

CASTLE

"A Latte Suspicion"

Written by

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ACT ONE

INT. COFFEE HOUSE - NIGHT

STACEY, 19, dressed in a barista uniform, walks to the door of the coffee house and switches the open sign off. She walks to the surrounding tables and wipes them.

It's fifteen minutes after closing time. The whole shop is dark aside from the light behind the bar.

MARK, 20, wearing a grey T-shirt, enters the room. He carries a backpack and his apron is strung over his shoulder.

MARK

Hey Stacey, I am done for the night. You'll be alright if I leave, right?

STACEY

Of course. Thanks for all the help. We were slammed today.

MARK

Yeah, but you pulled through it. You are making so much progress. Keep it up.

Stacey smiles.

STACEY

Thanks, this transition has been rough. I am just glad everything over the past year is finally over.

MARK

You're a tough cookie.

STACEY

Thanks.

MARK

Have a good night. Are you sure you don't want me to stay? I don't like the thought of you being here by yourself.

STACEY

I'm sure Mark, it's fine. I've done it a million times it seems. I'll be good.

Mark exits the store. Stacey locks the door behind him. She places her phone on the counter and starts to count the money.

Music plays from her phone.

It begins to ring startling her. The screen reads "Mom." She answers it.

STACEY (CONT'D)
Hey, what do you need?

She continues to count money. She sets the safe.

STACEY (CONT'D)
Yeah. I'm leaving here once I am done with the money count.

She laughs.

STACEY (CONT'D)
Love you too.

She hangs up. She finishes counting and places the money in the safe. She grabs her purse, sets the alarm and exits the coffee house.

EXT. COFFEE HOUSE - NIGHT

Stacey locks the door. She walks to her car. An UNKNOWN PERSON approaches her. The person is not seen on screen.

STACEY
Hi, do I know you?

Unknown person does not answer. Unknown person gestures towards Stacey's car. They walk to the car.

STACEY (CONT'D)
Thanks but I'm okay.

The person, dressed in a black hooded sweatshirt and jeans motions to the car once more.

STACEY (CONT'D)
I don't know what you want, but I am not interested.

She fidgets with her keys. She drops them on the ground outside of her car. They hit the floor with a CLANK and she bends to pick them up.

The person removes a white cloth from his/her pocket and places it over Stacey's mouth. She struggles and then her body goes limp.

Person drags Stacey's unconscious body to the trunk of his/her car. Stacey's body is placed in the trunk. There is a loud SLAM of the trunk before person enters the car.

Music plays. The car drives away with Stacey. The person whistles along with the song on the radio. There is a cross necklace hanging from the rear view mirror.

INT. CASTLE'S LOFT - KITCHEN - MORNING

ALEXIS sits at the breakfast bar with CASTLE. She pours half a cup of coffee. Castle yawns and stretches his arms above his head.

Alexis offers him the coffee. He denies it with a frown.

CASTLE

Nope my fine daughter, I am giving it up.

ALEXIS

You... giving up coffee...

CASTLE

Yes. I am trying to see the effect coffee has on my writing. It just a social experiment.

ALEXIS

Suit yourself, more for me.

Alexis shrugs and smiles.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)

You'll crack eventually, dad.

BECKETT enters the room.

BECKETT

Good morning Alexis.

She grabs a mug and pours herself coffee.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

What Castle, no coffee?

Castle sighs.

CASTLE

Not you too.

Beckett walks to Castle holding her mug to his face.

BECKETT

Mmmm smells so good. Don't ya think honey?

He smells the coffee and gives her a sad look. She takes a slow sip.

MARTHA enters the room.

MARTHA

Oh sweetheart, you know it wont last, you're a writer. I'd much rather you be addicted to caffeine than alcohol or drugs.

CASTLE

You guys have no faith in me.

ALEXIS

It's more or less we don't think we could handle you decaffeinated dad. No offence.

MARTHA

Well, I raised you. I know it wont last long. Don't fret Kate, give him until the end of the day.

He smirks, grabs a glass, and pours himself orange juice. He sips it and sticks his tongue out at Martha.

Beckett's phone rings.

BECKETT

Beckett.

She walks away and holds the phone to her ear.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Sounds good, be right down.

