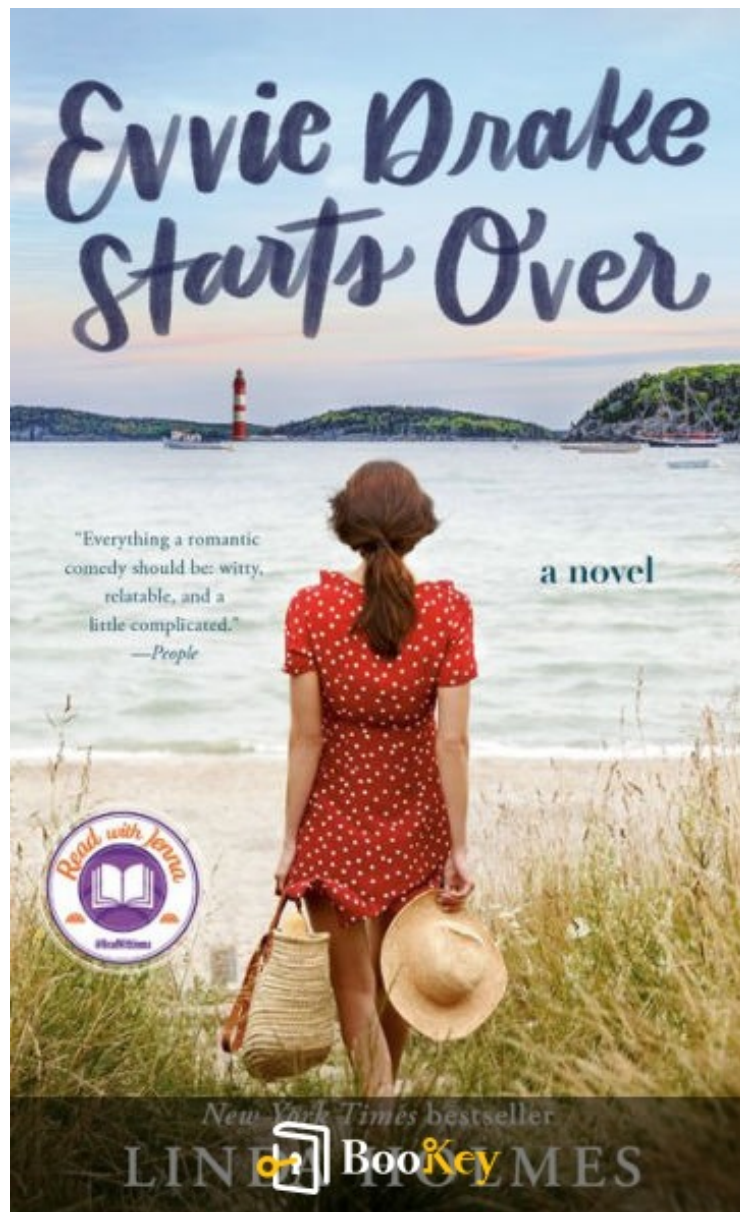


Evvie Drake Starts Over PDF

Linda Holmes



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About the book

Book Highlight: Evvie Drake Starts Over

Acclaimed as a New York Times Bestseller

Jenna Book Club Pick Featured on Today Show

"Everything a romantic comedy should be: witty, relatable, and a little complicated." – People

Discover the heartfelt debut novel, *Evvie Drake Starts Over*, which narrates the unexpected bond between Evvie, a young widow grappling with her husband's tragic death, and Dean, a struggling Major League pitcher facing his own demons.

Honored as One of NPR's Best Books of the Year

In a quiet coastal town in Maine, Evvie Drake feels trapped in her vast home a year after her husband's fatal car accident. Townsfolk, including her best friend Andy, assume she's simply engulfed in grief, a misconception she allows to persist.

Meanwhile, in the bustling city of New York, Dean Tenney, once a celebrated Major League pitcher, is battling a debilitating case of the "yips," losing control over his throws, and with it, his career. As pressure mounts from the press, a chance invite from Andy to retreat to Maine offers Dean a

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vital opportunity to reset his life.

