

## Touched Twice

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Rating: R

Summary: Secretly, they both had always known that as soon as they started, they would never be able to stop again.

**SPOILER: 3x13 Knockdown** (to air on Jan. 24th, 2011)

Disclaimer: Nothin' mine, 'tis all Andrew W. Marlowe's, just playin' around with some ideas to keep myself busy till the big day arrives.

A/N: Normally I wouldn't write two stories based on the same spoiler, episode, scene or whatever (the first one, by the way, would be "In A Moment") But after seeing the vid of the kiss and looking at the pictures again, and after analyzing and contemplating, I came up with a new theory of what could possibly happen.

Castle/Beckett-centered; there's no real going into the case. Also... I think (okay, I KNOW) I got a little carried away, so the ending isn't exactly a realistic one and probably quite OOC, but I just needed to write it down (I'm only hum... um, a shipper, after all ;)).

The initial lip-lock was nothing more than an easy cover-up. Might his look have been as intense as it was - she didn't notice it. All Kate Beckett saw was that the man who supposedly had killed her mother walked down the dark alley they were waiting in. It was a pretty lame cover, making Rick Castle kiss her, but it was the only thing she had been able to think of. The only logical thing, it seemed to her - besides drugs, what other business could two people, a man and a woman, in a dark alley at this ungodly hour share if not secretly making out while hiding from their lives and partners, probably?

Beckett barely felt the kiss. Too much was she concentrated on the man coming closer, her eyes never leaving him. Too overwhelming was the anticipation she felt, knowing that, if the man only made one wrong move, he would have the air he breathed filtered by bars for a long time. Too high were her hopes that she would finally find closure, to end the torture that almost felt like a part of her life. Like a painful part of *her*.

Too much of all that occupied her thoughts and emotions - too much to, just for a moment, feel the passion Castle laid into that kiss. One that was supposed to be nothing else but a cover. Or was it?

Right now, she would never have even considered giving it a second thought. Right now, it was all about one person. The one who had literally destroyed her family.

Her plan worked. Surprisingly, it really did. The man was only giving them so much as a disparaging glance, despite his profession obviously less suspicious than he should better have been. And with her eyes trained on him while she still tried to let her kiss with Castle look real, she soon saw another figure appearing on the scene.

It happened fast. As soon as the second man, assumedly a potential client, met with their man, from everywhere they suddenly came, the uniforms that run towards the suspect and his company, to force them down on the ground and then seat them into cars that would bring them to the precinct. That would bring *him* to the place where he would give her answers to her questions.

Castle and Beckett, having finally parted, watched the scene silently from afar. Silently - but only until Beckett started laughing. Castle looked at her incredulously. He would have been able to explain almost every reaction - but laughter, no. Not even he could make sense of it. And still he found the sound fascinating. Captivating. Touching.

Lovable.

She was laughing. She herself either couldn't exactly tell why, but she was bubbling with laughter and couldn't stop it. All the tension, the anxiety, the heart-wrenching fear and anger, everything seemed to have simply vanished. For just this moment, every weight was gone, every force bringing her down defeated. And, knowing the feeling, she was glad that her mind had decided on releasing the energy by laughing, and not crying.

It took her a moment to realize that besides her stream of mixed emotions, there suddenly was something else to feel. Something more physical that was still also entwined with her emotions.

A gentle hand cupping her cheek, to start with. A thumb tenderly caressing the soft skin of her face, also. A hand burning her with a non-physical heat while asking her to come closer.

Within seconds, her laughter subsided. Within seconds, she found herself going from relieved, energy-releasing happiness to seriousness accompanied by a quiet and still deafening, sizzling tension.

Seconds - that was what it took to change the way she looked at Richard Castle once and for all. Just like it seemed to be the same for him, right then, at this moment. They both knew, however, that it had had a long time in coming.

And seconds it were what she needed to see that his eyes, the expression in them, had changed from sympathy and concern to predatory passion, bound to something almost hidden somewhere beneath it, something she recognized as the rare emotion she didn't dare to believe and hope was there. Love.

Her eyes searched his, searched for him acknowledging her. But his mind was too far away, focused on what was about to come; on touches not yet given, on moments not yet shared, and words not yet said.

Had the world taken one step in one second before, now one move forward seemed to take hours. As he pulled her against his body for the second time this night, only this time for real and with every intention to make them both *feel* it, she was aware of him with her every fiber and nerve. Slowly, too slow, their bodies met inch by inch, melted into each other till they became one black figure in the dark of the night, in a dirty and abandoned alley somewhere in New York City.

Despite the moment, it came almost as a surprise when his lips met hers. It had nothing of the kiss they'd shared as a cover before; instead, it was gentle, soft, innocent maybe, before it started to build up. Even as the passion rose, the gentleness but remained, and Kate found herself hesitantly yet willingly fall into his embrace and touch. They explored and learned, gave in to and savored the feeling of an intimate gesture they had denied themselves for too long.

Just like in his books, the denouement of their moment came too soon, too fast, leaving their lips tingling and with the want of more when they parted. Her eyes remained closed, afraid to break the moment, when Kate whispered a simple and yet so meaningful *Rick* breathlessly, the intensity of his touch having robbed the air from her lungs; and he gave her only fractions of seconds before crushing against her again, taking her breathing of his name as a demand to continue.

This time, he devoured her lips with a passion that made her lose her mind. With her fingers clawed into the back of his coat, pulling him even closer, she returned his kiss like a tomorrow was never meant to

come and they knew it, like there was only tonight, one night, and nothing else. Without any chance, they spiraled into a bottomless depth that were their feelings, losing every sense of what was around them, and of what lay behind and possibly before them.

And just like this, to whatever was about to come in the morning, they both knew that they didn't want this night to end, couldn't let it end and have time run and chase them again, forbidding them what they desired most - each other.

"Come with me," she heard him murmur when he released her, their faces still so close that she more felt him say those words. Fingers and arms holding him as fast as possible, she simply nodded, agreeing to follow him wherever he would lead her, just for this one night, damn the morning and the cold, ruthless reality it was going to bring, a reality that had them brought so close but also seemed to want to keep them apart.

He let her go from his embrace and took her hand instead, enclosing her smaller one in his strong one securely, and pulled her with him, leaving behind the dark alley that was the only witness of how one seemingly insignificant touch under circumstances not meant for feelings to flow freely had broken their once steely self-restraint and confronted them with those suppressed feelings for each other with an immeasurable impact.

As they vanished into the dark of the night, an unknown, unforeseeable future lay ahead of them - as did a dream-breaking daily routine, to imprison them in a mere few hours. But they promised themselves to make the most of every second - for the touches of this night might be all they were ever going to get.

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