



Baby-sitters' European Vacation

Ann M. Martin

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Kristy, Abby, Mal, Jessi, and Stacey are off to London and Paris--with some very special side trips along the way--in this thrilling, 240-page super special that's packaged with three special friendship rings! .

Baby-sitters' European Vacation Details

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From Reader Review Baby-sitters' European Vacation for online ebook

Ciara says

the last of the super specials! the end is in sight! though it's kind of amazing that they managed to make a trip to london & france so boring.

picking up where mary anne & the playground fight left off, some of the babysitters are preparing for their school trip to europe, while the others are staying in stoneybrook to work on the playground play group thing. kristy, abby, stacey, mallory, & jessi are going to europe. mary anne, claudia, dawn, & logan are staying put.

let's get the playground shit out of the way first. claudia is upset because one of the counselors had to drop out, & the head counselor, janine's ex-boyfriend jerry, drafted janine to take her place. for some reason, claudia doesn't think janine will be a good counselor & she is worried that janine will spend all summer bossing her around. which is pretty much exactly what happens. jerry makes some joke about janine giving claudia preferential treatment, so janine starts coming down like a ton of bricks on claudia for all kinds of stupid shit, like having the kids do papier mache projects. finally claudia confronts janine, & janine says that she's been hard on claudia because jerry is being hard on her. claudia thought jerry chose janine to be a counselor in an effort to woo her back into a relationship, but he's actually been a real dick to her. when janine organized some math & science games for campers, jerry made fun of her & told her it was an inappropriate activity for kids, even though a lot of the kids were having fun. janine confronts jerry & he backs down, & then janine is nicer to claudia. it's...kind of confusing, really.

cokie mason was also selected as a counselor, apparently because her parents are friends with someone on the parks & rec board, which is overseeing the playground camp. cokie predictably sucks as a counselor & spends most of the summer flirting with logan, much to the consternation of both logan & mary anne. i've said it before, but i'll say it again: it really bothers me that we are supposed to believe that cokie has a crush on logan when mary anne & the bad luck mystery was all about cokie interfering in their relationship because her best friend, grace, had a crush on logan. the babysitters are always referring to the bad luck mystery plot as evidence that cokie once tried to break up logan & mary anne so she could steal logan for herself, & that's not what happened at all! i guess cokie makes a better villain than grace? i don't know. anyway, eventually cokie cottons on to the fact that logan isn't interested, & she quite playground camp.

janine was supposed to be a counselor for a special camp for special needs kids. they hired someone else when janine left to do the playground camp. one day their counselor is absent, so dawn is sent in her stead. she watches susan felder (from kristy & the secret of susan) play piano & get a hug from a hug machine. it couldn't be more boring. i also have to question the wisdom of stuffing a bunch of kids into a special camp just because they have various disabilities. there are autistic kids, kids with down's syndrome, kids with muscular dystrophy--a huge variety of kids with different needs & different abilities. seems kind of insensitive & ignorant about the realities of disability.

in europe, the stoneybrook kids are touring with kids from another middle school in canada. kristy meets a kid named michel & decides she hates him. they are constantly teasing each other & annoying each other. at one point, they get separated from their tour group in paris & have to go off on their own. it's the "plan B" the schools have set up--if anyone is separated from the group, they'll fly solo & meet back up with everyone at the eiffel tower at 5pm. because allowing two 13-year-olds wander around paris on their own for five

hours is totally safe. kristy tries to strike out on her own, but fails because she doesn't speak french. michel does. so they stick together & realize they like each other. as in, they LIKE each other. at the end of the trip. michel visits kristy in her hotel room (in what world would that be allowed? i guess a world in which teenagers have only smooth areas instead of genitalia) & they kiss.

we are supposed to believe that abby has a special relationship with victoria kent, even though they only got to know each other at the party victoria threw right before she went back to england. the babysitters visit victoria's house & victoria invites abby to accompany her to a special reception at which victoria will present flowers to the queen. abby does so--she has been really pumped about the possibility of meeting the queen since she found out she was going to london. because, you know, that happens. random americans go on vacation & meet the queen all the time! christ. anyway, abby does not meet the queen, but she does accidentally step on the foot of a prince. she really wants a photo of the incident...because a photo of you stepping on someone's foot is going to be really fascinating? it's dumb.

stacey accidentally takes the wrong bag at the airport. the bag she grabbed is full of old man's clothes & an urn containing human cremains. mrs. mcgill (who is a chaperone for the trip) gets in touch with the old man, who asks stacey to bring his bag to him in paris. he explains that he's a world war two vet & the cremains are those of an old army buddy who recently died & wanted his ashes to be scattered at normandy, where they stormed the beach during the war. stacey is all grossed out until she visits a wartime museum in london. suddenly the war seems more real to her & she really feels for this old dude & his buddy who risked their lives to stop the nazis or something. when the tour group gets to paris, stacey does the hand-off & then invites herself along for the ash-scattering. old dude agrees, which seems ridiculous to me. it's kind of a private moment, guys. & didn't the dead guy have family? wouldn't they want to be there for this?

