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Katie, Batter Up! (Cupcake Diaries Book 5)

By Coco Simon



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A sporty addition to a sweet tween series that's all about friendship—and cupcakes, of course!

Katie's Cupcake Club friends all have other activities besides making cupcakes: Mia and Alexis are on the soccer team and Emma plays the flute. Katie sets out to find her extracurricular niche and soon she's dribbling, passing, and catching. Sure, Katie can whip up a great cupcake—but can she cook on the field too? When Katie tries out and makes the softball team it's batter up....But instead of swinging away, she gets nervous during games. What if she makes a mistake? What if they lose? Is this the kind of batter Katie really wants to be dealing with? Katie starts to figure out that doing what you love always makes the batter sweeter.



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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, batter up!



CHAPTER 1

My Cupcake Obsession

My name is Katie Brown, and I am crazy about cupcakes. I'm not kidding. I think about cupcakes every day. I even dream about them when I sleep. The other night I was dreaming that I was eating a giant cupcake, and when I woke up I was chewing on my pillow!

Okay, now I *am* kidding. But I do dream about cupcakes, I swear. There must be a name for this condition. Cupcake-itis? That's got to be it. I am stricken with cupcake-itis, and there isn't any cure.

My three best friends and I formed the Cupcake Club, and we bake cupcakes for parties and events and things, and sell them. We're all different in our own way. Mia has long black hair and loves fashion. Emma has blond hair and blue eyes and lots of brothers. Alexis has wavy red hair and loves math.

I have light brown hair, and I mostly wear jeans and T-shirts. I'm an only child. And I hate math. But I have one big thing in common with all my friends: We love cupcakes.

That's why we were in my kitchen on a Tuesday afternoon, baking cupcakes on a beautiful spring day. We were having an official meeting to discuss our next big job: baking a cupcake cake for my grandma Carole's seventy-fifth birthday bash. But while we were thinking about that, we were also trying to perfect a new chocolate-coconut-almond cupcake, specially created for my friend Mia's stepdad and based on his favorite candy bar.

We had tried two different combinations already: a chocolate cupcake with coconut frosting and almonds on top and then a coconut cupcake with chocolate-almond frosting, but none of them matched the taste of the candy bar enough. Now we were working on a third batch: a chocolate-almond cupcake with coconut frosting and lots of shredded coconut on top.

I carefully poured a teaspoon of almond extract into the batter. "Mmm, smells almondy," I said.

"I hope this batch is the one," said Mia. "Eddie finally started taking down that gross flowery wallpaper in my bedroom, and I have to find some way to thank him. I would have paid someone a million dollars to do

that!”

“You realize you could buy a whole new house for a million dollars, right?” Alexis asked. “Probably two or three.”

“You know what I mean,” Mia replied. “Besides, you know how ugly that wallpaper is. It looks like something you’d find in an old lady’s room.”

“Hey, my grandma Carole’s an old lady, and she doesn’t have ugly wallpaper in *her* house,” I protested.

Emma picked up the ice-cream scoop and started scooping up the batter and putting it into the cupcake pans.

“We need to find out more about your grandma,” Emma said. “That way we can figure out what kind of cupcake cake to make for the party.”

“Right!” Alexis agreed. She flipped open her notebook and took out the pen that was tucked behind her ear. Sometimes I think Alexis must have a secret stash of notebooks in her house somewhere. I’ve never seen her without one.

“First things first,” Alexis said. “How many people are coming to the party?”

I wrinkled my nose, thinking. “Not sure,” I said. Then I yelled as loud as I could. “Mom! How many people are coming to Grandma Carole’s party?”

My mom appeared in the kitchen doorway. “Katie, you know how I feel about yelling,” she said.

“Sorry, Mom,” I said in my best apology voice.

“The answer is about thirty people,” Mom said. “So I think if the cupcake cake has three dozen cupcakes, that would be fine.”

“What exactly is a cupcake cake, anyway?” Mia asked. “Do you mean like one of those giant cupcakes that you bake with a special pan?”

“I was thinking more like a bunch of cupcakes arranged in tiers to look like a cake,” Mom replied.

Mia nodded to Alexis’s pen and notebook. “Can I?”

“Sure,” Alexis replied, handing them to her. Mia began to sketch. She’s a great artist and wants to be a fashion designer someday.

