



## Just One Taste

*Louisa Edwards*

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Bad-boy chef Wes Murphy is dreading his final-semester cooking class—Food Chemistry 101—until he meets the new substitute teacher. Dr. Rosemary Wilkins is a feast for the eyes, though her approach to food is strictly academic. So Wes decides to rattle her Bunsen burner by asking for her hands-on advice—on *aphrodisiacs...*

Rosemary is a little wary about working with Wes, whose casual flirtations make her hot under the collar. But once they begin testing the love-enhancing power of chocolate, oysters, and strawberries, it becomes scientifically evident that the brainy science nerd and the boyish chef have some major chemistry together—and it's delicious...

## Just One Taste Details

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## From Reader Review Just One Taste for online ebook

### Katie(babs) says

Wes Murphy has turned his back on his life as a former con artist and wants nothing more than to become a chef. He just has to get through one final semester at the Academy of Culinary Arts. His final class causes him grief even though he gets good grades and is at the top of his rotation. His goal is to do his externship for Executive Chef Adam Temple, who owns the upscale Market restaurant in Manhattan. What he doesn't count on is his teacher, Dr. Rosemary Wilkins. Now Wes has another goal on his mind, one where he would love to have a few one-on-one tutoring sessions with the stiff professor.

Rosemary is a self-proclaimed geek with too many PhD's to count. She isn't too thrilled about teaching, but makes do because she has access to the school's lab. Rosemary doesn't know what to make of her student, Wes. He interrupts her experiments by bringing along his adorable pooch, Lucille, to sweeten her up in the hopes he can get to know her better. When the president of the academy catches Wes with Lucille on school grounds, Rosemary claims the dog as her own. Wes returns the favor by stating that Rosemary will help him with research on his final project. Now Rosemary has no choice but to work closely with Wes. After one too many tastings together, one thing leads to another and Wes and Rosemary have a passionate encounter in her lab. Wes is forced to reconsider things when an opportunity falls in his lap. He's then off and running, leaving Rosemary behind to pick up the pieces of her newly broken heart.

As Wes navigates the kitchen and interacts with the staff at Market, he's still trying to figure out how to get over Rosemary and move on with his life. He loves his work, but missed Rosemary and his Lucille, thinking he and his former teacher can never have a future together. Rosemary is more than hurt that Wes would walked away from her like he did, especially since their passion for one another was so intense. She throws caution to the wind and will confront Wes, who has stolen her heart along with her good sense.

Just One Taste is another adorable installment in Louisa Edwards' Recipe for Love series. Wes is a very down to earth guy who is trying to escape his unfortunate past from a father who always comes around looking for hand out. Everything is going according to plan, that is until the very straight laced and book smart Rosemary enters his life. These two are total opposites in every way and it seems unlikely that Wes would be interested in a woman like Rosemary. But something about Rosemary appeals to Wes, where he wants to find the passionate woman deep down inside that she hides. Wes' talents in the kitchen breaks down her defenses and soon these two are having a hot and heavy love affair.

Rosemary is a hard nut to crack. She has closed herself off from the world because she too has issues with her parents. Her nature and opinions on herself and life in general seems hollow, as if she is just going through the motions of life. I couldn't get a good handle on her, and although her nerd like musings may seem cute, they became a hindrance in regards to my emotional attachment to her. Wes and Rosemary's interactions at first seem forced. Not until Wes goes to work at Market, is where Just One Taste really picks up.

Even though I found Wes and Rosemary's relationship a bit stilted at times, I did enjoy how Wes makes Rosemary come out of her shell both socially and sexually. The tension between them is thick and there is more than enough passion acted between them to appease readers.

Louisa's secondary characters really round out Just One Taste. The Market crew is so much fun to read about. I can't get enough of Market's manager Grant Holloway. And I'm totally hooked on the romance

between waiter Jes Wake and his former flame, the bad boy Brit, sous chef Frankie Boyd, who has it bad for Jes, but for reasons that are his own, gave the young waiter up. Watching these two dance around one another as they try to move on with their lives separately will have you anxious in the hopes of a possible reunion between the two.

I really felt Frankie and Jes had enough of a story to be given their own full length novel. I wanted these two men to have more screen time, rather than to be delegated to secondary status. At one point they took my interest away from Wes and Rosemary and with two such amazing characters, such as Frankie and Jes, I can't help but wonder why the next book in this series can't be theirs? Louisa has a knack at writing all types of romance, both straight and gay, and Frankie and Jes have become two very beloved characters for me that I hope stay around as the Recipe for Love series moves along.

