



## A Slice of Love

*Andrew Grey*

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To make a small fortune, start with a large fortune and open a bakery. That's the advice Marcus Wilson has heard. Unfortunately, Marcus doesn't have a large fortune—just a bakery, A Slice of Heaven, in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and the determination to make it successful. He needs more help than he can afford, so when he hires accountant Gregory Southland, it's for hours in the shop as well as on the books.

Gregory takes a second job at the bakery to help pay the bills now that his health is improving. Soon he's looking forward to spending time with Marcus, but as the business—and their relationship—grows, so do the complications: First Marcus's stepmother involves him in a cause that could give the bakery a reputation it doesn't need. Then Marcus and Gregory disagree over whether to involve A Slice of Heaven in a civil rights dispute. To top it off, Gregory's ex-boyfriend makes an appearance just when he is at his most vulnerable. But the greatest complication by far is Marcus and Gregory's struggle to learn to trust each other and themselves, especially when it comes to baking up matters of the heart.

## A Slice of Love Details

Date : Published November 9th 2012 by dreamspinner press (first published November 8th 2012)

ISBN : 9781623800796

Author : Andrew Grey

Format : ebook 200 pages

Genre : Romance, M M Romance, Contemporary

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## From Reader Review A Slice of Love for online ebook

### Agnes says

Ultimo capitolo della serie “of love” che questa volta vede protagonisti Marcus, pasticcere che ha da poco avviato la sua attività, e Gregory, ex fidanzato di Sebastian (una porzione d’amore), sieropositivo che si ritroverà a dare una mano a Marcus per gestire la sua contabilità. Anche se sempre a livello di romance, questo è quello che può definirsi il più “impegnato” ma essendo comunque in un’ottica tutta rose e fiori, il problema dell’AIDS viene risolto molto superficialmente. In ogni caso mi sono piaciuti molto come coppia e, stranamente, ho adorato Gregory! (view spoiler)

Ordine delle mie coppie preferite:

- Sebastian&Robert (vol.2)
- Marcus&Gregory (vol.4)
- Billy&Darryl (vol.1)
- Peter&Rus (vol.3)

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### Nikko says

Not my favourite in this series coz i don't like books with HIV issues esp. the ones where they contract it due to sleeping around. I do have a blog buddy who contract it due to trusting his boyfriend. That's a different story.

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### Susan says

Hmmmm...I'm having a hard time coming up with a review for this book. Have you noticed that it's really easy to write reviews for books you LOVE and surprisingly really easy to write reviews for books you REALLY DIDN'T LIKE. But, it's much harder to write reviews for books that...you thought were...OK...that you're slightly indifferent towards?

My problem is...I waited. I didn't write it right away. And now, a week later, I, um, barely remember this book. Which shouldn't be a good thing. But, I don't know if it's a bad thing either. So, I apologize...I'll do my best.

I'd recently read another bakery-plot book that really was so over the top sweet, even I couldn't stomach it. A Slice of Love actually managed to be a fairly entertaining read. Marcus owns a bakery and needs help because business is growing. Throw in a bunch of gay friends who introduce him to Gregory. Gregory is...living with HIV...and turning his life around. Marcus and Gregory are 2 really kind and likable characters. Gregory is Marcus' second lover with HIV (consecutively) which felt odd to me. But, I tried not to overthink it. It was clear there was a relationship growing here...borderline instalove...but not offensively so.

I think there were some random bits thrown into the book to try to shake things up a bit...kinda of your plug and play angst...but Grey never really susses these out and I have no idea why some of it was included. There's some dude named Thom that I think was there to add tension in Marcus' and Gregory's relationship. And there was a kitchen-sink scene in the bakery towards the end of the book that had literally everyone and their mother show up in a single day. By this point, I think my eyes were rolling...but I can barely remember.

I think the book was fine and decently entertaining for that moment. But, clearly for me, not entirely memorable. If you like baked goods (no really...Grey made everything sound SO YUMMY) and some easy reading, you might enjoy this.

