



Katie Starting from Scratch (Cupcake Diaries Book 21)

By Coco Simon

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Katie's mom asks Katie for a huge favor: will she spend some time with Emily, her boyfriend's daughter? Katie agrees and brings Emily to a Cupcake Club meeting. Things go well—almost *too* well. Everyone likes Emily so much, Katie wonders if her friends like Emily more than they like her! And if her mom marries Emily's dad, will Emily become her favorite daughter? Katie is an only child, so all this sibling stuff is new to her. She's starting from scratch!

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Katie Starting from Scratch (Cupcake Diaries Book 21) By Coco Simon Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #148990 in eBooks
- Published on: 2014-08-12
- Released on: 2014-08-12
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Coco Simon always dreamed of opening a cupcake bakery, but she was afraid she would eat all the profits. When she's not daydreaming about cupcakes, Coco edits children's books and has written close to 100 books for children, tweens, and young adults, which is a lot less than the number of cupcakes she's eaten. *Cupcake Diaries* is the first time Coco has mixed her love of cupcakes with writing.

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Katie Starting from Scratch



CHAPTER 1

Really, Mom?

So, Emily, what's new with you? How are things going at school?" my mom asked the girl sitting next to me.

"It's okay," Emily replied. "I like all my teachers."

Emily's dad, who was sitting next to my mom, smiled at her.

I should probably remind you that Emily's dad, Jeff, is also a math teacher at the middle school that I go to. There I call him "Mr. Green." And Jeff, or Mr. Green or whatever you want to call him, happens to be dating my mom. It gets a little awkward sometimes to have your mom dating a teacher at school, but I'm dealing with it.

"Have you ever had trouble with the lock on your locker?" Mom asked Emily. Mom nodded toward me. "Katie had a hard time getting the hang of it. Once she even called me at work because she couldn't get it open."

I looked at my mom in disbelief. "Really, Mom? Do you have to tell everybody that?"

Maybe normally I would have just laughed at a comment about that (especially since Mom was right), but lately Mom was doing this thing with Emily, like sort of selling me out to get closer to her, that was starting to get annoying. And even more stuff happened during our dinner that night at the Maple Grove Diner.

Mom changed the subject of my un-awesome lock-opening ability—but the conversation didn't get any better.

"Well, I'm glad everything is going smoothly for you," Mom said. "I remember when Katie and her best friend, Callie, just stopped being friends for no reason. Can you believe that? But, luckily, she made some new friends right away."

I. Could. Not. Believe. It. Mom was telling all my deep, dark secrets to Jeff and Emily.

“First of all, Callie stopped being my friend,” I said. “And, anyway, why is this important? I have awesome friends now.”

“That’s exactly what I said,” Mom protested.

That’s when the waitress came to our table.

Finally, I thought. We can stop talking about all my horrible school experiences and eat.

Mom and Jeff both ordered turkey burgers and salads. Emily ordered a turkey club sandwich.

“Would you like fries with that?” the waitress asked.

“I’ll have a salad, please,” Emily said. “And a glass of water.”

Then the waitress turned to me. “What would you like?”

Now, I like to think that ordering food at a restaurant is one of my skills. For example, if we go to Mariani’s Italian Restaurant, I always order the eggplant parm, because it’s awesome there, but if we go to Torino’s, it’s too greasy so I get the ravioli, which they make by hand. And I always end up with the best food on the table. It’s kind of an art. And whenever I recommend something, people love it. Maybe I’ll be a food critic when I get older. Imagine getting to eat in all the best restaurants and get paid for telling people what you did and didn’t like. That would be pretty amazing.

Anyway, I know exactly what to order at the Maple Grove Diner. “I’ll have the Reuben with cheese fries and a root beer, please,” I said.

Now, for years Mom and I have eaten out a lot, just the two of us, so she is used to my mad food-ordering skills. But today she raised her eyebrows at me.

“Root beer?” she asked. “You know how I feel about soda. It’s so bad for your teeth, not to mention your overall health.”

My mom is a dentist, so of course I know how she feels about soda. Which made me think she was just saying that to impress Jeff or something.

“Mom, you know my food-to-beverage formula,” I said.

Emily looked interested. “What is that?”

“Well, you know how some things just go together?” I asked. “Like, an ice-cold cola is awesome with Chinese food. But on the other hand, any kind of soda is gross with P-B-and-J. The best drink for that is milk.”

“What about . . . a tuna sandwich?” Emily asked.

“Iced tea,” I said. “That would go great with a turkey club, too, by the way. Or you can get lemonade.”

“Dad, can I get an iced tea?” Emily asked Jeff.

“Well, I’d rather you didn’t have caffeine this late,” Jeff said. “But I think Katie is on to something. Maybe you can test her theory next time.”

“I think it was very mature of you to order water, Emily,” Mom said, and I tried my best not to groan out loud. We had hung out with Jeff and Emily kind of a lot over the past few weeks, and Mom was always saying stuff like that. Like she was comparing us, or something.

I was kind of mad at Mom for that comment, so I stayed quiet until the food came. My Reuben smelled amazing—it had corned beef, mustard, melted Swiss cheese, and sauerkraut. I know that might sound gross, but when you eat it all together, it’s so good. And the cheese fries were covered with that gooey orange cheese. I ate one of those first.