Upon moving into an apartment at the rear of Evvie's home, they agree to avoid discussing one another's painful pasts—Evvie's late husband and Dean's faltering baseball career. However, as their friendship blossoms, those rules of silence begin to crumble. As they navigate their growing feelings, Evvie and Dean must confront their histories, face their secrets, and rebuild not just their lives, but their futures. Much like baseball, life offers a glimmer of hope, right up until the last out.

This delightful and uplifting debut by Linda Holmes promises to have you rooting for these two unlikely heroes and yearning for more.

Praise for *Evvie Drake Starts Over*:

- "A quirky, sweet, and splendid story of a woman coming into her own." – Taylor Jenkins Reid, New York Times bestselling author of *Daisy Jones & The Six*
- "Effortlessly enjoyable . . . pitch-perfect . . . an adult love story that is as romantic as it is real." – USA Today
- "Charming, hopeful, and gently romantic . . . Evvie Drake is great company." – Rainbow Rowell, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Eleanor & Park*

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Evvie Drake Starts Over Summary

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Who should read this book **Evvie Drake Starts Over**

"Evvie Drake Starts Over" by Linda Holmes is a must-read for anyone looking for a heartwarming and humorous exploration of healing and second chances. This novel will resonate with readers who appreciate character-driven stories, particularly those who enjoy contemporary women's fiction that dives into themes of grief, friendship, and self-discovery. Fans of romantic comedies and feel-good narratives will find solace in Evvie's journey as she navigates life's challenges after a major turning point, making it perfect for book clubs and readers seeking relatable, uplifting tales.

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Key insights of Evvie Drake Starts Over in table format

Title	Evvie Drake Starts Over
Author	Linda Holmes
Genre	Fiction, Romance, Contemporary
Main Characters	Evvie Drake, Dean Tenney
Setting	Small town in Maine
Plot Summary	Evvie Drake is a widow living in a small town who is struggling to move on after her husband's death. She rents out a room in her home to Dean Tenney, a former major league baseball pitcher who is hiding from his own troubles. As Evvie and Dean spend time together, they help each other confront their pasts and discover new beginnings.
Themes	Grief, Healing, New Beginnings, Friendship, Love
Tone	Warm, Humorous, Reflective
Publication Year	2020
Notable Elements	Explores the complexities of loss, the importance of self-acceptance, and the challenges of starting over in life.

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Evvie Drake Starts Over Summary Chapter List

1. Chapter 1: Evvie's Life Is Turned Upside Down in the Small Town
2. Chapter 2: The Arrival of Dean and the Start of New Beginnings
3. Chapter 3: Secrets, Grief, and the Weight of the Past
4. Chapter 4: Unlikely Friendships Flourish Amidst Life's Changes
5. Chapter 5: Discovering Love While Confronting Deep Fears and Insecurities
6. Chapter 6: The Journey to Acceptance and Facing Turbulent Emotion
7. Chapter 7: Embracing the Future with Hope and New Opportunities

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1. Chapter 1: Evvie's Life Is Turned Upside Down in the Small Town

Evvie Drake had always lived a life that felt like a carefully orchestrated routine in the small town of Lincolnville, Maine. The town, known for its charming streets and tight-knit community, had been both a cradle and a cage for her. For years, she played the role of the dutiful wife to a husband who was everyone's idea of a perfect match. But as the seasons changed, her life twisted into something unrecognizable after her husband's tragic death.

The ordinary hum of her days surfaced memories of laughter and companionship, yet also a haunting absence that shadowed her steps. Evvie spent her mornings sipping coffee in the same corner café where she had once shared plans for their future with her late husband. Now, the vibrant conversations around her felt muted, strained by her grief and the silent weight of loss. The people of Lincolnville sought to reach out, but she often retreated, her heart a fortress bristling with remembrance.

In the wake of tragedy, Evvie found herself grappling with a range of emotions, from guilt to a desire for freedom that she could hardly understand. It was this yearning that led her to the garage that she had turned into her sanctuary, a place filled with old bicycles, dusty furniture, and shadows of the life once lived. Each item whispered memories—reminders of a past she couldn't quite escape from, yet desperately wanted to leave



behind.

