

15 CONTINUED: (3)

15

NATALIE (CONT'D)  
Excuse me. Where did you get that?

THE GREAT MERLINI  
In the lobby. Downstairs.

Merlini gestures. He points, using two fingers.

Monk and Natalie walk away. Then- Monk freezes! He turns back, stunned. He remembers something!

16 INT. MAGIC CASTLE - BACKSTAGE - SATURDAY NIGHT - FLASHBACK (B&W) (FB-1) 16

A BRIEF FLASHBACK. It's the night of the murder. Monk is backstage. He's asking directions.

The mysterious Maintenance Man points, using two fingers.

17 INT. FUNERAL HOME - RESUME PRESENT DAY 17

Back at the funeral home. Monk is looking, accusingly, across the room... at Merlini.

MONK  
Who is that man?

NATALIE  
I've seen his picture. That's Merlini. That's Kevin's friend.

MONK  
(knowingly)  
He's a magician.

NATALIE  
The best in the world. That's what they say.

"Monk" - Tanya

Monk and Natalie cross to Merlini and Tanya.

START →

MONK  
I'm sorry. I wanted to introduce myself. I'm Adrian Monk. This is Natalie Teeger.

THE GREAT MERLINI  
Yes. Of course. The famous detective. I'm Karl Merlini. My assistant, Tanya Atwood.

(CONTINUED)

1/9

TANYA

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17 CONTINUED:

17

The Great Merlini and Monk shake hands. Natalie hands Monk a wipe, as...

TANYA

Were you a friend of Kevin's, or are you working on the case?

MONK

Both.

TANYA

How's it going?

MONK

There's nothing to report.

(eying Merlini)

At least, not yet. You worked with Kevin, is that right?

THE GREAT MERLINI

I didn't really know him. At least not well. I'm a featured performer. He was usually in the back room, crunching numbers.

MONK

Yes. He mentioned you. He said you gave him his big break.

THE GREAT MERLINI

I wouldn't say that...

MONK

He was filling in for you on Saturday night, wasn't he?

THE GREAT MERLINI

That's right. It was a last minute thing. I took Tanya to Reno.

TANYA

We got engaged.

Merlini puts a loving arm around his "fiancée".

MONK

Oh? Congratulations.

NATALIE

(suspiciously)

You're not wearing a ring?

(CONTINUED)

2/9

TANYA

TANYA  
(anxiously)  
Oh. I know. It happened so fast.  
I- we didn't get a chance...

THE GREAT MERLINI  
As you can imagine, after... what  
happened, we've been so distraught.  
Suddenly, a ring didn't seem that  
important.  
(somberly)  
Suddenly, nothing seems that  
important.

11END  
SC. 1

~~MONK  
Yes. Of course.~~

~~THE GREAT MERLINI  
If you'll excuse us. We'd like to  
pay our respects. Very nice meeting  
you. Good luck, Mr. Monk.~~

~~Merlini and Tanya somberly walk away, toward the casket.  
Monk watches them go.~~

~~MONK  
He's the guy.~~

~~NATALIE  
Because of the ring?~~

~~MONK  
Because he's the guy. I saw him. I  
recognize him. He was there.~~

18 INT. POLICE HQ - BULLPEN - LATER

~~Later that day. In POLICE HQ. In the BULLPEN. The fab  
four Monk, Natalie, Stottlemeyer and Disher.~~

~~CAPT. STOTTEMEYER  
Karl Merlini?~~

~~MONK  
He's the guy.~~

~~CAPT. STOTTEMEYER  
Karl Merlini was in Reno. As in  
"Reno, Nevada". And he can prove  
it.~~

~~MONK  
He's the guy.~~

(CONTINUED)

3/9

Tanya

CAPT. STOTTLEMEYER

I know this is personal. If you want me to dig, I'll grab a shovel. I'll dig for you. Just tell me what to look for.

MONK

I don't know.

Monk starts at a full-page NEWSPAPER AD, featuring "The Great Merlini". Merlini's face seems to be taunting Monk.

MONK (CONT'D)

(frustrated, to photo)  
How did you do it?

LT. DISHER

Even if he wanted to, he couldn't tell you. He's a magician. They have a code.

A stunned beat.

CAPT. STOTTLEMEYER

(to Disher)  
Excuse me. Could I see that badge again?

LT. DISHER

Why? You saw it this morning.

CAPT. STOTTLEMEYER

Please.

Lt. Disher hands his BADGE to Stottlemeyer. Stottlemeyer examines it.

CAPT. STOTTLEMEYER (CONT'D)

Yeah. It's real.

The next morning. Merlini lives in a large, open space. It's more like a magic museum: filled with PROPS and PARAPHERNALIA and POSTERS. Some are antique. Some are new.

Tanya- Merlini's assistant- leads Monk and Natalie in. Tanya has just woken up. She's wearing a bathrobe.

TANYA

We didn't expect you this early. I don't even think he's awake. We did three shows last night.

START →  
SC. 2

(CONTINUED)

4/9

TANYA

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19 CONTINUED:

19

NATALIE

Really?

TANYA

I'm making a gallon of coffee. You want some?

MONK

No. Thank you.

Tanya crosses to the KITCHEN, and pours some coffee. Monk and Natalie look around.

NATALIE

You actually live here? It looks more like a museum...

TANYA

I know. I can't believe this is my life. I can't even remember what normal feels like.