Just One Taste is light and fluffy, much like a tasty soufflé that should be savored and enjoyed.

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### **Jennifer says**

This was really good. I enjoyed it about as much as I did the first book in this trilogy - much more than the second. It is set in the same world, and we encounter the same characters, so that was satisfying, however this book definitely had its own plot arc. I think the best thing about it was the quirky heroine. Rosemary is something of an outsider to the group we have been following the last two books, whereas Wes, the male lead, is a part of Adam Temple's kitchen staff. But her quirky genius, bumbling, dorky, romantic persona was just great. I mean, she wears Star Wars T Shirts, she speaks directly, she's honest and open, and I just loved that about her. Not to mention... a Browncoats shirt? Really? Gold Star, Ms Edwards. :)

My gushing aside, the love story here has depth, intensity, connection - really everything I want in a love story. Not only that, but we get to follow through to the conclusion of Jess and Frankie's story and I was quite interested to see that work out, after the mess it was left in in book 2. So, happy endings all around! Sorry if that is a spoiler... but what do you expect from a romance novel?! Really, the overridingly interesting dimension these books had for me (besides interesting, well-rounded characters I could care about), was how all the main characters are obsessed with food. In this book even more than the others, the preparation and enjoyment of food was a pivotal aspect of the romantic relationship. This fundamental connection rings true to me... can't wait for more of these books.

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### **Cindy says**

I haven't read the others in this series but I definitely want to now! I enjoyed this story. Wes has reformed his ways from his youth and is seeking to make a new life for himself. He encounters the lovely and brainy Rosemary - a substitute professor - and insinuates himself into her well-ordered life. I loved that he was so taken by her logical, intellectual outlook and found himself captivated by more than just her beauty. The romance is slow to build and that seems right as well. I was also thrilled that she was the sci-fi geek, with all the Star Wars and Star Trek references and even a quote about my favorite UF hero Dresden: *"I've sworn off fiction...Science journals only for me, from now on."* She frowned. *"Not counting Jim Butcher, obviously. But the Dresden files transcend petty mortal issues of truth and lie"* Is that great, or what?!?

This book rates a 4.5/5.0

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### **Shh I'm reading! says**

I absolutely love this series. However, I've been so invested in the characters at Market that I cared less about Wes and Rosie's relationship than I did Jess and Frankie's. There were parallels in both relationships, but the HEA for Jess and Frankie was far more emotional for me than Wes and Rosie. And is it me, or did that fact that Jess and Frankie were gay seem to come up so much more than in the other books? Part of why I had enjoyed them as secondary characters in *Can't Stand The Heat* and *On the Steamy Side* was that it was obvious they were gay but the characters weren't thinking about it every five minutes (like Wes towards the end of the book).

As for Wes and Rosie? I loved that she was a supernerd and he tried to show her how he felt through his actions instead of telling her. He understood how her mind worked and that made their relationship feel more natural than some of the books I've read.

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### **Jennesa says**

I loved everything about this series. Very good books. Will highly recommend them :)

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### **Mishel Forte says**

My rating: 3.75/5 stars

Okay, so I absolutely love *Top Chef* and *Iron Chef America*. I enjoy a few other food-related shows as well but have never really picked up a food/chef related novel before. I admit they interested me enough to add them to my TBR list. So when I was approached to review the latest installment in the *Recipe for Love* series I thought it was a great chance to see if I'd enjoy some food fiction. I'm happy to report that **JUST ONE TASTE** was fun, sweet, and deliciously romantic. (Yeah, I know...that was cheesy)

Ex con-artist Wes Murphy is in his last semester at the Academy of Culinary Arts. His latest obstacle: Food Chemistry 101. Even though his grades are excellent there is just something about this last class that is not clicking well with him. So what can he do to get him out of his current pickle and out on his dream externship with Executive Chef Adam Temple? How about some sort of quick-thinking scheme that involves the hot new teacher? Not a bad idea...