Isolation became her familiar companion. Friends tried to whisk her away for outings, to coax her back into the rhythm of life, but the thought of entering a social scene without her husband felt insurmountable. Every smile felt dishonest, and every laugh felt like a betrayal of the happiness she had lost. She was adrift in a tide of conflicting emotions, seeking solace in solitude while battling the creeping anxiety that perhaps she would never truly move on.

As the days flowed into weeks, Evvie found her life at a standstill, suspended in a moment that refused to progress. She moved through her days in a haze, attending to mundane chores and pretending that her heart was healing. Yet, the facade was only skin deep. With each passing moment, the town's picturesque charm seemed to mock her, as if its very essence was a reminder of how far removed she was from the vivacious woman she had once been.

Despite the struggle, glimmers of resolve began to pierce through her sorrow, hinting at the possibility of renewal. A deep-rooted resolve stirred within her—a sense that perhaps it was time to confront the ghosts of her past, face the life she had to reclaim, and navigate the tumultuous path of rediscovery in a world that had drastically changed.

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Little did she know that the arrival of someone unexpected would soon usher in an era of reckoning, transforming the narrative of her life and paving the way for new beginnings.

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2. Chapter 2: The Arrival of Dean and the Start of New Beginnings

In the wake of devastating personal loss, Evvie Drake finds herself navigating a life that feels disjointed and surreal in her small town in Maine. Just as she grapples with the shadows of her past, the unexpected arrival of Dean Tenney offers a fresh chapter brimming with potential and new beginnings.

Dean, a recently retired Major League Baseball pitcher, arrives in Evvie's town searching not just for solitude but also a reprieve from the pressures and heartbreaks associated with his fall from grace. His fame contrasts sharply with Evvie's quiet existence, yet both have found solace in escaping their respective worlds. Dean's arrival is anything but understated; he draws attention with his fame and his seemingly easy-going charm, but beneath his confident exterior lies a man plagued by self-doubt and the fear of his own obsolescence.

Evvie learns of Dean's presence through a series of drawings propelled by her overactive imagination. Initially hesitant and skeptical, she gradually opens herself up to the possibility that Dean could be a source of understanding and companionship. Their initial encounters are filled with awkwardness and an air of tentative curiosity, as both characters sense a mutual need for connection while wrestling with their individual struggles.



As they interact more, Evvie finds a strange comfort in Dean's company. He is endearingly out of place in her small town, wrestling with insecurities that resonate with her own. In turn, Dean, though burdened by the aftermath of his career, finds Evvie's authenticity and strength refreshing. Their relationship begins to develop as they share stories and insights, slowly peeling back the layers of their lives.

This chapter subtly shifts from heartbreak to hope, marking a significant turning point for Evvie, who begins to sense that new possibilities are on the horizon. With Dean's arrival, she starts to look beyond her grief and loneliness, envisioning a future where she is not solely defined by her past. Together, they embark on a journey of self-discovery, marked by shared experiences and mutual support amidst the backdrop of their small-town life.

Evvie and Dean's connection burgeons from casual companionship into something deeper as they navigate their fears and uncertainties. The narrative captures the essence of vulnerability, illustrating how two individual lives, marked by loss and longing, can intertwine. Through Dean, Evvie learns to embrace the idea of moving forward, discovering that the risk of emotional openness might just be the catalyst for a transformative comeback in her own life.



As the chapter closes, both Evvie and Dean stand on the precipice of renewed hope, with the promise of their respective futures hovering just beyond the horizon. The arrival of Dean signifies not just the beginning of a friendship but also the stirring of Evvie's long-dormant aspirations and dreams, hinting at the vibrant stories yet to unfold.

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3. Chapter 3: Secrets, Grief, and the Weight of the Past

As Evvie settles into a new routine following the recent upheaval in her life, the burdens of her past begin to weigh heavily on her. She grapples not only with her grief over the sudden loss of her husband but also with the secrets that linger in the shadows of their relationship. The small town of Castle Rock, which once felt like a safe haven, now serves as a constant reminder of her trauma and the heartache that came with it.

Evvie often finds herself reminiscing about the good times shared with her husband, and these memories are bittersweet. They are tinged with regret—regret for the conversations never had and the dreams never pursued. She feels a palpable sense of loss, not just for her partner, but for the life they had envisioned together.

