

CASTLE

"Happily Never After"

written by

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## ACT ONE

### INT. APARTMENT, DINING ROOM - EVENING

In an upper class apartment, DANNY SMITH, 28, sits at his table. He repositions a dinner plate. A large steaming piece of roasted meat covers the plate.

He picks up his knife and fork and licks his lips. With surgical precision, he cuts into the meat. Danny raises the juicy chunk to his lips and slowly puts it in his mouth.

Danny moans and chews slowly. He cuts another, larger chunk and stuffs it in his mouth. Juice drips down his chin. His eyes widen and he drops the utensils on the table.

Danny grabs his throat. He gags. His eyes water and his face turns red. He struggles to stand, knocks over his chair, and collapses onto the floor.

### INT. CASTLE LOFT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

RICHARD CASTLE sleeps soundly in his bed. KATE BECKETT lays beside him. She stares at the ceiling. A frown creases her brow. Beckett gets up slowly and takes her pillow. She walks on the balls of her feet and makes her way out of the bedroom.

### INT. CASTLE LOFT, LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Beckett walks softly to the couch. She grabs a throw blanket and curls up on the couch with her pillow. Still frowning, Beckett takes a deep breath and slowly lets it out. She closes her eyes.

### INT. CASTLE LOFT, LIVING ROOM - LATER

The front door slowly opens. MARTHA RODGERS, carrying her shoes, tip-toes in and closes the door the same way.

Martha crosses the living room and freezes mid-way. She turns towards Beckett.

Beckett moans and tosses, but does not wake up. Her movement reveals the gun tucked under her pillow.

MARTHA

Oh, Dear.

INT. CASTLE LOFT, KITCHEN - MORNING

Beckett pours two cups of coffee. Castle walks up behind her.

CASTLE  
Good morning, my Dear.

Castle leans to kiss Beckett.

Beckett avoids the kiss and hands Castle a cup of coffee.

BECKETT  
Good morning.

Beckett walks around the counter. With her head bent down, she sips her coffee.

CASTLE  
Brr. Is it cold in here, or is it  
just me?

Beckett's eyes flick up and meet Castle's eyes.

CASTLE (CONT'D)  
I woke up last night and found you on  
the couch. Is everything OK?

Beckett swallows her sip of coffee. She breaks eye contact.

BECKETT  
Just couldn't sleep is all.

Castle moves around the counter and places his hand on Beckett's arm.

CASTLE  
You can talk to me, you know. I am  
here for you. Always.

Beckett looks in Castles eyes. She hesitates a moment.

BECKETT  
I'm fine, really. I --

Beckett's phone RINGS.

BECKETT (CONT'D)  
Beckett.

Beckett listens and nods.

BECKETT (CONT'D)  
Got it.

She ends the call.

BECKETT (CONT'D)  
Gotta go. We have a crime scene.

Beckett turns to leave. Castle watches her. He has a worried look on his face.

INT. SMITH'S APARTMENT, DINING ROOM - MORNING

KEVIN RYAN meets Castle and Beckett as they enter the dining room.

RYAN  
So what we have here is one Danny Smith. Choked to death eating his dinner.

BECKETT  
Someone poison him?

RYAN  
Right now, it looks like he was just stuffing meat down his throat.

BECKETT  
Then why are we here?

JAVIER ESPOSITO pokes his head around a door frame.

ESPOSITO  
This is what you need to see.

Beckett and Castle follow Esposito.

INT. SMITH'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Esposito opens the freezer door.

ESPOSITO  
Meet your victim.

A human head stares out at the group.

CASTLE  
Look who's coming to dinner.

BECKETT  
(to Ryan)  
Find out everything you can about Smith.

(MORE)

BECKETT (CONT'D)  
(to Esposito)  
Get this --

Beckett waves at the open freezer.

BECKETT (CONT'D)  
-- to the M. E.

Beckett leaves the apartment. Castle starts to follow, but Ryan stops him.

RYAN  
Hey, Castle. Is she OK?

Castle watches Beckett walk out.

CASTLE  
I have no idea.

INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN - DAY

Esposito is talking on the phone in the background. Beckett sits at her desk, her head in her hands. She stares at a file and its contents that are spread over her desk.

Esposito hangs up. He twirls his chair and faces Beckett.

ESPOSITO  
We have some information about Smith.

Beckett does not respond. Esposito gets up and walks over to Beckett's desk.

ESPOSITO (CONT'D)  
Kate?

Beckett takes a sharp breath and sits up straight. She gathers the contents into the file and closes it.

BECKETT  
Yes. Sorry. What did you say?