She walks to Castle. He kisses her on the forehead.

CASTLE

Death come knocking?

Castle puts his hand on his chin.

CASTLE (CONT'D)
Is death at our doorstep?

BECKETT
No. Disappearance of a girl. Sounds like a runaway, but Espo and Ryan want us to check it out anyway.

Beckett walks to the bedroom and gets dressed.

Castle finishes his orange juice. He grabs his coat, and kisses Alexis and Martha on their cheeks. He meets Beckett at the door.

CASTLE
So a disappearance? Maybe it was the KGB and they are planning on infiltrating the...

He pauses and looks at Beckett.

CASTLE (CONT'D)
Where was she abducted from?

BECKETT
That's what we are going to find out. And its not the KGB Castle.

CASTLE
What? Stranger things have happened.

INT. TWELFTH PRECINCT - HOMICIDE - MORNING

ESPOSITO and RYAN approach Beckett. Esposito carries a folder. He hands it to her.

ESPOSITO
The girl is Stacey Ryan, 19. She's a barista at Drip Cafe in the Upper East Side. She went missing two days ago.

CASTLE
Hey I love that place!

Ryan walks to Castle handing him a cup of coffee. He denies it.

BECKETT
He gave up caffeine this morning.

RYAN

Dips on the espresso machine!

Ryan makes his way towards the break room.

BECKETT

So what else do we know?

ESPOSITO

She is a psychology major at NYU.
Her parents are Harold and Mary
Makrs.

Castle moves in the rolling chair.

CASTLE

From Marks and Condon? The divorce
attorneys?

Ryan returns from the break room with another cup of coffee.
He sits on the edge of the desk next to Beckett.

RYAN

Yes. Mrs. Marks reported her
missing this morning. She thinks
that it may be due to her last
client.

CASTLE

Harold Marks, definitely a man you
don't want to mess with. He oversaw
my first divorce.

Beckett looks at him with a concerned look.

ESPOSITO

From what I understand she locked
up the coffee shop at 10:45 p.m.

He stands up and moves to the right of Beckett handing her
another paper.

ESPOSITO (CONT'D)

She spoke with her mother a few
minutes before then to tell her she
was on her way home.

RYAN

But, she never made it home that
night. Mrs. Marks called the police
yesterday afternoon and they told
her she had to wait 48 hours to
report her missing.

Castle rolls in the chair keeping himself busy. Beckett opens the file and looks at the picture. She gets up and hangs it on the murder board.

BECKETT

So, Mrs. Marks thinks that it may be something that has to do with her case? What was her most recent?

RYAN

Hansen Masters, head of Community Global. His wife liked to get around and apparently he was sick of it.

ESPOSITO

But things didn't go as planned and his ex wife got everything because of some clause that was overlooked.

Castle slides in. He almost falls out of the chair.

CASTLE

That's plenty of motive to kidnap. But that sounds too easy.

BECKETT

Castle, how many times do I have to tell you. This is real life, not some story you are writing. In real life people kidnap and kill for no reason at all.

CASTLE

Exactly.

Beckett sighs and walks to the board. She picks up a marker and begins to write the time line.

BECKETT

So she closes at 10:45, and never makes it home. Poor excuse of a time line if you ask me. We have nothing to go on.

CASTLE

Well, what else do we know about the girl? There has to be something that can indicate why she may have gotten kidnapped?

Beckett points to Esposito.

BECKETT

Call Mr. Masters office and see what is going on in that spectrum. See if the man has an alibi and if he was angry enough to kill.

ESPOSITO

Already on it. Just waiting for the call back. I also looked into his finances, nothing out of the ordinary.

Castles phone RINGS. He picks it up and places it to his ear.

CASTLE

Castle.

Beckett laughs and looks at Ryan and Esposito.

BECKETT

He stole that line from me.

Castle places his hand over the phone and looks at Beckett.

CASTLE

I did not!

BECKETT

Keep telling yourself that, Castle.

Castle, frustrated, walks away and speaks on the phone.

RYAN

I spoke with her mother briefly on the phone regarding whether or not Stacey had any enemies.

Ryan hands her a piece of paper.

RYAN (CONT'D)

From what she knew, her daughter really didn't do much aside from working and going to school.