jessi learns that the dance new york group she was in in jessi's big break is doing a european tour & will be performing in london while they are there. she gets in touch & they send her a batch of complimentary tickets. she heads backstage to see everyone before the show, & of course, while she's back there, one of the younger dancers sprains an ankle. & her understudy is back at the hotel with food poisoning. the director says they'll have to scrap part of the show because they're down one dancer. that's when jessi jumps in & offers to dance the part. the director accepts & jessi does a great job. the performance is even filmed for the BBC.

the more i write about this book, the stupider it seems.

mallory has an older cousin that lives in london. they have never met, but mallory gets in touch & arranged a hang-out. turns out cousin gillian is a secret novelist. mallory is pumped because she writes too. gillian shows mallory a family tree she's been working on, which indicates that mallory's mom's side of the family is descended from william shakespeare. mallory is delighted. when the tour group goes to stratford-upon-avon, mallory actually notes that she hasn't been spreading the news about her famous ancestor because she doesn't want the other kids on the tour to treat her any differently. um. i don't think you need to worry about that, dude. mallory starts working on a story about a girl in modern times who goes to sleep one night & wakes up in olden times as shakespeare's daughter. man, would that suck. mallory is all focused on frilly dresses & linen curtains & doesn't stop to consider things like bubonic plague, lack of women's rights, & the smell of sewage in the streets.

so that's that. pretty dumb.

Samantha says

The last super special, and potentially the worst. It was more convoluted than usual, which is saying a lot for a BSC book. Meeting the queen (sort-of)? Getting lost in Paris and having the chaperones be cool with it? Janine Kishi volunteering for something that involves being outside all summer? I don't buy any of this! I CALL SHENANIGANS!

April says

Fantastic books for young girls getting into reading!! Great stories about friendship and life lessons. The characters deal with all sorts of situations and often find responsible solutions to problems.

I loved this series growing up and wanted to start my own babysitting business with friends. Great lessons in entrepreneurship for tweens.

The books may be dated with out references to modern technology but the story stands and lessons are still relevant.

Awesome books that girls will love! And the series grows with them! Terrific Author!

Shira says

this is my first time reading this book!

in this FINAL MAIN SERIES SUPER SPECIAL (I'm so close to the end of these books! aaaahhh!) by ghostwriter Peter Lerangis, some of the babysitters go on the sms-hosted trip to london and paris, while the others stay in stoneybrook to work at the playground camp referenced in Mary Anne and the Playground Fight. the framing device for the book is that jessi is making a travel journal for mary anne, dawn, and claudia, since they're stuck in stoneybrook. don't ask me why mary anne, dawn, and claudia narrate chapters in the travel journal, but whatevs. see the narrator character plotlines before (all bsc members, with one chapter narrated by stacey's ex boyfriend robert).

character plotlines:

stacey: accidentally took the wrong luggage at the airport and finds that the luggage she took has cremains in it. she can't decide whether she's more horrified by the cremains or by having to wear clothes she borrows from other people. turns out the cremains belong to a wwii veteran whose friend was going to scatter them on the beach at normandy, because they were in d day together. stacey helps him out and has a meaningful experience thinking about veterans and how tough they've had it.

mal: hangs out with her english cousin gillian who is a writer. finds out she's a descendant of shakespeare due to gillian's family tree and spends the rest of the book writing (a very mal plotline)

kristy: has a will-they, won't-they thing with a canadian boy, michel. they end up getting lost from their group in paris and spend an afternoon together and bicker so much until they finally kiss.

jessi: goes to see david brailsford's dance team (from Jessi's Big Break) perform in london. one of their dancers sprains her ankle and the understudy has food poisoning. conveniently enough, they're doing a dance that jessi knows, so they ask her to step in and she does well. see lowlights for my thoughts on this.

abby: victoria kent is supposed to present flowers to the queen and asks abby to stand with her for it. then

she steps on the prince's shoe and a photo is taken of it and published in local papers.

robert: jacqui is still obsessed with him (as she has been in Stacey and the Stolen Hearts and Stacey's Ex-Boyfriend) and being grossly flirty ("we don't have to tell stacey, you know." "about what?" "you know. about us!" ewwww!) but robert finally is a jerk to her and she backs off.

claudia: (in stoneybrook) works at playground camp. janine works there too and is super controlling towards her. turns out it's because her ex boyfriend jerry, who is also working there, is being a jerk to her, so she bottles up her grumpy feelings and unleashes them unintentionally on claudia. finally, egged on by claud, she stands up to jerry.

dawn: (in stoneybrook) works at playground camp. one day she subs at sunshine gang, a camp for kids with developmental and intellectual disabilities. susan (from Kristy and the Secret of Susan) is there and has a temple grandin hug machine which freaks dawn out. they don't say temple grandin's name but they reference her specifically.

mary anne: (in stoneybrook) works at playground camp. cokie is bad at her job and mary anne has to pick up the slack. that's basically it.

highlights:

-alan gray gets stopped by security at the airport for acting suspicious on purpose. this is so pre-9/11. like, post 9/11 he would've been detained for so long as to miss the flight and maybe would've still been arrested. but also it's so alan gray and he's just so precious.