As Dean enters her life, bringing his own struggles with failure and disappointment, Evvie's emotional walls begin to crack. Their shared vulnerability creates an unspoken bond, yet the pain of their respective pasts lingers between them, at times keeping them at a distance. Dean, a once-prominent baseball player sidelined by injury, is grappling with his own identity and losses. His arrival serves as a catalyst for Evvie to confront her own grief more openly, but it also exposes her to the risks of vulnerability and the potential for further emotional turmoil.



Secrets that Evvie has kept hidden even from herself begin to bubble to the surface, reflecting her need to make sense of her life after such profound loss. She starts to question how much of her marriage was built on love and understanding versus obligation and silence. The memories come with a weight, dragging her down as she attempts to navigate through her daily routine and the interactions with the townsfolk who also carry their own burdens.

Evvie's journey to understanding her grief is a slow and often painful process. She realizes that in order to truly start over, she must first confront the pain and secrets of her past, no matter how heavy they feel. The struggle to reconcile these feelings pulls her deeper into reflection, helping her to process the loss while also allowing hints of acceptance to permeate her outlook. Through poignant moments of introspection and subtle interactions with Dean, Evvie begins to see that holding onto her past may be preventing her from embracing the potential for a new future.

Ultimately, this chapter highlights a pivotal moment for Evvie; it is a time of unearthing deep-seated emotions and realizing that secrets, although burdensome, can lead to healing when shared. The exploration of grief serves as both a chain and a catalyst, pushing her toward the possibility of forgiveness and the hope of new beginnings.

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4. Chapter 4: Unlikely Friendships Flourish Amidst Life's Changes

In the wake of the tumultuous events that reshaped Evvie Drake's life, she finds herself navigating a path filled with unexpected alliances and meaningful connections. As Evvie emerges from the shadow of her past, the quaint town around her serves as a backdrop against which unlikely friendships begin to take root.

The arrival of Dean, a former Major League Baseball player whose career ended abruptly due to a series of unfortunate injuries, brings a unique energy to Evvie's life. While both characters are dealing with their own forms of grief and loss, they discover a profound kinship in their shared solitude and the pressing need to redefine their identities. Dean's vulnerability and the openness he exhibits provide a stark contrast to Evvie's reticence, but this dynamic creates a fertile ground for their friendship to flourish.

Throughout this chapter, Evvie and Dean bond over their common experiences of change. Their discussions often delve into the nuances of loss — Evvie mourning the life she once shared with her late husband and Dean grappling with the end of his athletic aspirations. However, it is through these shared struggles that the duo begins to forge a deeper understanding of themselves and each other.



One of the most significant moments in this evolving friendship occurs during their late-night talks, where their vulnerability is laid bare. In one particularly poignant scene, Evvie reveals her apprehensions about moving forward and the weight of expectations from herself and her late husband's legacy. Dean listens intently, offering insights drawn from his own disappointments and aspirations. These conversations serve not just as a means of comfort, but as catalysts for personal growth for both.

As they spend more time together, Evvie and Dean decide to shake up their routines. In a fit of spontaneity, they embark on a series of adventures that symbolize their fresh start. From exploring local eateries to quirky coffee shops, these outings are filled with laughter and playfulness, allowing them to reclaim joy in each other's company and in their lives. This rekindling of joy becomes a hallmark of their friendship, highlighting how companionship can be a salve for life's deepest wounds.

Moreover, the warmth of their friendship extends beyond themselves, bringing together a circle of characters who enrich the narrative. The supportive web of friends that emerges showcases the importance of community in overcoming personal hardships. Evvie's friendship circle, which initially seemed limited, expands as she becomes more open to inviting people into her life. Dean's influence encourages her to step outside her comfort zone, leading her to reconnect with those she had distanced



herself from in the past.

Through Dean, Evvie learns to see life not just as a series of endings, but as a landscape of potential beginnings. His presence invigorates her outlook, prompting her to embrace moments of vulnerability rather than shying away from them. The blossoming friendship serves as a reminder that even in the face of change and uncertainty, human connections can foster resilience, optimism, and hope.

In this chapter, the theme of unlikely friendships serves as a light that pierces through the fog of grief and sorrow. Evvie and Dean's relationship epitomizes how bonds can form unexpectedly, offering crucial support amidst life's unpredictable changes. As they learn to lean on each other, they not only find solace but also rediscover parts of themselves that they thought were lost forever.

