



Courtship of the Cake

Jessica Topper

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From the author of *Dictatorship of the Dress* comes a new novel about a woman who's vowed to never walk down the aisle—and the two men who'll do anything to get her to say "I do"...

"Always a bridesmaid, never a bride" has suited Danica James just fine...until the mysterious man who crashed her sister's wedding steals her heart, leaves a slice of groom's cake under her pillow, and then disappears.

Hoping to forget her unforgettable fling, Dani takes a job as a backstage masseuse for a rock music festival, not expecting the tour's headlining bad boy to make an offer she can't refuse. Nash Drama needs a fiancée—and fast...

Mick Spencer is the best wedding cake designer in New Hope and the town's most eligible bachelor. But despite the bevy of bridesmaids he's sampled, Mick can't get the evening he spent with Dani out of his mind.

So when she shows up for a cake tasting at the Night Kitchen—with his former best friend's ring on her finger—Mick vows to charm the woman of his dreams into choosing a sweet and sinful ever after, *with him...*

Courtship of the Cake Details

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From Reader Review Courtship of the Cake for online ebook

Diane Matlick says

I really enjoyed this! I loved Nash's storyline, it really spoke to me being a physical therapist because I have watched many of my patients wrestle with the demons of their past at the same time as they come to terms with a life changing diagnosis. And in this case, the implications went beyond just how it affected him. I enjoyed the setting and all the characters and the journeys of self discovery each one went on, and how they all wove together. I didn't feel this love story as much as I have felt her others, but we're talking about the author who wrote Kat and Adrian, so the bar is set absurdly high. It was emotional and as always, the writing is impeccable. The way Jessica weaves expressions and references (that always seem to resonate with me) into her sentences is entrancing and I think she may be one of the best out there right now and that's what sets her apart from just being a good story teller.

ARC provided by the author

Baba says

3.5 stars. Review posted May 14, 2015

Hoping to forget Mick with whom she had shared a hot evening in New Orleans when he crashed her sister's wedding, Dani (short for Danica) is accepting the job as a backstage masseuse for the Minstrels & Mayhem Festival tour. Nash Drama, rock star and lead singer of Go Get Her, is one of those artists who benefit from Dani's magic hands.

Nash was at his truest state when he was at his most vulnerable.

As chances would have it, Nash is being honored with an award in his hometown and doesn't want to show up without a lady on his arm. Since Nash is (view spoiler) and going home after spending ten long years away isn't easy. That's why he needs all the support he can get. In addition to her gentle mojo hands, Dani has some other features that Nash approves of greatly: She's attractive, smart and well-educated. After the surprise wears off, Dani can't reject the offer, even more so because she's getting tired of running and making excuses. Plus, she truly wants to help Nash because she also realizes that this man isn't used to asking for help. Once arrived though, Dani's in for a big surprise. Mick Spencer is the owner of the Night Kitchen, a dessert bar where he can live out his own special brand of *culinary black magic* and, to Dani's utter astonishment, he's also a childhood friend of Nash's. Turns out that accompanying Nash back home wouldn't be a piece of cake--problems are preprogrammed.

Jessica's writing is absolutely impeccable and the reason I rounded up to four stars. Yet I'm very sorry to say that I couldn't give Courtship of the Cake a higher rating because, at my heart, I'm a die-hard romance reader and that's something this book lacked: romance. And by romance I don't necessarily mean sex (there's only one short smexy scene, very late into the story). I mean the sexy banter, the goosebump-inducing build-up, the blazing sexual tension, and the sparkling chemistry that would make me root and cheer for a couple who'd be destined to tread a path of love and happily-ever-afters. Also, a couple needs to spend plenty of page-time together. I want to see them date and share not only funny but also soul-searching moments together. Courtship of the Cake, however, isn't romance. It reads more like women's fiction and I think that fans of romance will have a hard time loving this story.

But as I stood there, being held in the comforting arms of my friend, I realized that time had mellowed the rigid wood and its scent had diminished. The planks above us had shrunk with age and separated from each other, their cracks were now too wide to contain what I had hidden all these years. And I knew I no longer wanted those secrets hanging over my head.