ESPOSITO  
What's up? You seem kind of  
distracted.

Beckett scowls at Esposito.

BECKETT  
I'm not distracted.

Ryan joins the conversation. He gives Esposito a questioning look. Esposito gives Ryan a tiny shake of his head.

Beckett turns to Ryan.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

What ya got?

RYAN

So this Danny Smith was studying to be a doctor. A surgeon, to be exact. Getting some really good grades, too. But he's kicked out of Medical School before he can graduate.

Castle and LANIE PARISH walk in on the conversation.

ESPOSITO

Robbed a morgue.

CASTLE

Must have been like a buffet to him.

Lanie nudges Castle.

RYAN

And there were two other students who where kicked out at the same time. Max Wolfe and Selma Harold.

BECKETT

We got addresses on them?

ESPOSITO

Yep. Pretty swanky places, too. Just like Smith.

RYAN

No employment records on any of them after medical school. Makes you wonder where they got their money.

BECKETT

They have any family?

ESPOSITO

None around here, but we'll keep looking.

BECKETT

Lanie? What have you got for us?

LANIE

Well, I don't have an ID on the head from the freezer yet, but his last meal was human. DNA will tell us if it's the same guy.

CASTLE

The way Smith was stuffing this guy down his gullet, it reminds me of a myth about the Wendigo.

ESPOSITO

What's a Wendigo.

RYAN

A Wendigo is a mythical demon who eats the flesh of humans.

CASTLE

That's right.

Ryan puffs up his chest and smiles.

CASTLE (CONT'D)

They are greedy, usually tall and bony, and they are super fast --

BECKETT

Look, this guy is not a mythical creature. He was not tall and bony. But he did have a head in his freezer and was eating human flesh. Shall we do some detective work, Detectives?

(To Ryan and Esposito)

Go check out these two class mates of Smith's.

ESPOSITO

You got it.

RYAN

We're on it.

Esposito and Ryan gather their things.

CASTLE

Hey there, Detective Beckett.

Castle moves in closer to Beckett.

CASTLE (CONT'D)

Wanna go grab some lunch?

Beckett looks up and catches Lanie's eye.

BECKETT

Oh. Sorry. I already made plans with Lanie for lunch.

Beckett pats Castle on the chest.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

Why don't you go with the guys?

Castle looks at Lanie.

Lanie shrugs her shoulders and smiles.

CASTLE

Well, alright then. I'll see you later.

Castle leans in to kiss Beckett. She gives him her cheek. Castle pulls back and smiles at Beckett.

Castle catches up to Ryan and Esposito as they are leaving.

CASTLE (CONT'D)

Hey guys! Wait up. I know this great little place to get a steak.

Lanie turns to Beckett.

LANIE

I didn't know we had plans. What's going on?

Beckett looks down and fidgets.

BECKETT

Nothing.

Beckett looks up at Lanie.

BECKETT (CONT'D)

I just thought we could have a little girl time.

EXT. MAX WOLFE'S HOME, FRONT - DAY

Esposito, Ryan, and Castle park in front of a well-maintained home. They get out and walk up the driveway. A black SUV and a red convertible sit in front of an open garage door.

MAX WOLFE, 28, walks out of the garage, wiping his hands on a shop cloth.

WOLFE

Can I help you, Gentlemen?

Ryan flashes his badge.



RYAN

I'm Detective Ryan. This is Detective Esposito, and this is Mr. Castle. Are you Max Wolfe?

Wolfe reaches his hand out to shake.

WOLFE

Yes. Yes, I am. To what do I owe the pleasure?

ESPOSITO

We came to talk about Danny Smith, your old classmate.

WOLFE

Danny Smith? Danny Smith. Now that's a name I haven't heard for a long time.

RYAN

What can you tell us about him?

WOLFE

Well. He was an odd character, really. Always kept to himself.

ESPOSITO

You and another classmate were kicked out of medical school at the same time as Smith. What was that all about?

WOLFE

You mean Selma?

RYAN

Yes. Selma Harold.

Wolfe looks over his shoulder at the backyard gate. Esposito and Castle lean slightly to see what he is looking at. Wolfe looks back at Ryan.

WOLFE

Well, actually, she's here for a visit. Shall we go in the back?

EXT. MAX WOLFE'S HOME, BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

SELMA WOLFE, 27, sits at a patio table set for lunch.

WOLFE

Selma, these gentlemen are  
detectives.

Selma stands up and extends her hand.

WOLFE (CONT'D)

They have questions about an old  
classmate of ours, Danny Smith.