On the wall: PROMOTIONAL POSTERS, from all over the world, in various languages, advertising "The Great Merlini".

NATALIE

Italy? China?

TANYA

We travel all the time. Forty weeks a year. Karl says the real money is on the road.

MONK

How long have you two been together?

TANYA

Six years. Karl was in Toronto. I was in the audience, believe it or not. He needed someone to levitate. I raised my hand.

NATALIE

And now you're family.

TANYA

That's right.

Tanya flashes an engagement ring.

TANYA (CONT'D)

We bought it last night. It's official.

(CONTINUED)

5/9

19 CONTINUED: (2)

19

MONK  
Congratulations.

Nearby: A COUPLE OF ANIMAL CAGES, containing RABBITS and DOVES. Natalie touches one.

NATALIE  
(to a RABBIT)  
Hello.

MONK  
Natalie. Don't touch.

TANYA  
It's okay. She can pet them.

MONK  
No. She can't.

TANYA  
These are Karl's other assistants.  
We breed them here. It's cheaper  
than buying them.

Monk is shocked.

~~MONK  
They're breeding?! In the house?  
(disgusted)  
We'll be outside.~~

Monk means it. He starts to leave. Natalie stops him.

~~NATALIE  
No we won't. We'll be fine. We're  
not leaving.~~

Natalie shoots Monk a look: "Let's remember why we're here".

TANYA  
(anxiously)  
Did you know him... I mean, Kevin...  
very well?

NATALIE  
He lived in Mr. Monk's building.  
They were neighbors.

TANYA  
Did he have any children?

NATALIE  
No.

(CONTINUED)

6/9

TANYA

TANYA  
(relieved)  
Thank God for that.

Across the room: Monk is still obsessing about the rabbits.

MONK  
(appalled)  
You don't even cover them up?!  
They're just out in the open? They're  
twenty feet from the kitchen!

Natalie senses: Tanya is softening.

NATALIE  
(gently)  
Tanya. If you know something about  
what happened... you can talk to  
us... you can call us anytime...

Tanya tenses. She shakes her head.

TANYA  
I don't know anything. I was just,  
you know, asking.  
(collecting herself)  
I'll go see if Karl's ready.

11END  
SC 2

Tanya leaves. Monk and Natalie are alone.

NATALIE  
Did you see that? Mr. Monk? I think  
she knows something.

During this, Monk has covered the rabbit's cage with a SHEET.  
He looks around. He considers Merlini's PIPE COLLECTION.  
He moves on... to a collection of PROPS. He picks up a  
retractable meat cleaver. He plays with the spring-loaded  
blade.

NATALIE (CONT'D)  
What are you doing?

MONK  
I'm trying to figure this out.

Monk picks up another prop: a retractable sword. He plays  
with the trick blade.

NATALIE  
I don't want to know all the tricks.  
It ruins the whole effect.

(CONTINUED)

7/9

TANYA

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29 INT. BASEMENT - BOILER ROOM -- SAME TIME

29

At that moment, in the basement. Monk is still chained to the chair. Tanya is having second thoughts...

START →

TANYA  
Are you okay?

Monk doesn't respond.

4.3

TANYA (CONT'D)  
I've fallen through that trap door myself. Eight times a week. I know it hurts.  
(then)  
Look. I just want you to know. This wasn't my idea. I'm really sorry.

MONK  
Sorry enough to let me go?

TANYA  
No.

On a table: a PHONE- an ordinary, old-fashioned phone- starts RINGING. BRRRRING! BRRRRING!

MONK  
Aren't you going to answer that?

TANYA  
No. It's just an extension.

Monk notices: an ASHTRAY near the phone. In the ashtray: some burnt tobacco and an empty tobacco pouch.

MONK  
Pipe tobacco.

Monk grins. He's solved the case.

MONK (CONT'D)  
Very clever.

TANYA  
What is?

MONK  
How you did it. How you killed my friend. Misdirection... the secret to every illusion.

8/9



Tanya

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39 INT. MAGIC CASTLE - BASEMENT -- PRESENT DAY 39

Our FLASHBACKS END. We're in the BASEMENT. Monk is still chained up.

The door opens. Merlini enters. Tanya rushes up to him!

TANYA

Karl! I didn't tell him! I swear I didn't tell him! He just figured it out!

THE GREAT MERLINI

Did he?

(to Monk)

What do you think, Mr. Monk? Pretty sweet, huh? The best tricks are the simplest.

TANYA

(anxiously)

What are we going to do?

THE GREAT MERLINI

We stick to our plan. We make him disappear.

1 END  
SC 3 40

40 INT. UPSTAIRS - MAIN THEATER -- SAME TIME

Meanwhile, two floors above. On the MAIN STAGE. Natalie, Capt. Stottlemeyer and Disher are still looking for Monk.

CAPT. STOTTEMEYER is holding a CUP OF COFFEE. He notices something unusual: thin grooves cut into the floor. He pours some coffee. The coffee drains right through the stage floor!

Stottlemeyer turns to the STAGE MANAGER.

CAPT. STOTTEMEYER

What the hell is this?

The Stage Manager throws a LEVER. A TRAPDOOR in the floor falls open! Ka-CHUNK! It leads to the basement.

STAGE MANAGER

I forgot it was there. We haven't used it in years.

NATALIE

(urgently)

Where does it go?

9/9