“Like this?” Mia asked, showing Mom the drawing. I looked over Mia’s shoulder and saw the plan: three round tiers, one on top of the other, with cupcakes on each.

“Exactly!” Mom said, smiling and showing off a mouth full of perfect white teeth. (She *is* a dentist, after all.)

Alexis took back her notebook. “Excellent,” she said, jotting something down. “Now we just need to decide what flavor to make and how to decorate it.”

“What do you think, Mom?” I asked.

“Oh, I’m staying out of this. This is your project,” Mom replied. “I think I’ll let you girls come up with something. You always come up with such wonderful ideas, and I know Grandma Carole will love whatever you do.”

“All done!” Emma announced, putting down the ice-cream scoop.

“Mom, oven, please?” I asked.

“Sure thing,” Mom said, slipping on an oven mitt. She put the chocolate-almond cupcakes into the preheated oven, and I set the cupcake-shaped timer on the counter for twenty minutes.

Mom left the kitchen, and the four of us sat down at the kitchen table to work out the details.

“So what kind of flavors does your grandmother like?” Alexis asked.

I shrugged. “I don’t know. She likes all kinds of things. Blueberry pie in the summer, and chocolate cake, and maple-walnut ice cream ...”

“So we can make blueberry-chocolate-maple cupcakes with walnuts on top!” Mia joked.

“Hey, we thought bacon flavor was weird and that worked out well!” said Emma. It was true. Bacon flavor was a really big seller for us.

“You know, we don’t know anything about your grandma,” Emma said. “Maybe if you tell us something about her, we can get some ideas.”

“Sure,” I said. “Hold on a minute.”

I went into the den where Mom and I keep all our books and picked up a photo album. We have lots of them, and there were pictures of Grandma Carole in almost all of them. I turned to a photo of me and my mom with Grandma Carole and Grandpa Chuck at Christmas. Grandma Carole looked nice in a red sweater and the beaded necklace I made her as a present at camp. Her hair used to be brown like mine, but now it’s white.

“That’s her,” I said. “And that’s my grandpa Chuck. They got married, like, forever ago, and they have three kids: my mom and my uncle Mike and my uncle Jimmy. She used to be a librarian.”

“Just like my mom!” Emma said, smiling.

I flipped the pages in the photo album and found a picture of Grandma Carole in her white tennis outfit, holding her racquet.

“Mostly she loves sports and stuff,” I said. “She runs, like, every day, and she won track medals in high school. She goes swimming and plays tennis, and skis in the winter, and she likes golf even though she says there’s not enough running.”

“Do sports have a flavor?” Mia mused.

“Um, sports-drink-flavored cupcakes?” Alexis offered.

“Or sweat-flavored cupcakes,” I said, then burst out giggling.

“Or smelly sneaker-flavored cupcakes,” Mia said, laughing.

“Ew, sweat and sneakers ... those are so gross!” Emma squealed.

“But I guess she does like sports most of all,” I said. “She’s always trying to get me to do stuff with her. Because I am *soooo* good at sports.” I said that really sarcastically, because the exact opposite is true. Now it was Emma’s turn to giggle.

“Yeah, I’ve seen you in gym,” she said.

“It’s even worse than you know,” I confessed. “When she tried to teach me to ski, I wiped out on the bunny hill—you know, the one for little kids? I even sprained my ankle.”

“Oh, that’s terrible!” Emma cried.

“And when I played tennis on a team with Grandpa, I accidentally whacked him in the head with my racquet.”

Mia put a hand to her mouth to try to stop from laughing. “Oh, Katie, that would be funny if it weren’t so terrible!” she said.

I nodded. “He needed four stitches.”

“So I guess you don’t take after your grandmother,” Alexis said.

“Well, not the sports thing,” I admitted. “But everyone says I look exactly like she did when she was younger. And she’s a good baker, too. She used to own her own cake baking business.”

Alexis stood up. “You’re kidding! Why didn’t you tell us?”

“I just did,” I said.

“But she’s a *professional*,” Alexis said. “It’s not going to be easy to impress her.”

“Yes, the pressure is on,” Mia agreed.

I hadn’t thought of that before. “Well, we’ll just have to make a superawesome cupcake cake, then.”

Alexis sat back down. “Okay, people, let’s start jotting down some ideas.”

We tried for the next few minutes, but nobody could think of anything. Then Emma looked at her watch.