Dr. Rosemary Wilkins is a genius, well a child prodigy really. She graduated high school when she was 12 and received her first (yes, meaning she has more than one) undergraduate degree at age 14. Her parents are smart in their own right as well and have very successful careers. They certainly haven't been the most family-oriented bunch so it's pretty easy to imagine how life has been for Rosemary. The one thing Rosemary can always count on is her passion for research and her love for her lab. She may be detached and clinical most of the time but nothing can quell her lust for knowledge.

Rosemary isn't exactly jumping up and down with excitement when asked to teach at the Academy of Culinary Arts. But she'll certainly put up with a little social awkwardness for access to the school's lab. She

wasn't expecting a student like Wes though or his tag-a-long doggy sidekick Lucille. In hopes of getting closer to Rosemary Wes decides to visit her office with the adorable dog in tow. But his plan goes slightly awry when the president of the academy catches Lucille on school grounds. Without even thinking Rosemary claims the dog as her own and just as quickly Wes explains to the dumbfounded president that the two of them are working on research together. Food is definitely not the only thing sizzling between the two after a few too many encounters experimenting with aphrodisiacs.

The two of them are pulled apart just as quickly as they were pushed together when Wes is forced to make a choice about his future. After taking off and leaving a crushed Rosemary behind – Wes realizes how important their relationship has meant to him but feels he has to stay away. Meanwhile, Rosemary nurses her newly broken heart. After stewing for some time she starts to focus on what's important in her life and what's always been important in her life: her research. But lo and behold that path will lead her right back to who she's trying to avoid...bad-boy chef Wes Murphy.

I think as a couple, Rosemary and Wes came together pretty well. She is socially clueless most of the time but that's totally understandable given her background and her personality. Despite her clinical state of mind she is just as vulnerable as anyone else. After breaking out of her shell later on in the book she becomes slightly more laid back but never quite loses her nerdy side which definitely grew on me. Wes can be just as clueless though. He obviously thinks he knows what's right for Rosemary so he makes decisions without necessarily thinking things through. That may just be a guy thing...I don't know.

I also really got attached to the sub-plot and secondary characters: Jess and Frankie. Jess is a waiter at Market, which is the restaurant Wes gets his externship at, and Frankie is the sous-chef. Now I'm pretty sure these characters were mentioned somewhere in the first two books but their story was easy to follow. It was interesting comparing Wes and Frankie in their respective relationships because the underlying problem was the same: they were both keeping things from their significant other. Boys being boys they obviously were trying to "save" the ones they cared about from their terrible ways. But usually the case is they are just afraid to reveal their true selves because they are scared they won't be fully accepted. Either way I absolutely loved having Jess and Frankie in the story.

I really enjoyed my first venture into Louisa's Recipe for Love series. I'm definitely going to be reading the other two books that came before JUST ONE TASTE. The food aspect of the novel was evident, although not heavily used. I don't think that part bothered me so much because I don't have any other food fiction novels to compare this one to. But overall it was a super fun read! I think any kind of romance fan will enjoy Wes and Rosemary's story.

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### **Janga says**

Another entertaining book from Louisa Edwards. I especially liked the socially inept heroine of this one and thought she and the hero were a great match. I appreciate strong settings, and Edwards has given professional kitchens a vibrancy and vitality that I've loved in all three books.

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### **Carrie says**

My overall impression of this book is the author was trying too hard. I think it's a classic example of a relatively new writer with a successful book (or two) and who then feels the strain of living up to expectations.

The humor was often forced and the character of Rosemary too over-the-top. But first, I'll go through what I *did* like about the book.

Pros:

Louisa Edwards can still write well when she relaxes and goes with the story. Parts of this book are wonderful, poignant, and engrossing. Also, and perhaps most importantly for fans, her handling of the Jess/Frankie situation continues to be excellent. For those who are invested in that relationship, this book is a must-read. The too few passages that deal with this storyline are extremely well-done: emotional and satisfying. Lastly, the other characters, mainly from the restaurant, are all there and it's fun to visit them again, including the hero of this book, Wes.

Cons:

First I'll say the main conflict between H/h is weak. Perhaps if the author had helped us get more invested in the anxiety Wes felt about his past, and I mean making the reader *feel* his shame and understand his inability to deal with it head on, then perhaps this conflict with his dad would have held some emotional impact. As it was the conflict felt forced. It could have been easily dealt with by a 10 minute truthful conversation between Rosemary and Wes. "Here's the truth, here's how to protect yourself." Massive drama never needed to be part of the equation, and the way things were left with Wes's dad really put me off. There is also the silly prop of the aphrodisiac experiment. Too corny.