“Whoops, Katie! You got some cheese on your shirt,” Jeff said.

I looked down and saw a glob of orange cheese on my purple shirt. I grabbed a napkin and started scrubbing it, but the cheese just left an orange streak. Mom rolled her eyes and gave a big sigh across the table.

Next to me, Emily was neatly cutting her salad into tiny pieces with a knife and fork. I realized that I had never seen her spill any food or anything like that. In fact, Emily is one of those all-over neat people. Her brown hair is always very neat and shiny, whereas my brown hair usually gets tangles in it by lunchtime every day. She wears white sneakers with no black smudges on them or anything, and I wear sneakers that I’ve doodled all over with colored pens. There’s usually some kind of mudlike substance on them too.

Mom looked at Jeff. “Felix and Oscar,” she said, and they both laughed.

“What’s that supposed to mean?” I asked.

“It’s from an old TV show about two roommates,” Mom said. “One was really neat, and the other one was . . . messy.”

“Let me guess. I’m the messy one?” I said, and Emily giggled next to me.

“It was a really funny show,” Jeff said. I think he was trying not to make me feel bad.

“Very funny,” Mom agreed, smiling at Jeff, and then they started holding hands at the table.

“Gross!” I mumbled, and then I bit into my Reuben. Mustard squirted out and landed on my jeans. Oh well.

“Oh, I’ve been meaning to tell you,” Jeff said, looking at my mom. “I’m not sure if I can go see that show with you next Saturday. Emily’s mom has an unexpected business trip, so Em will be with me all weekend.”

Emily’s parents are divorced, just like mine. Except I never see my dad, and Emily sees Jeff every other weekend and some days during the week, too. It’s hard to keep track of their schedules sometimes.

“Oh, that’s a shame,” Mom said. Then her eyes lit up. “Hey, it’s a matinee, and we won’t be back late. Why doesn’t Emily hang out with Katie and her friends at their Cupcake Club meeting?”

I almost spit a mouthful of sauerkraut across the room.

“What?” I asked, with my mouth full.

“Well, Katie, you’re old enough to babysit now, although this wouldn’t exactly be babysitting,” Mom said quickly. “And I’m sure you could use some help with your cupcakes.”

I was speechless at first. Help? Help? At our Cupcake Club meetings, my friends Alexis, Emma, and Mia plan our schedules and go over our budget and come up with new cupcake ideas. We don’t need help from anyone, let alone someone younger than we are.

“I would love to help,” Emily said a little shyly, and suddenly I felt badly for getting worked up. Yes, Mom thinking Emily was perfect was starting to get annoying, but Emily was pretty cool. And Emma’s younger brother, Jake, comes to a lot of our meetings when Emma has to watch him, and Emily is kinda sorta like my younger sister, right?

“Fine,” I said.

Mom smiled. “Perfect! Jeff and I can drop you off at Mia’s for the meeting and then head into the city. I’ll check with Mia’s mom to make sure she can drive both of you back to our house.”

“I just have to check with everybody first,” I said, reaching for my phone.

“No texting during meals,” Mom said, and I pulled my hand back and sighed. I had a club meeting tomorrow anyway, so I’d just mention it then.

Emily glanced at her dessert menu and then looked over at me. Her brown eyes sparkled under her perfect bangs. “What’s the best dessert to go with a turkey club?” she asked.

I hadn’t thought about dessert formulas before. This could get interesting.

“Hmm . . . Boston cream pie,” I said. “Definitely.”

“Dad, can I get Boston cream pie for dessert?” Emily asked.

Jeff laughed. “Sure, why not?”

So Emily got Boston cream pie for dessert, and I got rice pudding, to test if it would go well with a Reuben, which it did. Emily did not spill a drop of chocolate or whipped cream, but I managed to get a glob of pudding on my sneaker. And I didn’t care one bit.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Louise Hawkins:

Reading a e-book tends to be new life style in this particular era globalization. With reading you can get a lot of information that may give you benefit in your life. With book everyone in this world can easily share their idea. Textbooks can also inspire a lot of people. Many author can inspire their particular reader with their

story or even their experience. Not only the storyplot that share in the guides. But also they write about the data about something that you need case in point. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your young ones, there are many kinds of book which exist now. The authors nowadays always try to improve their skill in writing, they also doing some research before they write to the book. One of them is this Katie Starting from Scratch (Cupcake Diaries Book 21).

Edna McArdle:

A lot of people always spent their particular free time to vacation or go to the outside with them loved ones or their friend. Were you aware? Many a lot of people spent these people free time just watching TV, or maybe playing video games all day long. If you want to try to find a new activity that's look different you can read the book. It is really fun to suit your needs. If you enjoy the book that you just read you can spent the entire day to reading a publication. The book Katie Starting from Scratch (Cupcake Diaries Book 21) it is very good to read. There are a lot of those who recommended this book. We were holding enjoying reading this book. In the event you did not have enough space bringing this book you can buy often the e-book. You can m0ore effortlessly to read this book through your smart phone. The price is not to fund but this book provides high quality.

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