

Hot

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Rating: P6

Contents: There are several definitions of HOT. And one of them is quite painful to learn.

Disclaimer: Castle's not mine, but Andrew Marlowe's and his team's.

Author's Note: I went through my "hiatus" folder and found a few stories that only needed a finishing touch (guess my muse just left me in the wrong moment). Therefore this is set around season two.

"I'd be very careful with that if I was you."

Warning him was the least she could do. She knew Rick Castle was the adult version of a little boy; with more boy than adult inside of him. He never followed advices; he rather made his own experiences and found out himself. After two years of working with him, she knew that much. This time was no exception; but she wanted at least be fair and warn him.

Their last case - a long and exhausting one that didn't allow even a pause of a few minutes to grab something to eat - had left them hungry, with stomachs rumbling in protest every other minute. So they'd decided that the Indian place they'd passed on their way back to the precinct after closing the case and leaving the wrap-up work to Ryan's and Esposito's capable hands was just perfect.

Thing was, contrary to Kate Beckett who had her share of experience with Indian food, know-it-all Castle had actually never eaten something from the Asian country. What didn't mean that he heeded Beckett's warnings. "How bad can it possibly be?" he asked as he shoved a good amount of what she already knew would be a painful experience for him onto his spoon. But that was what you got for not listening. He would have to live with it. She had warned him.

"Very," she tried one last time. Truth be told, she cared about him. Or more to the point, she wasn't in the mood to listen to his whining. She had enough of that already. He was a full-time big baby, after all.

"Then, my dear Kate, I'll surprise you. I'm a man. I can deal with it."

"Uh-hu."

She resisted the urge to close her eyes. The mouthful he was about to take was able to knock out even the strongest man. And he was everything - or much, at least - but not exactly what one would describe as a strong man.

The wicked voice in the back of her mind commented on it being like theater. In slow-motion. First his face froze. Then tears welled up in his eyes. His skin color turned white, but soon changed to red. The real kind of red. Mentally, she gave him some credit for keeping his mouth closed; it was the best thing to do in such a case. But she also knew he wouldn't be able to do it any longer. And she was right.

His mouth suddenly popped open, and he let out a shaky, anguished breath. This was followed by a sound from the very back of his throat she recognized as something similar to a choked squeal. When he, breathing noisily, pleaded for water with a weak voice, she already held the glass up and passed it into his hands. She had to bite her lip to keep herself from laughing when he gulped the water down fast, and reached for the bottle with his other hand at the same time. She, however, pushed a glass of milk into his direction instead.

"Told you," she remarked dryly when she was sure his brain was able to process some information again, "This stuff hasn't the label 'Warning: HOT!' for nothing."

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