“You know, I need to get home,” she said. “It’s my turn to make dinner tonight.”

“We need some more time to come up with ideas, anyway,” Alexis said. “Let’s schedule another meeting.”

“Let’s do it tomorrow,” I suggested. But Alexis and Mia had whipped out their smartphones, and Emma took out a little notebook with flowers on it—and they were all frowning.

“Alexis and I have soccer practice tomorrow and Thursday, and a game on Friday,” Mia reported.

“And I have concert band practice on Wednesdays and Fridays,” Emma said. Emma plays the flute, and she’s really good at that.

“Sorry, Katie. You know spring is a busy time of year,” Alexis said.

“Yeah, sure,” I said, but really, I didn’t. I don’t really do anything besides the Cupcake Club, and it’s not just because I have cupcake-itis. I’m no good at sports, and I’m not so great at music, either. When we learned how to play the recorder in fourth grade, I ended up making a sound like a beached whale. My teacher made me practice after school, after everyone went home.

Just then the cake timer rang. I put on a mitt and opened the oven door. All the cupcakes in the pan were flat. They should have gotten nice and puffy as they cooked.

“Mom!” I yelled.

Mom rushed in a few seconds later. “Katie, what did I tell you about—Oh,” she said, looking at the deflated cupcakes.

“What happened?” I asked.

“This looks like a baking powder issue to me,” she said. She put the pan of flat cupcakes on the counter and picked up the little can of baking powder. “Just as I thought. It’s past its expiration date. You need fresh baking powder for your cupcakes to rise.”

I felt terrible. “Sorry, guys.”

“It’s not your fault,” Emma said.

“Yeah, and anyway, Eddie’s not finished taking down that wallpaper yet,” Mia said. “We can try again next time.”

“Whenever that is,” I mumbled.

Emma, Alexis, and Mia started picking up their things.

“We can talk about your grandma’s cupcakes at lunch on Friday,” Alexis said. “Everybody come with some ideas, okay?”

Emma saluted. “Yes, General Alexis!” she teased.

“Ooh, if Alexis is the general, can I be the cupcake captain?” I asked, and everyone laughed.

When my friends left, the kitchen was pretty quiet. Mom went into the den to do some paperwork, and all that was left was me and a pan of flat cupcakes.

As I cleaned up the mess, I thought of Alexis and Mia and Emma all going off and doing stuff—stuff that I couldn't do. They were all multitalented, and the only thing I was good at was making cupcakes. It made me feel a little bit lonely and a little bit like a loser.

In fact, it made me feel as flat as those cupcakes.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Anna Lewis:

Reading a publication tends to be new life style on this era globalization. With reading through you can get a lot of information which will give you benefit in your life. Using book everyone in this world may share their idea. Guides can also inspire a lot of people. A lot of author can inspire their reader with their story or maybe their experience. Not only the storyline that share in the textbooks. But also they write about the ability about something that you need illustration. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your children, there are many kinds of book which exist now. The authors in this world always try to improve their ability in writing, they also doing some investigation before they write to the book. One of them is this Katie, Batter Up! (Cupcake Diaries Book 5).

Erica Northern:

Spent a free time and energy to be fun activity to try and do! A lot of people spent their sparetime with their family, or all their friends. Usually they doing activity like watching television, gonna beach, or picnic within the park. They actually doing same task every week. Do you feel it? Do you want to something different to fill your own personal free time/ holiday? May be reading a book may be option to fill your no cost time/ holiday. The first thing that you'll ask may be what kinds of reserve that you should read. If you want to try out look for book, may be the guide untitled Katie, Batter Up! (Cupcake Diaries Book 5) can be very good book to read. May be it is usually best activity to you.

Jon Fuselier:

Reading a book for being new life style in this yr; every people loves to go through a book. When you study a book you can get a lots of benefit. When you read books, you can improve your knowledge, mainly because book has a lot of information in it. The information that you will get depend on what types of book that you have read. If you want to get information about your study, you can read education books, but if you want to entertain yourself you can read a fiction books, these kinds of us novel, comics, and also soon. The Katie, Batter Up! (Cupcake Diaries Book 5) offer you a new experience in examining a book.

Willie Batres:

In this period globalization it is important to someone to get information. The information will make professionals understand the condition of the world. The condition of the world makes the information better to share. You can find a lot of references to get information example: internet, classifieds, book, and soon.

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