



The Baby-Sitter

R.L. Stine

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From the minute that Jenny accepts the Hagen baby-sitting job, she knows she has made a terrible mistake. First there is the dark and gloomy Hagen house, filling her with dread and horror. Then the crank phone calls start. When she finds a threatening note in her bag, she realizes that this isn't a harmless game.

The Baby-Sitter Details

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From Reader Review The Baby-Sitter for online ebook

Zi Lin Li says

Scared to Death

The Babysitter Scholastic, 1989, pg 167, \$5.99

R.L. Stine ISBN: 0439992494

Ever have you imagine being a babysitter could change your life? Not all babysitters are happy about their job. Jenny, a normal high school student, was accepted to a babysitting job. Jenny thought that babysitting was not hard, but she was wrong. It changed her life.

The Babysitter, the name of this book, is written by R. L. Stine. R. L. Stine is one of the famous writers that wrote Goosebumps. His writing contains lots of scary events and characters. On Jenny's first day of babysitting Danny, she receives lots of weird phone calls that were scary. She felt scared and she wanted to know who is all behind this prank. Day after day of babysitting, Jenny kept on receiving the strange phone calls again and again. Will this mysterious person show it's true identity to Jenny or scares her to death?

Jenny is a courageous person. Even though the phone calls are still hunting her, Jenny shows her courage that she wants to keep her babysitting job and find that person who is behind all of it. When I read this book, I couldn't keep on eyes off it. It was so interesting that I finish reading the whole book during one day. It was amazing and the suspense was wonderful. I recommend this book to teenagers that are 12 and older and also someone that likes mysteries and suspense. Read this book and I bet you that you won't be able to put the book down afterwards.

Diego Sanchez says

Si lo que buscas es un libro corto que te ayude a despejar tu mente, éste es la mejor opción.

Mi opinión con los libros de R.L. Stine sigue siendo que son predecibles, pero no por eso dejan de ser buenos. En esta historia, nos encontramos con "la canguro" o "niñera", la cual es una chica que, aunque por un motivo sumamente raro, acepta cuidar de un niño que se encuentra perdido en el centro comercial.

La chica desde un principio se muestra perdida, asustada y con miedo a que algo le suceda, por lo cual ya sabemos que todo estará mal. A eso debemos sumarle que en la ciudad se han estado cometiendo asesinatos con las niñeras, que por lógica, nuestra protagonista también podría ser víctima de ello. Es así como vamos descubriendo una situación de tensión y ganas de escapar, después de raros actos que comienzan a suceder en casa, así como secretos y acciones que salen a la luz.

Se presentan diferentes personajes, todos para que jueguen con el factor de "quizá sea este o éste", pero si eres fan del género y sabes cómo distinguir, te darás cuenta rápidamente de a quién debes estar observando y el porqué de las cosas. Aquí debemos agregar que el niño al que se cuida tiene papeles fundamentales, pues debo admitir que a veces él me daba más miedo que las mismas situaciones en sí.

Debo a que se sitúa en épocas pasadas, se puede encontrar rápidamente referencias en cuanto a la vestimenta,

forma de hablar y lo que en aquél entonces, se consideraba como una leyenda urbana popular, que era la de “el asesino de canguros”.

La historia me gustó bastante, no tiene 5 estrellas debido a que es predecible. Tiene algunos clichés, pero no son obsesivos y el peso de la trama se pone cada vez mejor. Recomendable, siempre y cuando no lo mires con ojos de ser demasiado crítico.

Tania (Real-Listen-Feel) says

3.5 stars

Chronique à venir...

Kirsty says

It's the O.G. R.L.! Just re-read this for Episode 9 of the Teenage Scream podcast (lovingly dissecting the best and worst of 90s teen horror). Listen here, or subscribe on your podcast app:

<https://soundcloud.com/teenagescream>

Michael says

Teenager Jenny Jeffers has just found herself a new job, a twice-a-week evening gig sitting for the Hagans after a chance encounter at the local mall. It's just what she needs: autumn's arrived, the weather's turning nasty so outdoor activities are pretty much out, and she can use the money she earns to help her mother with the bills. It doesn't hurt that little Donny is fun to be around and cute as a button.

"Hi, Babes."

Not everything is ideal though. For one thing, the Hagans have just bought an old home on the far side of town, meaning a long bus ride for Jenny to get out there, and an equally long car ride home from Mr. Hagan every night when they get home. The family's working on renovating the place, but they're far from finished, leaving much of the house creepy, creaky, and darker than Jenny might like.

"Are you all alone?"

Jenny's always had an overactive imagination, and it's gotten her into trouble in the past, but when the phone calls start, not even she can deny something weird is going on. Who's the mysterious caller who seems to know her every move, who phones her up after Donny's in bed to taunt her in a sinister, raspy whisper.

"Are you all alone in that big old house?"

Jenny's new crush Chuck is quite the practical joker, and he knows her schedule, but he swears it's not him.