Courtship of the Cake is told in alternating POVs and provides a rather generous cast of secondary characters, some of whom I really liked, especially the adorable Logan as well as Bear with his pert mouth. It is an engaging story about second chances, righting wrongs and mending aching hearts. It is written well too. This being said, it didn't appease my hunger for a beautiful love story and it saddens me to say that Mick and Dani had nothing on Adrian and Kat. And, I really felt that the revelation of the secret happened too late and the resolution thereof didn't quite cut it for me either. Regardless of my issues, I really loved the stellar writing and witty dialogue and, for a few hours, I could indulge in engaging entertainment.

What really made me truly happy in the end was the prospect of getting back to Adrian and Kat this summer. What's even better is that their novella will lead right to Softer Than Steel. It's a follow-up novel to Louder Than Love which will feature several of the same characters as well as some new protagonists. Softer Than Steel is due out coming September, so I feel compelled to counting down the months already. These two new stories will be my personal *sweet voodoo* that my dreams are made of, that's for sure. I'm positive that great things guys will be coming my way this summer.

As I sit here now, writing, I realize she is right. This is more than just a house; it is a home. It's filled with sound now, where once upon a time, there was only silence.

If you'd like to know more about sound and silence, then take a chance and read Courtship of the Cake.

Recommended read.

All quotes are taken from the pre-published copy and may be altered or omitted in the final copy

ARC courtesy of Berkley in exchange for an honest review

Abby?Books says

I like the first book in the series more than this one but it was still fun to read.

Christy LoveOfBooks says

I read *Dictatorship of the Dress* last year and found it to be adorable and funny, so I was looking forward to getting Dani's story in *Courtship of the Cake*. I enjoyed this book too, but not quite to the degree of *DotD*. It's still a pretty fun book, though.

Don't be afraid of the blurb! It makes it sound like there is a love-triangle, but there isn't. Actually, there's a love-square. Okay, okay ... but it isn't real. Promise. *Courtship of the Cake* reminds me of a cute romantic-comedy you'd watch on the Hallmark channel or wherever you watch that type of stuff.

Nash and Dani have great chemistry. As friends! Yes, he's a total flirt and enjoys women, but he and Dani develop a genuine friendship that actually turned out to be my favorite aspect of the book. The beginning spends some time developing the friendship while she is on the road with a music festival as a massage therapist, and she becomes his rock when they go to his hometown to face his past. Nash convinces Dani to act the part of his fiancée for a pretty good reason. Then Dani gets quite the surprise when she discovers Nash's former best friend is the same guy she had an unforgettable evening with a year prior. Turns out Mick never got over her and is determined to show Dani what a player Nash really is, which is something Dani is well aware of, but has to keep the charade up. And let the shenanigans begin!

We get dual perspectives – Dani and Mick, which I was really glad for. I like how the story is told with little flashbacks throughout the book, that form the full story of what really happened with Mick and Dani the previous year. The situation they found themselves in with Nash gave them an opportunity to spend time together and actually get to know each other better. I liked both of them, especially Mick's passion for baking, he even gets a little Rain Man about it sometimes. Dani is a likeable character too, who can hold her own with the teasing and banter.

There are a few secondary characters who are instrumental to the story, as well. Things get real interesting with everyone staying under one roof. Bear is definitely another highlight of the book with his keen sense of humor and passion for playing in tribute bands. I also love the addition of a certain deaf character and how music was incorporated into their life.

There were a couple things off that hampered the flow a bit. First, the whole Jax storyline felt out of place. I totally understand the meaning and reason for it, but the way it was done just didn't jive with me. It added too much to a story that already has *a lot* going on. Also, there are numerous times in the book where the whole setting or situation is changed without a break or anything. It gets jumpy. For instance, Dani will be one place talking to someone, and the next paragraph she's somewhere else talking to a different person. It offered many WTF moments because I didn't know what the hell happened, then would have to go back and re-read certain parts to clear it up.

Despite those issues, I was pleased with *Courtship of the Cake* and the way everything turned out. And even though it comes close to 400 pages, it's actually a quick read.