But the most disappointing aspect of the novel was Rosemary. She was a strange and unbelievable amalgam of childlessness (not endearing childlikeness) and socially-awkward braininess, all wrapped in an obviously gorgeous outside that no one else ever seemed to appreciate before. The author bludgeons the reader over-and-over with Rosemary's genius, often spouting it from Rosemary's own mouth in an off-putting, braggy way. And the character's constant references to sci-fi characters was so forced and awkward that it made me cringe. The whole "what would Buffy do" syndrome was completely out of place with Rosemary's character.

Rosemary's character did grow and develop some toward the end of the book, but never enough that I understood Wes's instant and overwhelming attraction to her. Nor enough to make me at all sure of the HEA we're suppose to believe in.

I give this book 3\*'s for parts of the story that didn't include Rosemary, and for the wonderful potential this author has to write really moving storylines and endearing characters. (If you love Frankie and Jess...read the book!)

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### **Nancy Brady says**

The third book in this hot series pits student chef Wes against his chemistry teacher, Rosemary (an intentional pun on the herb, perhaps?). But studying aphrodisiacs together leads to love and lust for both of them if only Wes can come clean of his past. Interspersed is the continuing relationship of Jess and bad boy Frankie and whether they can work it out.

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## **RO says**

Louisa Edwards did a great job of blending humor and deeply emotional characters to make this story so real. Despite being brainy and seeming to have everything, Rosemary is like most of us, looking for love from someone who will love her for who she is. Wes has personal demons to battle and some serious trust issues, but when he finally realizes how much he loves Rosemary, he lays his heart and soul on the line. Wonderfully written and well worth your time to check out.

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## **Jane Stewart says**

Great character definition, but the author didn't show enough action using the characters' talents and weaknesses.

### **STORY BRIEF:**

Wes was raised by his con-artist dad who scammed people for a living. As a result Wes has a knack for reading people – to see their weaknesses and desires. He never went to college and wishes he had been a better student. They traveled a lot and he was pulled out of school to help his dad with scams. At one point Wes was placed in a halfway house for juvenile offenders. This was the catalyst for Wes to stand up to his dad and refuse to be part of any future scams.

Dr. Rosemary Wilkins was a high-IQ child prodigy. She obtained her degrees at an early age and does scientific research. Her weakness is people. She has difficulty reading facial clues and doesn't understand why they do what they do. She had a lonely childhood with high achieving parents who were too busy to spend time with her.

Wes is now a student at the Academy of Culinary Arts. Rosemary was recently brought to the Academy to do research. Wes is immediately drawn to her. He takes his dog to Rosemary's office thinking to charm her. Cornell (the President of the Academy) walks in. He is furious and threatens to punish Wes for breaking the rules by having a dog. Rosemary sticks up for the dog, so Wes tells Cornell that the dog is Rosemary's and that he is helping her with a research project. Cornell asks what they are researching, and Wes (on the spot) comes up with "aphrodisiacs." Rosemary is a little shocked but agrees. Then Wes begins wooing her with sensual foods. A few weeks later something bad happens, and Wes has to leave school and stop seeing Rosemary. He doesn't tell her why. Since then he has been doing his externship working as a chef at Market restaurant – the scene of the previous two books.

### **REVIEWER'S OPINION:**

There is a lot of potential with these two fascinating characters – each having skills the other lacks. This was a fun idea, but the author doesn't do enough with it. I wanted more scenes showing Wes' knack for reading people. I loved the early scene where his fast thinking saved the day with Cornell. I wanted more of that and to see Rosemary admire it.

I had a problem with two major relationship conflicts. This is book 3. At the end of book 2 Frankie broke up with Jess for Jess' own good. That story continues in this book with both Jess and Frankie miserable. I was disappointed that not more happened with their story. It was a fun story in book 1, but it was just touched upon in books 2 and 3. It wasn't rewarding enough.

The second conflict was Wes leaving Rosemary for her own good and not telling her why. Later when she came to him, he still didn't tell her – at least not for a while. Both of these conflicts bothered me. A loves B. A breaks up with B and doesn't tell B why. A's actions don't fit A's motivations which is a problem.