The Hagans' creepy next door neighbor has certainly been keeping an eye on the place, but every time Jenny confronts him, he tells her he's just watching for prowlers. Is Jenny's over-active imagination working overtime to entertain a harmless telephone prankster as the police suspect, or has she caught the attention of the same maniac who's been attacking babysitters all over town?

"Well, don't worry, Babes. Company's coming."

The Hagans always tell Jenny to keep the windows shut, the curtains closed, and the doors locked, but not even that will keep her safe when her would-be company shows up as promised.

* * * * *

'The Babysitter' is simple, easy-to-read escapist fiction. As part of Scholastic's Point Horror series, it's aimed at the teen and young adult crowd of the late 80's and early 90's. Modern-day readers may struggle with the lack of caller ID, absence of cellular phones, and needing the operator to connect one to the local police department, but if the reader can overlook this, it's an enjoyable enough story written eight years before *Scream* had audiences deciding to just let the calls go to voice mail.

(Personal confession: though his voice is described as a raspy whisper, I couldn't help but read each of Jenny's prank caller's lines in Roger Jackson's perfectly creepy over-the-phone voice from *Scream*...what can I say, I'm a 90's kid.)

Stine's plots are never terribly complex, and this one's just as straightforward as normal. It relies a bit too much on a couple of bone-headed decisions by the main character to build tension, and while Jenny at least has the sense to contact the police once things start escalating, the cops also refer her to a different department and dismiss her concerns by telling her that people who make prank calls very rarely follow through with the threat. This despite Jenny being a babysitter in a town where someone stalking babysitters has made it into the newspaper after multiple assaults on young women. You'd think they could at least send out a patrol car or something.

Jenny's also hesitant to tell her mom about the harassing calls, which isn't terribly realistic behavior, no matter how much Stine tries to justify it by having Jenny worry her mom will think she's making a mountain out of a molehill again. Looked at critically, Jenny's a terrible protagonist since the entire story revolves around things happening to her instead of her trying to take charge, but I can also excuse this since she's likely used to the adults in her life handling the heavy lifting, and she's completely out of her element at the Hagans' place.

What I have a much more difficult time excusing is that Jenny's mother talks her into keeping her job at the Hagans' house even after all the harassing phone calls. I get that money's tight, but damn, that's heartless. I took on the occasional babysitting job as a teen myself, but I know for a fact if I'd brought up any concerns I had with the jobs to my mom, she'd have been on the phone to the parents and they'd work together to come up with a plan or resolve the issue. Jenny's mother, on the other hand, is about as hands-off as you can get when it comes to her daughter's problem. True to life? Maybe? I guess there are parents like that, but it's not my experience.

One thing Stine's particularly good at is leaving the reader with enough options that it's hard to pin down the person responsible, but a careful reader will suss out the phantom phone caller after one key piece of evidence is revealed a little more than halfway through the story. Once you figure it out, it's just a matter of following the story to its natural conclusion, although it's a conclusion that leads to one enormous problem I

had once the stalker is revealed and dealt with. Discussing it would lead to a pretty serious spoiler, but chances are you'll have the same question I did about one character in particular and that character's actions given their knowledge of the situation. I recognize that I'm reading this as an adult though, and I doubt it's something my teenage brain would have caught or bothered with, so I can't hold it against the story too much.

Overall, I'm content to give 'The Babysitter' three out of five stars. There's nothing technically wrong with it, and it's a quick read that does what it sets out to do. Though the ending doesn't seem very open-ended, Stine somehow figured out a way to get three sequels out of this idea, and I'm curious enough to see how he handles it that I've gone ahead and picked up books two and three. Not a bad first book finished for 2018, all things considered.

Best scene:

Jenny arrives at the Hagans' house one evening to discover Donny's all hyped up to watch the video mom and dad rented for him. What, I hear you ask, did Mr. and Mrs. Hagan bring home for their precocious little son? Surely it was *Transformers*, or *E.T.*, or *The Goonies*, something like that, right?

Nope. Jenny and Donny settle in to watch freakin' *Poltergeist*. Wait, what?! I know it got a PG rating, but who lets their six year old kid watch a movie about an old house built on a Native American burial ground that sucks family members into hellish alternate dimensions via the TV? R.L. Stine's finest parenting tips, ladies and gentlemen: traumatize 'em when they're young, and they stay yours forever!

Shut up. I laughed.

Lindsey says

I used to love these books and I was so excited to find this at a used book store and take a walk down memory lane. Unfortunately, all I could think was "who in the world can afford a babysitter twice a week?"

Ken says

Jenny starts her new job babysitting Donny, but with a Babysitter attacker being reported in the news it makes her even more nervous on her first day.

Stine really has fun with the jump scares here, most of the cliffhangers are weakly resolved - but that's the fun part with these books.

All the classic tropes are used with creepy anonymous phone calls, a cat jumping out at Jenny and the obnoxious young boy.

I really enjoyed revisiting this one.

Elisabeth says

i could not put this book down. from begining to end it kept me hooked. i couldnt wait to see what would happen to the main characters. its as if their fears were my fears!

Alejandro says

Cool reading!

HAZARDOUS JOBS!