SELMA

Danny Smith? Now that's a name I  
haven't heard in a long while. What's  
Danny done now?

ESPOSITO

Danny's dead.

Castle turns to speak.

CASTLE

Mr. Wolfe --

But Wolfe is on the other side of the patio at the grill. He  
lifts the lid and smoke rolls out. Steaks SIZZLE as Wolfe  
turns them over.

CUT TO:

INT. PRECINCT, BULLPEN - DAY

Beckett examines the case board. Her cell phone RINGS and she  
answers.

BECKETT

Beckett.

LANIE (V.O.)

I have an ID on the head. The victim  
is known a Spike and he was a grunt  
man for the mafia.

BECKETT

I've heard of him. He fell off the  
radar a while back. Guess we know  
why, now.

LANIE (V.O.)

Yea. He and a few others. Maybe Smith  
has been doing us a favor.

BECKETT

Maybe, but couldn't he just dump them instead of eating them? Yuck. And how does a guy like Smith over power a thug like Spike?

LANIE (V.O.)

Hey. You're the detective. I just listen to what the dead have to tell. Except, without the rest of the body, this one isn't talking much. Maybe Smith was a Wendigo. They are supposed to absorb the strength of those they eat.

BECKETT

Not you, too. I don't believe in myths and fairy tales. The facts tell me the story.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAX WOLFE'S HOME, BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

Castle elbows Ryan and nods toward Wolfe.

ESPOSITO

So tells us more about Smith. Why were the three of you kicked out of medical school?

Selma looks to Wolfe.

SELMA

Well. That is a sore subject. Danny had stolen a corpse from the local morgue and was performing an unauthorized dissection on it when we found him in the school lab.

WOLFE

The campus security came just after we did. They accused us of helping him. We were innocent, but no one would listen, so we were expelled, too.

CASTLE

That must have made you angry.

SELMA

For a while, yes it did.

Selma squeezes Wolfe's hand.

SELMA (CONT'D)

But we learn from our mistakes, and  
we don't hold grudges.

Wolfe smiles at Selma.

WOLFE

That's right, Darling. We are better  
off. So how did Danny die?

RYAN

He choked on a piece of meat.

Wolfe and Selma look at the smoking grill.

Castle's phone RINGS. He steps away from the group to answer.

CUT TO:

INT. BECKETT'S CAR - SIMULTANEOUS

Beckett grasps the wheel with one hand. She concentrates on  
the road and she talks to Castle.

BECKETT

Castle. Where are you?

CASTLE (V.O.)

We're at Max Wolfe's house,  
interviewing Wolfe and Selma Harold.  
Boy, is there a lot to tell you.

BECKETT

Be cautious. I just found out those  
two and Smith were patients at  
Bellevue together.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAX WOLFE'S HOME, BACK YARD - SIMULTANEOUS

Two GUNSHOTS echo from a stand of trees.

Wolfe falls backwards. Blood seeps from a hole in his chest.

Selma's head whips back and she falls across Wolfe.

Ryan and Esposito draw their guns and dive for cover in  
opposite directions.

Castle turns toward the action.

Ryan FIRES his gun in the direction the shot came from.

Castle takes cover.

A body falls from a tree and crumples to the ground.

CUT TO:

INT. BECKETT'S CAR - SIMULTANEOUS

The sound of loud GUNSHOTS from the phone speaker causes Beckett to pull the phone away from her ear.

BECKETT

Castle!

CUT TO:

EXT. MAX WOLFE'S HOME, BACK YARD - SIMULTANEOUS

Esposito crouches behind a pillar.

ESPOSITO

Ryan! You hit?

Esposito scrambles to Ryan. Blood covers Ryan's side.

RYAN

I got him. I saw him drop.

ESPOSITO

Yeah. It was a hell of a shot.

Ryan groans.

ESPOSITO (CONT'D)

Hang in there buddy. Hey Castle! You hit?

CASTLE

I'm OK.

CUT TO:

INT. BECKETT'S CAR - SIMULTANEOUS

Beckett grips the steering wheel tighter. Her knuckles turn white.

CASTLE (V.O.)

I'm OK.

BECKETT

Castle! What's going on?

CASTLE (V.O.)

A sniper killed Wolfe and Harold.  
Ryan got him, but he took a bullet  
himself.

BECKETT

And Esposito?

CASTLE (V.O.)

Taking care of Ryan.

SIRENS pierce the background through the phone.

CASTLE (V.O.)

We'll meet you at the hospital.

Beckett ends the call and tosses the phone in the passenger seat. She grips the steering wheel with both hands and shakes it in frustration.

END ACT ONE