I was annoyed with “the big misunderstanding.” Wes kept another secret from Rosemary. She overheard him say he was lying to her. When she confronted him, instead of telling her the truth, he said nothing. So she left him. I didn't believe it. His secret was no big deal. She would have been sympathetic and supportive. Instead he's going to allow a break up? Not interesting.

#### **CAUTION SPOILERS:**

I was unhappy with Wes' stupidity. He wanted to confess to Rosemary that his dad was a con-man. He felt his dad should be there in case Rosemary didn't believe him and wanted to do a DNA test. So his dad said he would not meet Rosemary unless Wes paid him \$5000. He also said he would stay away from Wes for the rest of his life if Wes paid him the money. Wes stupidly borrowed money to pay him. The dad has been coming to Wes for years, always asking for money. Wes should have known better than to believe this. This won't keep the dad away. It's not even an interesting con. It's just stupidity on Wes' part, which did not fit with his “people smart skills.” If you're going to have a story about con-men, I'd like to see an interesting con. But there were none.

I was also unhappy with Wes' actions when he left Rosemary the first time. He claims Cornell forced him to write a dishonest letter to Rosemary. It would have been easy for Wes to call her afterwards and tell her the truth and how Cornell forced him. He could have asked her to keep it a secret or “whatever” he was worried about. He claims he did it for her own good? I didn't buy it. This was no fun. I want believable conflicts. I'm ok with a smart person doing something stupid if there's a reason. Everyone does something stupid sometimes. But give me a believable reason.

#### **DATA:**

Story length: 331 pages. Swearing language: strong, including religious swear words. Sexual language: strong. Number of sex scenes: 2. Approximate number of sex scene pages: 25. Setting: current day New York City and upstate New York. Copyright: 2010. Genre: contemporary romance.

#### **OTHER BOOKS:**

I've read two other books in the Recipe for Love series and gave them both 3 stars: “Can't Stand the Heat” (Book 1) and “On the Steamy Side” (Book 2).

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#### **Leah says**

Wes Murphy is not quite what he seems. On the outside, he looks like every other student at the Academy of Culinary Arts, if a little bit older, but inside is a constant struggle. He was raised by a con man to be a con man and he does his best to avoid that fate and make a better life for himself. But when Dr. Rosemary Wilkins takes the temporary teaching position in his Food Chemistry 101 class, Wes' first instinct is to manipulate her somehow in order to ensure a good grade. As she fumbles with her speech on that first day, Wes comes to her aid. Thus begins his plan. Later that day, Wes and trusty companion Lucille go to visit the doctor. To begin the seduction. Upon being discovered with the dog, Rosemary and Wes come up with quite the elaborate explanation: Lucille is Rosemary's and Wes watches her, and the two of them would be working together on his final project...aphrodisiacs. While working together, the two begin to feel a strong attraction for each other. And in one passionate moment, they find themselves kissing. Only to be caught, yet

again, by Cornell. The man who has the power to fire Rosemary and expel Wes from the Academy. After Cornell leaves, the two completely give into their passion for each other.

The next morning, Rosemary finds Lucille and a note from Wes on her bed: he got an externship at Market and would be leaving, so he left her his dog and hopes she does well. While at Market, Wes makes plenty of friends, particularly in Jess Wake, but can never seem to shake the feeling of emptiness he has after leaving Rosemary behind because of Cornell's blackmail. One night, Rosemary crashes back into his life and they work together again to finish the aphrodisiac research. And Wes resumes his seduction to a different purpose now: Rosemary's trust. Meanwhile, Jess and Market's sous chef, Frankie Boyd, circle around their problems and awkward break-up, and Wes tries to help them both. Too bad it really doesn't end well.

Everything is going perfectly with Rosemary and Wes, so nothing can go wrong, right? Wrong. When Wes' con artist father suddenly shows up in Wes' life again, everything starts going downhill. Wes would do anything to keep Rosemary from knowing the truth about his past and his father, so he lets Pops blackmail him and continually lies to Rosemary. When she finds out about the lies while eavesdropping on a conversation between Wes and Frankie, Rosemary finds out that Wes had been lying to her. When she follows him and confronts him in Chapel, she accuses Wes of selling her research, and refuses to listen to his explanation.