Joyfully Reviewed says

Danica “Dani” James is a masseuse who is hoping to forget the one that got away. Taking on a job travelling with a rock group, she garners another position that brings her right back into the orbit of the mysterious man who left a slice of cake under her pillow and a fire burning that he didn’t bother to quench.

Mick Spencer, cake decorator extraordinaire, has now been retained to present a cake for the upcoming nuptials of his former BFF. However, imagine Mick’s surprise when the bride-to-be is the one he left wanting, but can’t seem to forget. Will these two be able to work their way back to what they shared one night, or will they find that there are too many obstacles barring their way?

Courtship of the Cake was an intriguing, convoluted tale that promised a HEA for all involved. I enjoyed Dani’s story after I got to know her more in Courtship of the Cake, and her fiancé was brought forth with his baggage that added to Courtship of the Cake. Mick wasn’t a bad guy, but he seemed like the easy choice, and I felt that was a cop-out for Dani. They didn’t spend a lot of time together in Courtship of the Cake, and her fiancé, Nash, seemed to be a little more fleshed out in the tale.

Courtship of the Cake has a lot more depth between its covers than a regular run-of-the-mill romance. Dani had a story that she needed to tell, but she hid it so well in her psyche that there was really no hint of its truth, and the reader doesn’t uncover it until Dani realizes it either in the Courtship of the Cake. I found, at times, that Mick wasn’t truly necessary for Dani’s HEA, but was more the icing on her cake! I still think that Nash would’ve been the more intriguing match for Dani as they explored what brought them to the points in life where they intersect in the Courtship of the Cake.

Reviewed by Vanessa for Joyfully Reviewed

Link: bit.ly/1fW7jnX

Sophia says

I absolutely loved the first book in this series and the secondary character, Dani, so I was eager for this book with Dani as the lead. It was not long before the story had me rear back with surprise, ponder if I wanted to continue, and then cautiously proceed forward once again. Not what I was expecting and definitely feeling conflicted, but in the end I was pleased that I pushed through and gave it a chance.

This is not an easy story and it really isn't a typical romance. In fact, the romance doesn't come until nearly the end. I would actually place this more as a women's fiction story since it's really the emotional journey of several lost (and I do mean lost) souls finding their way home. This is not obvious until later in the book and the full extent of what was in process didn't hit me until the end. Redemption happened all around and the romance was strong and struck more than one couple. It was like one of those blazing sunrises that steals your breath away. A paradigm shift occurred and I suddenly saw the whole story from a new perspective. I went from not really seeing the appeal in the characters or their story to being riveted to see if it would all work out the way I hoped.

I shared all that because I suspect that most folk will go into this book with the same expectations I did and be sorely tempted to slam the book closed and move on. Unappealing, self-absorbed characters with a boatload of issues and not a romance in sight several chapters in doesn't generally appeal. I almost closed it

and set it aside after few chapters of Dani's narration and I was wondering what I ever saw in this character from the earlier book. And the rest of the characters, whew, they weren't the types to make you want to care about their story either. I chose to read on because I had read two earlier books by the author and trusted her to bring me another good one. Glad I stuck it out because when all was said and done, this was a good one.

So...

The story opens with Dani James donating the latest of her bridesmaids dresses and taking the awe her serial bridesmaid's status brings from her best friend, Laney. Dani has a nearly legendary reputation for avoiding the altar or relationships. She dispenses sage advice and is there for her friends. Laney has found Noah and they're getting married and her other best pal, Jax is writing his best seller and selling cars. Her parents with their high expectations and notions for what is best are on her to settle down to a real job instead of flitting about. None of them realize what she hides as she adeptly keeps them at arm's length from the real Dani.

Just the sight of that bridesmaid's gown brings back memories that she has been trying to bury for over a year. Why can't she forget the guy who crashed her sister's wedding, charmed her with his talk of cake under her pillow and a cake charm from the wedding cake and then giving her the best night of her life before the truth came out? He no-showed on her the next morning. Come to find out, he was a thief and her family looked down on her for her poor judgment. And yet, it took her a year to part with the gown and she can't be near a dessert at night without thinking of him. With that in mind, time to get out of town and busy with her new gig as masseuse to all the rock musicians with the big summer traveling music festival.

