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Family Meals: Coming Together to Care for an Aging Parent

Michael Tucker

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Family Meals: Coming Together to Care for an Aging Parent Michael Tucker
Michael Tucker and his wife, Jill Eikenberry, are enjoying the early years of retirement in their dream house, a beautiful 350-year-old stone farmhouse in the central Italian province of Umbria, when life rears its ugly head on their summer plans. Jill's mother's second husband, Ralph, has passed away, and Michael and Jill must leave the respite of the Italian countryside and travel westward to console Lora, Jill's mother, and help her plan her future. Thus begins *Family Meals*, a beautifully told memoir that explores the meaning of family and examines the sacrifices we make for those we love. After Ralph's death, Lora begins a rapid decline into dementia, and Jill wrestles with the decision to move her from Santa Barbara to New York City. The Tuckers initially attempt to place Lora in a senior residence in New York, but when an apartment becomes vacant right across the hall from them, they grab it for Lora. Michael and Jill's children, Alison and Max—much to their parents' happiness—decide not only to relocate to Manhattan but also move in together. Their family, which had been a loose network of individual strands, has become, remarkably, a unit. It's all very Italian.

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