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5. Chapter 5: Discovering Love While Confronting Deep Fears and Insecurities

In the heart of the small town, as the seasons shifted, Evvie Drake began to navigate the tumultuous waters of her emotions that accompanied new beginnings and complicated relationships. The arrival of Dean, once merely a new acquaintance, evolved into something deeply intricate and significant. Amidst conversations layered with laughs and shared glances, Evvie found herself wrestling with eerie feelings of vulnerability, a stark contrast to the protective walls she had spent so long building around her heart.

Dean, a former professional baseball player dealing with his own demons, had inadvertently caught Evvie off-guard. Their bond, initially blossoming through late-night discussions and gentle laughter, forced her to confront not only the heaviness of her past but also the silenced fears lurking in the corners of her mind. The profound loss of her husband had left a profound void in Evvie's life, one that filled her days with doubt about allowing love to take root again. As her heart danced precariously on the brink of blossoming feelings for Dean, she wrestled with questions that haunted her: Did she still possess the ability to love? Was it okay to embrace happiness after so much heartache?

Dean's presence was a balm yet a source of agitation, igniting both warmth and an uncomfortable awareness of her insecurities. Evvie feared not just the



possibility of falling for him, but also the implications that love could bring about; the vulnerability it demanded made her shiver. There was a constant internal struggle—her longing for connection warring with the instinct to retreat into the safe silence of solitude, reminding her of the pains of her past. Yet, as she learned more about Dean, it became clearer that he, too, wrestled with his share of insecurities stemming from his career and identity struggles after the sport that once defined him.

In his own way, Dean mirrored Evvie’s journey, both seeking solace yet grappling with the burdens of self-doubt. Their connection deepened, transforming the weight of their shared vulnerabilities into a tender, shared experience that they could navigate together. Through discussions about dreams and aspirations, Evvie began to peel back the layers of her fears, allowing Dean to gently breach the subject of love—cuing to her that it was permissible to seek joy in the present.

As the weeks passed, Evvie started to embrace the idea of possibility rather than confinement to past shadows. Moments spent together—long walks, spontaneous trips to the local café, evenings filled with playful banter—served not merely as distractions but as opportunities to heal. Each shared smile, every comforting touch, and all laughter fostered a burgeoning warmth inside her that had long been dormant. Slowly, she let her guard down, marveling at the rediscovery of joy. Yet, the dance of intimacy also



brought a knotting tension. The fear of emotional exposure lingered, urging her to tread carefully as if love were a fragile thread that could snap at any moment.

In tandem with the lightness of budding romance was the sobering confrontation with her insecurities. Evvie recognized that to love Dean meant to relinquish her grip on sole ownership of her sorrows and to share the canvas of her heart with someone else. This realization was daunting but also liberating, as it pushed her toward a deeper understanding of herself and the nature of love. Each moment spent with Dean stirred hope within her, whispering that love could exist alongside her past, not merely as a replacement but as recognition that life could evolve—an evolution where love can indeed sprout anew, embracing all the imperfections, fears, and beautiful complexities that make life a wondrous tapestry.

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6. Chapter 6: The Journey to Acceptance and Facing Turbulent Emotion

In this chapter, Evvie Drake's emotional landscape becomes a dominant theme as she navigates the aftermath of significant life changes. The turbulence of her past continues to reverberate through her present, leading her on a complex journey toward acceptance. As she grapples with her grief over her husband's death and her yearning for a new path, Evvie confronts the deep-seated fears that have long dictated her responses to love and loss.

Evvie's journey is not just about moving on from her husband's memory, but also about understanding herself in the context of her experiences. The arrival of Dean, who carries his own tumultuous baggage as a former Major League Baseball player, catalyzes a shift in Evvie. As they navigate the challenges of building a new friendship, they slowly begin to reveal their vulnerabilities to one another. Dean's struggle with his career-ending injury and Evvie's struggle with her grief intertwine, providing a backdrop for exploring themes of acceptance and resilience.

Through small yet meaningful moments, Evvie starts to acknowledge her feelings. She recognizes that grief is not a linear process and that it doesn't simply go away; rather, it evolves and requires patience and self-compassion. This acceptance marks a turning point in her character arc, as she learns to forgive herself for the happiness she is beginning to feel with



Dean.