The tour brings her into contact with obnoxious rock star, Nash Drama, and when she loses her job on the tour, she let's him talk her into a fake fiance scheme so she can help him with a cleaned up reputation before his home town. Shockingly, she encounters the one who got away is Nash's best friend, Mick Stevens, and she doesn't know what she think she does about Nash, Mick, or even herself. She can run like she always does when things get real or she can stick it out for the chance of finding something permanent- a chance to find home.

As I said, this one doesn't read like typical romance. It is long developing for the romance and characters and sweepingly descriptive of the rock festival life and life in Nash's small home town. Music lovers will find the authentic feel to the rock festival and the delightful Bear's rock band tributes a blast.

Even when I didn't particularly like Dani (and I confess that I never completely warmed up to her), Nash or Mick, I will admit that they were well-written and complex characters. It's only late in the book when the author peels back the layers and secrets that things make complete sense when it comes to these people. Wow! There were some real humdinger past issues that made them the way they are. I'm not sure if the author deliberately intended for the way a reader will initially feel about the characters and have that transform by the end, but if she did then she's a master at her craft. As to the surrounding characters, they weren't just props. Each had a background and a developed personality. Bear was a crack up and Mick's aunt was a scene-stealer.

The romance itself is an utterly confusing thing much of the time and doesn't shake out until the end. I couldn't decide if this was going to end up a love triangle (or at one point even a love square was possible) or if it was going to be complete upset like one of Shakespeare's comedies. Oh, and this story heads down some interesting paths so that if you're looking for some hot, sexy action, you won't get a direct scene until near the end. But that being said, there is a happily ever after and no serious love triangle going on.

That reminds me, this is a story told in alternate points of view and flashback scenes. It certainly kept me on my toes, but never actually confused me as each switch was marked clearly and the flashbacks were in

italicized font.

Now, I never did fully cotton to Dani, I was meh on her and Mick's romance, but the rest of this story with several people including Dani and Mick finally healing and finding their happy was what really did it for me. There is a sense that I wrote this review in a cautionary way, but that's because as I said, I think going in with the right expectations can make all the difference.

I would recommend this for those who love rock star romance, long developing character-driven stories and spicy Contemporary Romance.

My thanks to Penguin Group for the opportunity to read this book in exchange for an honest review.

Cocktails and Books says

This review was originally posted on Cocktails and Books.

Courtship of the Cake was not what I expected. It was a good, well written book, but the emotions were heavier than a book about cake should be.

We meet Dani, a travelling massage therapist; Nash, a famous musician; and Mick, a bakery owner. Dani and Mick met in New Orleans when he crashed her sister's wedding and formed an instant connection that circumstances didn't allow to flourish. A year later, she is working the same music festival as Nash when she ends up working for him to help with a medical condition. Being Nash's personal therapist leads to her helping him with other aspects of his life and back to Mick, who was one of Nash's childhood friends.

Dani was an easy character to like. She was pretty easy going, caring, and seemed to be everyone's port in the storm. Nash and Mick were much harder to like at first; they were both more complex and dealing with a lifetime of issues. To be honest, I never quite understood why Dani agreed to help Nash in the first place.

Nash brings Dani to his home town where he wants to get to know his son. Once they arrive, we see several different relationships develop and grow. The stories are interesting and intriguing to watch, but there is also an unfinished feeling and a sense that no one is really being honest. By then end of the book, things made more sense, but I still wasn't really comfortable with how everything was handled.

Courtship of the Cake is the second book in the Much "I Do" About Nothing series. I have not read the first book in the series and I don't know if that would have helped or not, but this book and I didn't really click. This book was reviewed by a member of the review staff at Cocktails and Books. The name of the reviewer can be found under the post categories.

Lauren at Live Read and Breathe Reviews says

2 Sadly didn't do it for me stars!

Source: eARC for Honest Review Courtesy of Berkley / Penguin Group

After reading Dictatorship of the Dress, I thought I was going to love Dani but I gotta admit that this book didn't do it for me. Ugh! I so badly wanted to like it. I don't know if I wasn't in the mood to read this or what, but it just didn't float my boat.