Wes spends many days as a man in misery and it takes the love between his two friends to make him see what he has to do. Because after several stern talkings to, Frankie finally opens up to Jess and admits that he loves him, that he never wants to be without him again. This spurs Wes into action. He brings his father to confront Rosemary and explains everything: how his father is a con artist, how he was lying to protect her, how he loves her. Finally, Rosemary forgives him and tells Wes that she loves him, too, and they ~~both~~ all (let's include my adorable Frankie and Jess, too) happily ever after.

I knew as soon as I started reading this book that it would be my favorite Recipe for Love novel. Because, while I loved Adam Temple and Devon Sparks, Wes Murphy called to me in a way neither of them ever had. And by the end of this novel, I knew I had been right. Just One Taste is so eloquently written that it is next to impossible not to love it. Louisa Edwards has created a love story in this novel that I will never forget, and love story that I will never want to forget.

Just like with the novel in general, I knew from the start that Wes Murphy was going to be my favorite Recipe for Love male. I'm not exactly what did it for me (his sarcasm, intelligence, devilish smile, loyalty, his color-changing eyes, his clear adoration of Lucille, or maybe just his fantastic skill in the kitchen and bed), but I knew from the get-go that he was going to be my heartbreaker. Like I said above, he called to me on such an emotional and mental level that I could just not help but love him.

Rosemary was definitely an interesting character and I loved her. Although, at times I had no idea what the hell she was talking about. A lot of her technical, chemistry talk had me so confused that I had to re-read it multiple times! I loved, though, that Wes made her feel like a woman to be desired and loved, someone beautiful who was not just her IQ but was also a person to be cherished.

Finally! Frankie and Jess are back together! I was so upset at the end of On the Steamy Side when these two broke up, and I literally cried at that point. So, I was biting my nails waiting for the moment they'd get back together in this book. And I knew they would because I'd gotten it from a reliable source

\*coughLouisaEdwardscough\* that I would love the ending with Jess and Frankie. (She knows how much I love those two ;) I have to say, though, that it was quite the wild ride. Because, although I knew he was lying, Jess broke my freaking heart when he told Frankie that he'd had sex with that guy he went on a date with. In the end, though, it all turned out okay, with Frankie finally opening up (his past killed me, poor baby) and revealing his love for Jess.

Although I knew this was going to happen eventually, I hate that the book and the series had to come to an end. I wish that there could be more books. Maybe I just wish there could be more Wes. I know I wish that Frankie and Jess had gotten their own full-length novel. As sad as I am to see this series come to an end, I eagerly await the arrival of Louisa Edwards' next trilogy.

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### **Booknerd says**

Well written with emotionally driven characters, and plenty of humor. Some of the food mentioned is positively yummy!

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### **ALPHAreader says**

Wes Murphy spent his formative childhood years grifting and conning with his Pops. They were a bungo team – swindling to get by and make a buck. But that all changed when one con too many landed Wes in a halfway home, where he discovered and nurtured his love of cooking.

Years later and Wes is making good on his talents, studying at the acclaimed Academy of Culinary Arts. He's in his second-to-last rotation, with high hopes of gaining an internship at Adam Temple's infamous Market restaurant in NYC. The only thing standing in Wes's way is a little chemistry class, and a much sought after passing grade. If Wes doesn't pass chemistry 101, he doesn't get his dream placement. But when the geekishly adorable Dr. Rosemary Wilkins takes over the class halfway through the semester, Wes thinks he has found a way to gain extraordinary new insights into the art of chemistry . . .

Rosemary Wilkins was a child prodigy. The daughter of an infamous novelist and respected lecturer, Rosemary was bound for greatness. But being a Mensa member isn't as fulfilling as some may believe. Rosemary has felt used and flaunted her entire life. It seems everybody wants her genius, not her. And she's not entirely sure that her new student, Wes Murphy, is any different. All this talk about an aphrodisiac science experiment is all well and good, but does he want the grade or the woman handing them out?

'Just One Taste' is the third book in Louisa Edward's ridiculously delicious 'Recipe for Love' contemporary romance series.

We first met Wes Murphy back in second book 'On the Steamy Side'. Wes was introduced as the new Market intern (after the last one went bonkers!) and he came with a shady back-story about an illicit student-teacher romance and a broken heart pining for him back at culinary academy. In 'Just one Taste', Edwards backtracks and gives fans the full explanation to Wes's back-story . . . and boy, is it good!