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### **Sheilad37 says**

Cute story

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### **Aine Massie says**

When I first heard that the new *Of Love* book was due out, I was thrilled. I love Andrew's stories, especially these and the Range ones. Later books in a series often do not hold true to the earlier excitement and feel, luckily *A Slice of Love* does NOT suffer from such issues!

The characters, Marcus and Gregory, are brought together by need and Sebastian. If you recall, Gregory is Sebastian's ex we met in *A Serving of Love*, who contracted HIV. Marcus is a new character who opens a bakery across from Café Belgie (If you would love Marcus's Carrot Cake recipe, pop over to Andrew Grey's new blog and get yourself a taste, lol). I love watching as these two men find their way through many personal issues/fears and the pressure of exes, family, and helping stand up for what's right.

The situations are very real and more than once I wanted to cry or strangle people in the story (and part of it is based on something that actually happened in PA, where the story is set), so the authenticity was riveting... Laugh, cry, pant, and scream... this is what Andrew offers us, as usual, in *A Slice of Love* and it both receives a full 5 drops and an Award of Excellence!

The *Of Love* series is about overcoming the odds, triumphing and finding the person you are meant to be, regardless of the obstacles life throws you, and more than lived up to my expectations. As always, keep 'em coming Andrew and thank you for such rich, powerful stories of love!

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### **Ines Dossena says**

Quarto e ultimo libro della serie questo capitolo parla di Gregory già conosciuto nel libro di Sebastian e Marcus.

Gregory è riuscito a rimettere la propria vita nei binari giusti dopo la scoperta della sua malattia, ha trovato

un lavoro per mantenersi ma non riesce a mettere a via niente per il futuro; così è in cerca di un secondo lavoro e tramite Sebastian trova un impiego nel nuovo panificio-pasticceria della città. Quando va a fare il colloquio incontra il proprietario Marcus e si sente subito attratto.

Marcus non naviga dell'oro anzi a stento arriva a fine mese perché ha messo tutti i suoi risparmi nella sua attività e pian piano deve farsi la clientela. Ama il suo lavoro e i suoi dipendenti sono la sua famiglia ma quando Gregory arriva come un uragano nella sua vita le cose cambieranno e in meglio.

Trovo la scrittura di Grey bellissima affronta sempre tematiche forti con molto garbo e delicatezza. consigliatissimo

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### **Aisha says**

The beginning if the book was not interesting during the time Gregory's perspective was given. I was still mad at him for hurting Sebastian be cheating on him.

However, he did change. He did not cheat on Marcus. He became an amazing person. I like that.

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### **Serena Yates says**

There are several reasons to love this amazing book. And no, it isn't just the mouthwatering descriptions of the various cakes and wonderful donuts and cookies that Marcus keeps producing, although that certainly had something to do with it. I loved this book because Gregory from the third volume comes back here, settling into his new life, because we get to see more of Café Belgie and all the characters from the previous books, and, of course, because Andrew Grey has written yet another fabulous love story about two men who feel utterly alone at the beginning, yet once they meet, both their lives change for the better.

Marcus has fulfilled part of his dream by opening a bakery. The second part, making it a success, will take a lot longer and be more difficult than he hoped. Not because his cakes and other creations aren't delicious, but because starting a business and ensuring it is a financial success are two very different things. Being a good baker is his contribution, as well as some ideas of how to market the bakery, but as soon as Gregory comes in with his understanding of accounting and some great ideas of his own, Marcus's chances increase. His personal life also looks up, and despite all the obstacles, he is determined to persevere.

Gregory is a reformed man in this book. He made some bad mistakes, but Sebastian, his ex-lover, helped put him back on his feet in the previous volume, and now we get to see the rest of his story. Living with HIV is not easy, despite all the available medication and some support, and there is no sugarcoating of the issue in this book. We do get to see how things can work with the support Gregory deserves, and when he and Marcus decide to help out a kid affected by prejudice, it made me cheer them on.