It wasn't what I was expecting, since I thought that it would be a slasher story, and instead it resulted in a mystery tale...

...but that wasn't something bad at all!

I thought that it would something like the movie, *When a Stranger Calls*, and since it was my first book of the *Point Horror* line, I wasn't sure if this one would be bloodier than *Goosebumps*, but since the book was by R.L. Stine, I think that it was just what I should expect...

...clever, with good ambiance and one heck of entertaining!

Sometimes, readers are unfair with books (or a book series) since some of them have a clear style, and if you take this book expecting to be something like *It* or *The Shinning*, and later they gave it a negative rating, well, I think that it's unfair, since maybe the book isn't that bad, it was just that they picked the wrong book for their particular interest on reading in that moment.

For me, this was a very good reading, since I was looking for something quick to read and with good narrative...

...and kept me guessing who was the villain, and even fooled me! So, it was just what I was looking for, even if it wasn't exactly what I thought first.

So, if you decide to take such hazardous job like baby-sitting (at least, you can bet that in a novel, TV series or movie, it won't be a simple work!), follow the rules...

...lock the doors.

...don't invite friends over (even less boy/girl/friends!)

...don't answer the phone!!!

Bwa-ha-ha-ha!!!

Shannon says

I found the books in this mini-series for cheap at Half Price and decided to read them now that I have all of them. This was just an 'ok' R.L. Stine book. It was creepy, but nowhere near the best I've read. I actually liked the cast of characters. Jenny was a fun main character and I liked how she was always so paranoid about things going on. It reminded me of myself, since I have an overactive imagination. The little boy Donny that she babysat was meh. He got on my nerves a bit and made me remember why I never wanted to watch other people's kids. I had a love-hate relationship with Chuck. At times, he was cute and I felt bad that Jenny was being mean and rejecting him. Then, there were times where I wanted to punch him in the face for being obnoxious and I didn't blame Jenny for getting irritated at him.

The buildup of suspense with the creepy phonecalls and stuff was really good, but the ending was what killed it for me. I just didn't like it much and I felt kind of let down. I wish that there would have been more of an explanation about (view spoiler). I finished reading the last page, and I was like, 'Really? That's it?'. I also couldn't believe that (view spoiler).

Louise says

3/5 Good short horror :)

Kyley? says

Read this during Halloween because I wanted something a little spooky!

I was let down a little because I was expecting this to be a lot creepier than it was, but it was still a quick fun read!

I didn't like the main character at all. She was really annoying and was kissing a guy that she thought could be her stalker... Who does that??

Nothing really happened until the last 25 pages and I didn't like the way it ended.

I was thinking of giving it a lower rating but I didn't, due to the fact that I did enjoy the writing style! I just wish the story would have been more put together.

Liliana says

Reviewed on Lili Lost in a Book

The Babysitter was a pretty good book, overall. I was a big fan of the classic premise—recent attack on babysitters... OMG is Jenny next?!—and mystery of it all. I was also imagining Jenny babysitting on Fear Street, because that would just be the perfect setting for this! But alas, this is not a Fear Street book.

I loved Jenny and her super overactive imagination! It was just so fun to be inside her head and see how her mind worked as she came up with all these insane scenarios. For example, before her first night of babysitting, she was freaking out a bit because she didn't know the family. I mean, what if the kid was a

monster, what if the parents are weird, what if the family is in some secret cult and when Jenny finds out they lock her up in the basement for the rest of her life so she can't tell anyone?! What if the house is haunted by a ghost girl trapped in the attic and Jenny accidentally sets her free then the ghost inhabits her body and is never the same again?! Seriously, these were the things going through her head and I totally loved it!

And then we have Chuck, who is relatively new in town, and a potential love interest for Jenny. Initially, I actually liked him because he was just really funny and an overall fun guy. But then he pulled an awful prank on Jenny that was totally NOT funny! What a jerk!

But overall, I really enjoyed the read! It had a really creepy atmosphere and tons a tension with the creepy calls and threats. As for the mystery behind these threats, well, I had an idea, but the reveal still got me. This character was super weird to begin with, but damn, I didn't know how off the rails this person was! It has an insane ending but I just don't know how Jenny didn't see it sooner!

I am looking forward to reading the rest of the series, because apparently, these horrible babysitting experiences aren't over for Jenny just yet. Poor Jenny...

Nessell Axtell says

The Babysitter, is about a young babysitter who discovers she is the next victim of a notorious babysitter attacker. The ending will shock you and leave you afraid to stay alone ? It was a great book, so good I just couldn't put it down and wanting to know what happens next! I would definitely recommend it to girls that are a fan of thriller books. This book gets a bit scary at the end; impossible to guess, I wasn't expecting it! If you read this book you might want to read The Babysitter 2 and The Babysitter3.

Sanara♥ says

1.75/5 stars.

I did not like the female lead at all. She just panics for every single thing, even before she gets the creepy phone calls. Also who in this world kisses someone who they think is stalking and trying to scare them?? O.o Makes no sense.

The story is messy and overall not realistic, but still it was bearable since it's a quick read.