Wes falls for his chemistry teacher, Dr. Rosemary Wilkins. Rosemary is actually at the academy conducting research for a scientific journal she's writing, and her presence is a real coup for ACA since she is so

infamous in the science world. Rosemary was my favourite thing about this book. She is adorable – and I feel the best way to describe her is to say she's just like Dr. Amy Farrah Fowler from 'Big Bang Theory' (but blonder, and with a pert ass). Seriously, she wears Wookie and Browncoats t-shirts (I loved her the moment she revealed herself to be a 'Firefly' fan!). Rosemary doesn't say "For God's sake!" she says "For Buffy's sake!". I found my girl-crush cemented after Rosemary awakens from a particular sex dream about Wes and role-play...

*With a sigh, Rosemary opened her eyes and blinked sleepily into the darkness, glad there was no one there to witness her skin glowing bright red with embarrassment. Her blush felt hot enough to set off radioactivity alerts.*

*"Hi," she said to the featureless black of her room. "My name is Dr. Rosemary Wilkins, and I have Star Trek sex dreams."*

Wes, by contrast, is a saucy delight. He's all tan and sinewy, with a smirk to die for. I definitely got the reformed bad-boy vibe from him . . . but even though Wes and Rosemary are polar opposites, it was never hard to believe that Wes would fall for her and vice-versa. Their research into aphrodisiacs aside, these two just fit. Rosemary needs to lighten up, and Wes needs someone to believe in him. These two were precious, and I loved them!

If I had any problems with this book it has to be the rather convoluted story about Wes being an ex con-man. Edwards sets this story up to be the big obstacle for Wes and Rosemary and for a little while you hold your breath expecting Wes to fall into his old, scheming ways. But this story never felt fully fleshed-out, and it just seemed a little too tangled and frayed to pose as a real, pivotal hurdle for the romance . . . which, incidentally, meant there wasn't all that much tension in the relationship, no 'will-they-or-won't-they' juiciness.

One of the things I L-O-V-E about the 'Recipe for Love' series is the ongoing story of Jess and Frankie. Frankie is Market's sous-chef, and Jess is a part-time waiter at the restaurant. Frankie is Jess's first boyfriend since coming out to his sister and being honest with himself. They got together in 'Can't Stand the Heat', but hit a few major bumps in 'On the Steamy Side'. I love Frankie and Jess together, so I had my heart in my throat regarding their broken relationship in 'Taste' (seriously, they are the Qhuay of the 'Recipe for Love' series!). I love (and appreciate) that Edwards offers Jess and Frankie's romance as the one continuous side-story of the series. It means that fans can get really invested in their story, and caught up in the melodrama. I don't want to give anything away about the status of their romance in this third book, but I will say I look forward to where they go from here...

Edwards's writing is a sumptuous delight. I love just how committed she is to her series theme – everything begins and ends with the food, the restaurant atmosphere and the hectic cooking that goes on in the kitchen. Edwards remains true to her theme in every aspect of the novel. It's very subtle, and never over-cooked, but if you look for it you can read just how much Edwards has imbued her series with flavour . . . whether she's using a food simile to describe someone's emotion, or infusing a romantic declaration with food parallels;

*Drawn to her like butter melting toward the hottest spot in the pan, Wes knelt up and shuffled around the blankets until he was right there, next to her, above her, sharing the same air with their quickening breaths. "I checked to make sure not a single ingredient has ever been classified by myth, legend, old wives, or science, as an aphrodisiac."*

*"And why did you care about that?" A slick pink tongue darted out to wet her plump bottom lip, leaving it shiny and tempting as hell.*

*Wes nearly groaned. "Because," he panted, sliding one hand around her back and lowering her gently down*

*to the blanket, “when I kiss you, I don’t want there to be any confusion about why you kiss me back.”*

I have said it once and I’ll say it again; the setting of an infamous NYC restaurant is genius for a contemporary romance series! Edward’s has given herself boundless opportunities to write about juicy relationships and smouldering hook-ups. Forget hot-under-the-collar, it’s what’s heating up in the kitchen that counts!

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### **Marisa says**

This is my first Louisa Edwards book - I had a blast reading it.

Ms. Edwards' contemporary romance is a blend of witty dialogue, like-able characters, fun references to pop culture and two protagonists that are complete opposites.

Full review posted on B&N. <http://bookclubs.barnesandnoble.com/t...>

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