These two men are fantastic together. Their story is a wonderful mix of love, the friendship they share with others, and the reality of life in all its glory. If you like books about realistic characters who learn to overcome the obstacles life has placed in their way, if following their relationship and growing love will warm your heart as it did mine, and if you prefer a gentle and tender love story, you will probably like this book as much as I did.

NOTE: This book was provided by Dreamspinner Press for the purpose of a review on Rainbow Book Reviews.

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### **L-D says**

This is book four in the Love series and I enjoyed it more than the last book. Marcus is a small business owner who is trying to get his bakery in the black. Unfortunately, he is working as many hours a day as he possibly can without collapsing from exhaustion but it isn't enough. He needs to hire someone else in order to get the business really going, but he needs the business to get going in order to have the money to hire someone. Catch-22. So when his friend Sebastian asks his best friend Gregory to help him out, it's the push Marcus' business needs. This was a very cute story and I liked seeing the old characters from the series back again. Gregory wasn't super likable in the past because we know the history between him and Sebastian, but this is his chance to finally get things right for himself.

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### **Penumbra says**

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First, I need to mention that this is the first book in the series I've read, and if I remember correctly, the first book I've read by this author. I was interested in reading the book because I'm a sucker for books centered on food. Also the author seems to be popular with many readers and I wanted to see f

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### **Meggie says**

Gregory and Marcus's romance was sweet and warm. I liked it a lot! I had an opportunity to enjoy A Slice of Love in audiobook edition. Awesome work by Andrew Grey!

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### **mw138 says**

Marcus Wilson runs a fairly new bakery, A Slice of Heaven, in the quaint town of Carlisle, PA. The business is slowly growing, but if he doesn't generate additional business, he could potentially close down within three months. Gregory Southland, who we met in book two of the "Of Love" series, A Serving of Love, is relatively happy in his current job, but is looking for some additional part-time work for some extra cash. When his good friend and ex, Sebastian, suggests he help out Marcus in his bakery, he jumps at the chance. Little did either man know that their meeting would lead to something very special.

Andrew Grey never fails with this series. The characters are complex, imperfect, and just overall good. I appreciated Marcus' work ethic and desire to build his business into a very successful venture. Gregory was particularly poignant because he refused to allow his situation (being HIV positive) dampen his outlook on life or slow him down.

The romance aspect of the book was really quite sweet and didn't seem contrived or forced down the reader's throat. The slow progression of the relationship between Marcus and Gregory was refreshing and their own personal issues were handled in a respectful and realistic manner.

I would highly suggest this book for any Andrew Grey fan as well as those who appreciate stories about two people in love who rise above their circumstances.

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### **Ryan says**

This time around it's Gregory's turn at love everlasting. We first met Gregory in *A Serving of Love*, he was the heart breaking ex of that book's hero, Sebastian. By now Gregory is in a better place, both emotionally and physically. He has his HIV status under control and is on his way to living a full and long life, if only he can get his fiancés in order and maybe even find love along the way.

Then we have Marcus, a young man determined to find his own way, away from his father's rather large and imposing shadow. He's on his way to having the successful business he has always wanted, and dreamed about with a former lover, one that lost his own fight with HIV. He is in sort of a personal limbo, just waiting for the right guy to come along and grab his attention once again.

Like every other couple in this series, I love these two on their own, but I love them even more once they are together. They compliment each other, both in their strengths, and in their weaknesses. They fit together, and even when the inevitable tension is introduced into the relationship, they support each other without really needing to think about it.

What I really loved about the story is how the author doesn't shy away from an HIV negative man, dating a HIV positive man. I've been there, I'm HIV negative and I've dated two different guys who were positive. I'm not going to lie and say the relationships didn't provide unique challenges and a little extra angst on both our parts. Obviously neither relationship worked out in the end, but I learned from both of them, and I consider both of them to be friends. I think there is this misconception that if you find yourself HIV positive, that any chance at love or a healthy sex life is gone. That you are supposed to just crawl up into a ball and wave any chance at a happy life goodbye. I know many guys who are HIV positive will only date others that are as well, scared to pass the virus on to someone else. I understand the fear, but it's one that can be overcome with communication and trust. The way I've always approached the subject is that you can't help who you fall in love with, and that there is almost no obstacle too large to overcome.