BECKETT

Was she seeing anyone?

RYAN

Not that her mother knew, however, she said that Stacey was pretty private with her personal life.

BECKETT

Well find out who her friends were.
And then you and Espo go and talk
to Mrs. Marks and see what you can
get from her room.

RYAN

You got it boss.

Castle reenters the room with a smile on his face. He sits in the chair next to Beckett's desk. He rubs his eyes that are seemingly bloodshot.

BECKETT

What's that look for?

CASTLE

Oh nothing. Just a little something
for Alexis. She doesn't know it
yet.

BECKETT

Come on Castle, what is it?

CASTLE

Well, she has had this computer for
years and its on its last leg. I
know she needs a new one soon, so I
pulled strings with Apple.

He laughs and pulls his hands up to his mouth.

CASTLE (CONT'D)

I got her the newest model, its all
souped up and perfect for her. It's
engraved.

BECKETT

Awh, Castle. That's so sweet.

CASTLE

I do what I can.

Beckett stands up and grabs her coat. She looks at Castle and motions he does the same.

BECKETT

We are going to talk to the people
at the coffee house. Are you going
to be able to behave yourself?

CASTLE

I'll be on my best behavior.

He smiles and stands up.

CASTLE (CONT'D)
You wouldn't happen to have a
clothespin would you?

BECKETT
(sarcastically)
Yes of course, because on my off
time I hang my clothes up on the
line in locker room.

She stares at Castle with a frustrated look.

CASTLE
Sorry, just curious.

Castle holds his hands in the air and shrugs. He grabs his coat. They walk towards the elevator.

INT. SQUAD CAR - EARLY AFTERNOON

Beckett drives. Castle sits in the passenger seat singing.

CASTLE
(yelling)
And I said maybe, you're gonna be
the one that saves me...

Beckett signs loudly.

CASTLE (CONT'D)
Come on Beckett, sing it with me.
You know the words!

Beckett stares at him blankly.

CASTLE (CONT'D)
You're my wonderwall.

Beckett's phone rings. She turns down the music and answers.

BECKETT
Beckett.

Castle fiddles his hands. He sighs and bobs his head.

The window is cracked and he rolls it up and down. He makes noise as it goes up and stares at the movement of the window.

BECKETT (CONT'D)
Alright, thanks Ryan.

Beckett hangs up. She smacks Castle's arm. He flinches.

CASTLE
Hey what was that for?

BECKETT
You without caffeine is worse than
the first case I worked with you.
You are seriously a child.

He smiles and cocks his head to the side looking at her.

CASTLE
But you love me.

Beckett sighs.

CASTLE (CONT'D)
What did Ryan have to say?

BECKETT
Just that Mrs. Marks had nothing
useful to offer. Her and Stacey
weren't very close.

Castle taps his thigh. He continues to fidget.

CASTLE
So she calls her mom to let her
know she's coming home, but they
aren't close?

BECKETT
My guess is she's just a polite
daughter. Or Mrs. Marks has done
something that Stacey doesn't
approve of.

They stop abruptly. Castle flies forward, his seatbelt snapping him back.

CASTLE
New York drivers never cease to
amaze me. The amount of idiots on
the street astonishes me.

BECKETT
I see one idiot right now.

Beckett smiles and nudges him.

CASTLE
Must be looking in that rearview
mirror.

He smiles.

BECKETT

We have to figure out why on earth she would just up and vanish.

CASTLE

Well, there are plenty of reasons. Maybe she was in some sort of trouble?

BECKETT

I'll call Esposito, see if she had any complaints about her, or if she filed any. Maybe she was having trouble with a customer.

Beckett picks up her phone and calls Esposito.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Hey, check and see if she had any complaints filed, or if she filed any in the last year.

Castle resumes playing with the window. Beckett locks the windows. Castle frowns and returns to tapping on his leg.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Working in the service industry someone is bound to complain.

She glares at Castle.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Thanks Espo.

She hangs up.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

So according to Esposito she filed a restraining order against someone a year ago. He is finding out who.

They pull up to the coffee house.

CASTLE

I can do this. I can do this.

He pins his nose shut with a clothespin.

BECKETT

I won't even ask.

They get out of the car.

END ACT ONE