

## Allison's Corner January 2020

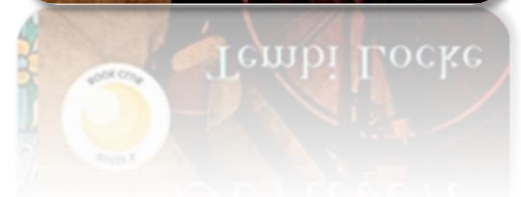
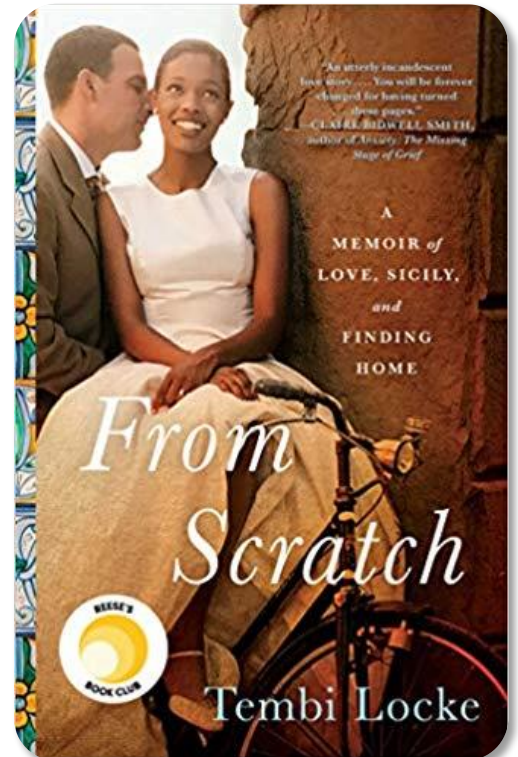
[From Scratch: A Memoir of Love, Sicily, and Finding Home](#) by Tembi Locke  
(Simon & Schuster 2019)

I have found that you come to a certain time in life when you realize it is your relationships with people and some family that matter the most. I have a special place in my heart for memoirs - this one really got to me. You know that feeling when you read something and parts of it remain with you for days afterwards. I guarantee that this memoir will do that to you.

On the surface, it may seem like a bit of a common story. American student studies abroad, falls in love with native from the country, plans to marry him, etc. But as we know, life can get complicated and throw you some surprises along the way.

I will try not to give everything away. But the actual Sicilian home cooking is so wonderfully detailed that you can almost smell it from the pages. Pasta, artisanal cheese, fresh bread, and home-cured olives are the daily staples. Yummy.

Also, I can say as an African American who grew up in New York City, I am very used to diversity and all cultures sort of living together or near each other. Well, when you leave a big city, it is not that way in many places. And just my mere presence in a place without others who look like me can cause a stir. Just like Tembi, I really did not become aware of this until I was a student in college and met many other students from non-diverse areas of the country.



Tembi Locke also has that experience in Sicily. It is a joy to read how she learns the dialect of the people and becomes part of the village when she is there.

I will leave the personal love and illness details between her and her husband out of this review.

I will just end by saying everything is heartfelt. The author shares her thoughts and feelings freely. We can all relate to parts of this story.

And when you are ready (and it may not be right away after you finish) you can visit the author's website for a few shared family photos. I highly recommend doing that. This book so enthralls the imagination that I think it is best to leave the photos until after you finish the final word on the very last page.