So here we are, the last book in the *Taste of Love* series, though I'm holding out for at least one or two more. I've grown rather fond of Carlisle, PA, and the men who live there. I just hope the author feels the same way.

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### **T.M. Smith says**

\*\* This is a review on the 'Of Love' series as a whole \*\*

I fell in love with this series (pun intended!) that is all about these four couples, their lives, their families and their friends. The way that their lives all intersect and come together throughout was very refreshing and intriguing as well, it made the stories just that much better for me.

The first story is all about Darryl, Billy and Billy's twin brothers Donnie and Davey. Darryl is the owner and chef of Café Belgie. He's worked hard to get where he is and his job has literally been his life for years. Billy and his brother's are in hard times since their father's death and Billy desperately needs a job. He starts working for Darryl, but it isn't without a few hiccups along the way. When Darryl learns just how dire the brothers circumstance is, he moves them all into his house, and soon after moves Billy into his bed. They form a tight bond and quickly become a makeshift family. But mistakes that the brother's parents made soon come back to haunt them, and Darryl is by their side the entire time.

Up next we have Sebastian and Robert's story. Sebastian is the floor manager at Café Belgie, he too pretty much lives his work. He's been alone for a while now since his ex cheated on him. When the Café is robbed during Sebastian's watch, a tall uncoordinated stranger saves the day. Robert is a local attorney that has just been elected to the bench. He's never hidden his sexuality per say, but he hasn't advertised it either. The waiter at the Café makes him want to advertise more than just his choice of lover. Their relationship is rocky at the start. Sebastian's ex is sick and has no one else so Sebastian lets him stay with him. Robert is thrilled, he's grown quite attached and he's worried about Sebastian getting hurt again. And then there is the ever present threat of Robert's sexuality having a negative effect on his pending job as a judge.

And now we come to Russ and Peter's story. Russ is an assistant chef at Café Belgie, and he will be the chef that will run Darryl's new restaurant Acropolis. He's in an abusive relationship and has been completely brainwashed into believing he's only getting what he deserves. Peter is a salesman that sells the restaurant equipment they will need for the new restaurant. His unhindered attraction to Russ sort of opens Russ's eyes. Even after Russ leaves his abusive boyfriend and moves in with Darryl and Billy, his ex just won't stay away. Thankfully Russ now has an extended family through his job, which includes a newly appointed judge. And Peter is right by his side, unwavering through everything.

And finally we have Gregory and Marcus. Gregory is Sebastian's ex, who is now Sebastian and Roberts best friend. When Gregory learned he had HIV, Sebastian and Robert became his family as everyone else he knew turned their backs on him. When Sebastian learns that the owner of the new bakery in town needs some help, he gets Gregory to assist and pay it forward. Marcus lost his last partner to the disease, so he is familiar with everything the Gregory has to deal with on a daily basis. These two seem to connect quicker than any of the other guys did, but their connection won't be the issue within their relationship. Gregory has an ex that just won't go away, and Marcus has less than a tolerable relationship with his father.

I love a good series when it focus' on that specific relationship the author is building for that specific book, but still keeps you up to date with the other characters you've come to love in the previous books. There is a lot of action, suspense, romance, love and yes.. the sex is of the charts. But each book in and of itself, is not all about the sexual aspect. Darryl and Billy have to find a balance between their age difference and the issues they've learned about the twins. Sebastian and Robert have the jealousy aspect. Although Gregory isn't truly a threat, Robert is still leary of him after what he's done in the past. And then there is them not knowing what is going to happen when the general populous finds out that Robert is, in fact, gay.