Emotional turbulence builds as Evvie reflects on her marriage and attempts to separate her identity from her past life. Confronting memories and the stark reality of loneliness pushes her to face her fears head-on. With Dean's encouragement, she starts to embrace the uncomfortable emotions associated with letting go, realizing that acceptance can coexist with love for someone no longer present. Together, Dean and Evvie find solace in their shared experiences, which leads them toward a deeper understanding of themselves and of what they want from life moving forward.

Ultimately, this chapter intricately weaves Evvie's personal growth with the gentle unfolding of her relationship with Dean, illustrating how acceptance is intertwined with vulnerability and the courage to face unsettling emotions. As she progresses on this path, Evvie begins to see a glimmer of hope for a future that incorporates the lessons of her past. This realization becomes a backdrop for her continued evolution as she learns that embracing the complexity of her feelings and experiences is essential for her journey toward healing.

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7. Chapter 7: Embracing the Future with Hope and New Opportunities

In the final chapter of “Evvie Drake Starts Over,” Evvie comes to a crucial turning point in her life, embodying the theme of hope and renewal that permeates the novel. After grappling with her complex feelings about her past relationships and the loss that has weighed her down, Evvie starts to see a path forward that is paved with possibility rather than fear.

Dean, who has become a central figure in her life, also begins to face his own challenges regarding his career as a baseball pitcher. Both characters are at a crossroads, and their paths converge in a way that symbolizes healing and personal growth. Their relationship, built on mutual support and understanding, deepens as they share their vulnerabilities and dreams. The narrative highlights the importance of companionship in the journey toward self-discovery, underscoring how their bond helps each of them step out of their shadows.

As Evvie embarks on small but significant changes in her life, she learns to embrace her independence and choices. Whether it’s reconnecting with friends from her past or exploring her interests that had been set aside, she begins to reclaim her identity outside of her previous roles. Evvie’s once-restrictive view of her future expands as she finds joy in the present, leading her to consider new job opportunities that align with her passions,



ultimately illustrating her readiness to embrace whatever is to come.

The narrative doesn't shy away from the residual effects of grief, but it portrays them with a sense of realism that emphasizes healing rather than forgetfulness. Evvie acknowledges the sorrow of her past while simultaneously allowing herself to feel excitement about the future. This balance of emotions enriches her character and resonates with readers, revealing how moving forward does not mean abandoning those we have lost but embracing life in a fuller, more vibrant way.

As the chapter unfolds, the reader sees Evvie taking the bold step of making decisions that are authentically hers. She begins to craft her own story, one built not on the constraints of her past but on the hopes that she has dared to nurture. This transformation is visually celebrated through scenes that depict her revitalized living situation and the revitalization of relationships around her, punctuating the idea that every ending can lead to a new beginning.

In a climactic moment that encapsulates her journey, Evvie reconnects with her love for the rhythm of life, perhaps symbolized through cooking, which she has always found solace in. This engages her creative spirit and allows her to express her innermost thoughts and emotions. The kitchen becomes a metaphorical space for healing and transformation, where she concocts dishes that reflect her new outlook and the flavors of life's uncertainties.

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Ultimately, "Evvie Drake Starts Over" concludes on a note of cautious yet optimistic excitement. The future is no longer a daunting expanse but an open horizon filled with new possibilities. As Evvie and Dean equip themselves to face whatever challenges lie ahead, the story provides a reassuring message that it is indeed possible to embrace the future, build new foundations, and thrive amid life's unpredictability. This chapter encapsulates the essence of the narrative: the beauty of starting over and the promise of hope that lies within each new opportunity.

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5 Key Quotes of Evvie Drake Starts Over

1. "Sometimes you need to let a person go to allow them to become who they are meant to be."
2. "Life can be a series of unexpected turns; embracing them can lead to new beginnings."
3. "Healing isn't a straight path; it's a winding road filled with ups and downs that we need to navigate at our own pace."
4. "The stories we tell ourselves shape our reality; it's never too late to change the narrative."
5. "Connection is key in life, whether it's with friends, family, or even someone who unexpected becomes a part of your journey."

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