Dani is always a bridesmaid but never a bride. She was also like this in relationships. Even though Dani doesn't like to commit there is something about Mick that she can't forget after that one night at her sister's wedding. Instead of staying rooted in one place she likes to live free. Now she takes her massage gig on the road with a touring music festival.

Here she massages and hangs out with bands. After one massage she befriends Nash Drama. He needs her for many reasons besides the relief of a massage. Nash and Dani become friends and eventually to fiancée with no benefits. The Nash and Dani saga goes on forever that you almost forget that this book was supposed to be about Mick and Dani. Then after a very very long time Mick finally makes an appearance. It seems after his night with Dani he too can't stop thinking about her but now finds relief between the sheets of his baking gigs.

Lo and behold the connection with Mick is that Nash and Mick are friends. Dani is shocked to meet Mick again but she's committed to Nash now. Mick's determined to subtly court her with cakes to change her mind but having a difficult time.

I know the book has courtship in the title but its also a romance novel so when they didn't get together until (view spoiler)

"You're running. Again." (Ugh! Why do most heroines run so much lately. Why?)

Then we read a bit more to (view spoiler) and we find out the reason she doesn't have relationships which was a valid reason and I know I may sound heartless but it was a bit too late for me to all of a sudden to get on the Dani train.

Now for the next bit she has to deal with her past so she can finally be in a relationship.

"Are you mine? " (Effing finally. Argh!)

The book was well written but this story just didn't do it for me at all. I was annoyed or eye rolling for most of the book. I did like the fact that the author was well researched about a lot of details which was probably the reason I kept reading hoping I was going to fall for Dani and Mick at some point, but nope didn't happen.

For more reviews, visit [Live Read and Breathe](#)

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Melissa says

“You’ll never find yourself, if you haven’t yet lost yourself.”

Dictatorship of the Dress has a special place on my favorites shelf. It was adorable, funny and has stuck with me, even months after reading it. Danica was part of the fun in that story, along with being Laney's voice of reason, so I sort of went into this one expecting it to be light and kind of silly. It was much more than that though. Dani had a depth, I didn't originally give her credit for.

"Listen to that little voice inside your own head for once, will ya? W-W-D-D?"

The night of her sister's wedding, Dani meets Mick and they share a pretty unforgettable connection, but that doesn't stop him from disappearing.

Months after the wedding, in an attempt to forget him and find her place in the world, Dani joins a summer music festival as a masseuse for the artists. That's how she gets wrapped up with, Nash Drama, the lead singer for one of the bands. There wasn't much I liked about Nash. At times, I saw hints of a good guy hidden under that rock god ego, but they were few and very far between.

For some reason, Dani agrees to help out Nash and pose as his fiancé for his epic hometown return. A place he left behind ten years ago, full of regrets and a son he's never even laid eyes on. Turns out his best friend, the cake baker extraordinaire, is the mystery man from her sister's wedding - MICK!

There's a lot of history and a tangled web of heartache surrounding Nash's group of friends and Dani finds herself caught in the middle. She's a natural fixer and people pleaser, so of course she's going to try and make things better, maybe even at the cost of what she really wants, or I should say who.

“Mick, you’re the only taste I’ve been craving.”

The spark between Dani and Mick made me giddy. I will say, the romance wasn't the most prevalent part of the story though, it read more like women's fiction than contemporary romance. I thought Dani was a really likable character, but there were more than a few times, I was frustrated with her. I wanted her to let the whole sham go, everyone could see through it anyway, and just be honest with Mick. At one point, it was like, enough already, just tell him you want him! But, Mick was patient and so sweet, and it only made me fall for him even more.

“You should try frosting a cake with those moves.”

“I do. Every day. And I can’t wait to frost yours.”

The cast of secondary characters was top notch. Bear pretty much stole the show with his serenade. I would *love* to read Bear and Angie's story. Nash and Quinn's reunion sort of happened in the background, so maybe this means, possibly, they might get a book? I'm not a huge Nash fan, but I'm sure the author can change that.

I enjoyed the story, but there were a few things that bothered me enough to mention. The whole Jax and Dex situation felt like an afterthought, like it was just thrown in. I would have liked for that to have been explored a little more, rather than just a quick chapter at the end. And how could Dani not be in New Hope with Laney and Noah?!?! Totally blew my mind that she would miss out on that day.

