Kate, not that I'm complaining, but I thought you wanted me to dress up tonight?

BECKETT

Oh, I do. But not as a pirate or a Musketeer. I want you dressed as my favorite hero: Richard Castle, amateur sleuth and best-selling author.

Beckett reaches under the bedclothes... and brings out a PIRATE'S SWORD. She gives him a wicked grin.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

What were you going to do with this?

Castle tosses it across the room, pulling her toward him.

CASTLE

Nothing. Everyone knows the pen is mightier than the sword.

And off Beckett's LAUGHTER we FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW