



# Starting from Scratch: A Novel

*Susan Gilbert-Collins*

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## **Starting from Scratch: A Novel** Susan Gilbert-Collins

Why is someone who just defended her doctoral dissertation still wasting her time at her childhood home, two months after her mother's funeral, making coq au vin and osso buco? Olivia Tschetter, the youngest of four high-achieving South Dakotan siblings, is not returning to "normal"—or to graduate school—quickly enough to suit her family. She wants only to bury herself in her mother's kitchen, finding solace in their shared passion for cooking.

Threatened with grief counseling, Olivia accepts a temporary position at the local Meals on Wheels, where she stumbles upon some unfinished business from her mother's past—and a dark family secret. Startling announcements from two siblings also challenge the family's status quo. The last thing she needs is a deepening romantic interest in a close but platonic (she thought) friend.

But while Olivia's mother is gone, her memory and spirit continue to engage Olivia, who finds herself daring to speak when she would never have spoken before. Told with humor and compassion, *Starting from Scratch* explores the shifting of family dynamics in the wake of shattering loss and the healing power of cooking.

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