I thoroughly enjoy Jessica Topper's writing. Her way with words, all the musical references throughout the story and the development of the characters, spoke to my inner book nerd and commanded my attention. Similar to cake, I enjoyed this until the very last crumb.

ARC provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review

Ellie says

3.5 Stars

I really enjoyed the first half of the story but I felt too many things happened in the second half and they were rushed through.

Note: This reads more like women's fiction, sort of family saga than romance. It does have a HEA but the focus was on the heroine's journey and not just on the romance.

Here is my full review which you can also read on Ellie Reads Fiction:

This is the second book in the I DO series and I can say these stories shape out more like women's fiction, family sagas, than romance.

It's Danny's story whom we met briefly in the previous book. We see that she is not the confident, clear-headed Dany from What Would Dany Do that Laney thought of her. She is a normal person with strengths and weaknesses, she is a little lost and confused, a lot of caring and full of love.

This is a complex story, overwhelming at times with its diversity of characters and intricate relationships between them. Yet, it was engaging. I cared about Dany, and Mick, and Nash, and everybody in New Hope. I felt the complexity of the story reflected real life, it's messy, people make mistakes and hurt each other, but there is also forgiveness, acceptance, love, hope.

Despite having two guys as lead characters in the story, it's not a love triangle, there is no real competition, they are both involved in Dany's life in important ways. I wanted more of the romance, wanted Mick and Dany to spend more time together. It seemed the author tried to cover too many issues in the story and the love/romance got lost in between them. I feel some of the events/characters could have been skipped, there

was some jumping from character to character which was rather distracting.

All characters, Dany, Mick and Nash had one too many issues stemming from their past. They all needed to deal with them in order to move on with their lives but I felt some of the problems were superficially treated and far too easily and conveniently resolved. The whole subplot with Dany and Jax didn't fit the story and the dramatic twist towards the end was uncalled for.

Overall it is a well written romantic story of one woman's journey to herself and to love, it's smart and full of tender emotion. Fans of the author will enjoy this installment in the series and I'd recommend it while keeping in mind that the romance is not the main focus of the story, it's rather women's fiction with romantic elements.

Jacqueline's Reads says

3 Who to Pick Stars

Courtship of the Cake is a standalone and is part of the Much "I Do" About Nothing series. I'm reading this series out of order (something new I'm doing) and completely random.

This is Danica and Nash and ****GASP**** Mick story.

So it's a love triangle (sort of) storyline and we all know where I stand on these. I have major issues with love triangles, so just note that's my personal preference.

This book reads in different parts (to me). I felt like the first half of the book is about Nash and the second half of the book is about Mick. Dani is a masseuse and she works at a rock music festival massaging people. Nash is a rocker bad boy. He likes sex and he likes women. He also has a messed up body. No, he doesn't use drugs, but he has a lot of kinks and Dani is the one to work them out.

Dani and Nash's relationship isn't really typical. It's completely a friendship relationship, even though Nash flirts with her like crazy so there could be something there? You will just have to read and find out. I really liked the parts with Dani and Nash. I found Nash the bad boy I crave and love to read. He's so into himself, he needs a girl like Dani, calling him out and putting him in his place.

Like I said, during the second part of the book it shifts and I actually had to flip backwards and re-read some chapters because I felt like I was reading a different book. It went from rocker vibe to cute "wedding" theme. Mick is a cake designer and he's the best of what he does. When Dani and Nash come back into town, they run into Mick.

Mick and Dani had a wild night one night and ever since then Dani has been holding major grudges against Mick. It took me a bit to figure out the relationship between Mick and Dani. There is crazy sexual tension, but not everything is revealed, so I had to pay attention to the flash back scenes.

I liked the parts with Nash and Dani so much I was kind of thrown off by Mick. I guess I wanted Mick to be part of the story in the beginning. Courtship of the Cake is cute, but the romance is lacking. Yes there are some flirting scenes and yes there's sex, but I didn't get the butterfly scenes you know? The ones where you

are like “oh-my-god-they-kissed” and you clap your hands and jump for joy. Of course not every book needs this.