Russ and Peter's story shows that gay men can be in emotionally and physically abusive relationships as well. And still suffer the same aftermath, carry the same scars. Peter is in a wheelchair and he will be damned if that will define who he is, and kudos to Grey because never not once did it even matter. In fact, I almost forgot he was handicapped along the way. Gregory and Marcus explore the issues and the ignorance that people with HIV have to deal with daily. Compound that with Marcus's issues with his family and their relationship was probably the most difficult of them all.

Overall this was just a fun series that chronicled the lives of a group of gay men that are family and friends.

They work together, live in the same town and have each other's backs day in and day out. They all grow and learn together and become stronger from it. I highly recommend this series, and not just because it's written by Andrew Grey. It's really well written, involved, passionate and endearing.

\*I received a copy of this audio book from Dreamspinner Press in exchange for an honest review through MM Good Book Reviews\*

<http://mmgoodbookreviews.wordpress.com>

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## **ItsAboutTheBook says**

*Review can be read at It's About The Book*

Marcus Wilson has realized his dream of opening his own bakery, but the hours are long and exhausting. He has Angie and Becky, an elderly friend and her granddaughter, who work the front of the store during peak hours, but he needs more help. Unfortunately, he's just at the point where he needs more help to allow the business to grow, but can't afford to hire enough help to meet the demands of more business. Walking home one evening with his neighbor Sebastian, Marcus ends up telling Sebastian about his concerns.

Sebastian just happens to know someone who may be just what Marcus needs. Gregory Southland is Sebastian's ex, having not only cheated on Sebastian but ending up HIV positive as a result. They ended their relationship, but have remained friends. Sebastian and his partner Robert even took Gregory in when he was very ill, had lost his job, been rejected by his family, and had nowhere to go. Gregory is now receiving effective treatment and has been able to get a new job and his own apartment. He works as a shipping clerk, but is an accountant by profession. He is also looking for a part-time job for a little extra money.

Sebastian calls in the favor that Gregory promised in return for Sebastian and Robert's help when he was sick, asking him to help Marcus with his books. He introduces Marcus to Gregory, and Marcus and Gregory work out a schedule. Gregory starts helping in the bakery and with the books. He reveals his HIV status to Marcus at the beginning, but Marcus has no issue with it, in fact telling Gregory about his friend and lover Teddy, who was supposed to be his partner in the bakery but died suddenly from an illness his immune system could not conquer.

Gregory turns out to be a natural salesman and starts bringing more business to the bakery. He and Marcus also recognize a growing attraction, but Gregory is hesitant because he has a very poor track record with relationships. He doesn't want to end up hurting Marcus, but he can't ignore that he and Marcus are really very good together. They become lovers, business is great, and things are looking up. Then Marcus's stepmother appeals to Marcus to help with a fundraiser for a boy who has been denied admission to a private boarding school because he is HIV positive. Marcus feels sorry for the boy and is outraged at his situation, but is also worried that publicly supporting the boy's cause will result in negative publicity for the bakery. He does eventually follow his conscience and lend his help, but not before Gregory overhears a conversation between Marcus and his father that almost destroys Marcus and Gregory's relationship.

Gregory and Marcus work things out, express their love for each other and start looking for an apartment they can share. There is so much publicity about the young man for whom the benefit is being held that the school relents and admits him. Longstanding family issues are at least partially resolved for both men, the business is becoming more and more successful, and they are planning a life together.

I always enjoy Andrew Grey's stories and this one is no exception. His characters have real lives to which everyone can relate. No super angst fest, no glamorous lifestyle, no extraordinary drama, just warm human characters who could easily be your neighbor or your friend. I'm always smiling at the end of his stories because I have come to care about these characters and am so glad to see them end up happy and building a life with the perfect partner.

This was the audio version of this book, narrated by Andrew McFerrin. The narration was excellent, and I feel he was really able to capture what I expected the characters to sound like. His narration added another dimension to an excellent story.

By the way, Andrew dedicated this story to a boy who actually was denied entry to a private school because he was HIV positive, and was the inspiration for the character of Reggie, the young man for whom the benefit was held. That only made it all the better for me.

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