Courtship of the Cake has some mild tension with a unique, cake/rocker theme that is appealing. Take a chance, you just never know.

An ARC was Provided

AMAZON

Michelle [Helen Geek] says

Very sad .. Penguin always turns down my ARC requests on NG. I don't have this issue with any other publisher. Sad. Guess my reviews for the previous books by this author didn't amount for SQUAT !!

Kimberly says

My review cross-posted from Wit and Sin: <http://witandsin.blogspot.com/2015/06...>

A free-spirited massage therapist, a sexy cake designer who knows his way around more than the kitchen, a rock star at a crossroads in his life... There is a lot to capture readers' interest in *Courtship of the Cake*. Jessica Topper's second Much "I Do" About Nothing novel can be fun and charming, and at times almost captures your heart.

Dani is the black sheep of her family, happier on the road treating festival musicians than staying home and fulfilling her parents' expectations. I liked Dani; she has a good heart and can hold her own against the dominant personalities at the music festival. When a mishap at the festival lands her in hot water and out of a job, bad boy Nash Drama comes up with a heck of a job offer. He needs Dani's skills as a massage therapist to help him when his AS flares up and he also needs a respectable fiancée for his return trip home. Against her better judgment, Dani accepts Nash's offer, but the trip to his hometown yields an unexpected surprise in the form of Nash's childhood best friend, Mick. Mick is a too-hot-for-his-own-good baker who fell fast and hard for Dani the one disastrous night they met the year before. Mick and Dani have good chemistry, and though there was sexual tension aplenty, the romance fell short. There was no true development to the love story; it was glossed over and I was disappointed in the lack of depth. I didn't really know why Dani and Mick were in love, aside from a romance novel requiring it.

Courtship of the Cake has a lot of potential. There are half a dozen interconnecting storylines involving Dani, Mick, Nash, and the book's sizeable supporting cast. Family drama, lost love, dreams coming apart, friendships being tested, and more are all plotlines at play, yet none of them are given the attention they deserve. This was frustrating because Ms. Topper would introduce an element to the story that was really interesting and then skimmed along the surface of it until going to the next plot point. That's not to say that *Courtship of the Cake* is a bad book – there's a lot to enjoy and I was undoubtedly invested in the story. I was simply surprised that the book was more superficial than I would have expected given the characters and their various problems.

Courtship of the Cake is the second book in the Much “I Do” About Nothing series but it can be read as a standalone. Despite the fact that this book wasn’t quite my cup of tea, I do still want to read the first story, *Dictatorship of the Dress*. Ms. Topper knows how to write charming characters and I liked her writing enough to give her work another shot.

*FTC Disclosure: I received this book for free from the publisher in exchange for an honest review. This does **not** affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.*

Tanja ~ T's Book ~ KT Book Reviews says

The follow up read from author Jessica Topper’s Much I Do about Nothing series has the same formula that I am beginning to appreciate, as good people with crazy lives injected with a bit of rock and roll that gives the series a nice bite.

Courtship of the Cake is a second chance romance on two different levels. It’s a one night stand that won’t fade away for neither Dani nor Mick. Also, a childhood romance that is years past its expiration date still hasn’t had its final curtain call for Nash and Angie.

Rocker Nash needs the help of masseuse Dani. Not only for his health, but to act as a pretend fiancé in order to facilitate a relationship with his sons mother. Quickly, Dani discovers that all isn’t as quiet as it seems back home where Nash grew up.

When you throw in the fact that Nash’s best friend is the incredible one night stand Dani hasn’t been able to forget, it only adds to the lies that begin to pile up and become a bit unbelievable.

Honestly, I would have preferred Nash and his ex’s story to have been the main focus. As much as I love Dani and Mick, I just felt more drawn to the obviously more dramatic and deep love shared and rejected by Nash and Angie. There was just so much there I wanted to know more intimately.

All in all, Courtship of the Cake is a nice follow up, but it falls just a bit short of its predecessor; however it is still worth devouring as is any good piece of cake ;)

4 Stars

T~

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Erin says

Dnf :(just couldn't keep me interested. I really enjoyed book 1, and this one has the right recipe just not delivered in engaging way.