-they're on a trip with a canadian school: zehava berger junior high. they don't explicitly stay that it's a jewish day school, but do they even have to? I go to ??????????????????

-the stoneybrook kids say something about how they do things in america and michel says that canada is part of america too and that they live in a country called the united states. BOOM. nobody ever addresses this in anything, but it needs to be addressed. the country is the united states of america. the americas include many countries. it's super ethnocentric to call the united states "america" when it's just not.

-when writing my rant below about jessi's ridiculous coincidental luck, I realized something. one of the dancers sprains her ankle and another has food poisoning. is there any chance jessi gave the understudy some expired tapioca and told the dancer the nearest bathroom was just past the extremely slippery, recently waxed hallway? COULD JESSI HAVE ORCHESTRATED HER OWN DEBUT BY SABOTAGING OTHER DANCERS? she has way more ambition than, like, anyone else in any of these books, so I definitely buy it. now I'm rethinking the conclusion of Jessi and the Dance School Phantom...

lowlights/nitpicks:

-the biggest problem with the book is how preposterous and coincidental everything is. it's like when I'm talking about how jem and the holograms is a fantasy show and it has nothing to do with the fact that jerrica has magical earrings that turn her into the truly outrageous hologram jem, but actually it's just that jem wins the freakin' indy 500 the first and only time she ever tries to compete in it, without ever practicing or anything. and how she gets nominated for best actress at the academy awards even though she's never acted before and is in a crappy cheesy movie. this book is like jem and the holograms, but not in a charming way. jessi conveniently is in the right place at the right time so that when one of the dancers gets hurt and the understudy has food poisoning, jessi gets asked to step in last-minute. and she does so, and she does well? SERIOUSLY? that kind of crap doesn't happen in real life. abby wants to meet the queen and then coincidentally is asked to come to an event where she will see the queen by a princess that she knows for no real reason other than she happened to live in her podunk connecticut town for a while? HUH? stacey grabs the wrong luggage and it has FREAKIN CREMAINS IN IT? NO WAY, DUDE.

-jessi says abfab (absolutely fabulous) is british slang for a good thing. is it actually? I'm pretty just it's just slang for patsy and edina getting sloshed and acting like this:

-stacey makes a fawlty towers reference. really? even for someone as "cultured" as she, I just can't imagine a

13-year-old in 1998 making a fawlty towers reference.

-the chaperones from sms are stacey's mom and an english teacher, mr. dougherty. that's too few if you ask me, but whatever. anyway, dougherty is flighty and keeps wandering off and waxing poetic and is just the worst. it's frustrating to read, and nothing really comes of it. poor mrs. mcgill.

-in london they go to see shenandoah, the musical. but it's about the us civil war. I don't think it ever ran in london, and I can't imagine it ever would.

-shakespeare is nobody's great-grandparent! he had one grandchild who never had kids. so the whole mal plotline is impossible.

-they see a portrait of susanna hall (shakespeare's daughter) and she looks just like gillian (mal's cousin). really? even if she were susanne hall's great great great (etc) granddaughter (which I've already told you is impossible) then it would be weird for them to look exactly alike. unless they only ever married their siblings, in which case I guess they would look the same but mal would probably have extra fingers or something.

-abby: "(the queen) was escorted by a guy I recognized. Prince Something. I forget. He's been on the news." really? she recognizes the prince, but she doesn't know his name? looking at the photo, he looks to be the generation of charles, andrew, and edward, but doesn't look anything like them. here's the photo:

Chiara says

lol had never read this one.

Logan Hughes says

The baby-sitters have adventures on a school trip to London and Paris, while others counsel at a playground camp back home.

In Europe, Kristy butts heads with a French-Canadian Alan Gray; Jessi meets up with her former dance troupe, Dance NY, on tour in London; Abby is excited to be invited to a royal event by former Stonybrook resident and actual princess Victoria Kent; Stacey gets her luggage mixed up with a WW2 vet who's taking a friend's ashes to Normandy; and Mallory becomes obsessed with a story she's writing and misses everything. In Stonybrook, Claudia feels picked on when her sister, Janine, becomes a counselor for the playground camp; Mary Anne and Dawn are also there.

Actually... for a Super Special... I liked it! I normally hate Super Specials because the plot is so fragmented, but somehow it managed to keep a lot of balls in air without making the individual plots feel rushed or boring. It felt MORE action packed than the usual BSC book, instead of LESS, as most Super Specials do. The pacing was better than usual. Each plotline was juicy enough to be interesting but simple enough to be told completely with a beginning, middle, and end in the few chapters allotted to it, and there were even some mini-plotlines, like Robert's chapter, that were self-contained. There were enough glimpses into the other plots in each thread to keep the momentum going for the background plots while focusing on each character's personal drama. The sin of "why is this girl telling this chapter when it's really about somebody else" was thankfully rare. And the book picked up several threads from past books, so it didn't feel completely out of continuity.

Of course, most of the plotlines were pretty unbelievable and more over-the-top than a normal BSC book; Abby meeting the Queen (sort of), Jessi performing on a London stage at the spur of the moment, Mallory finding out she's a descendent of William Shakespeare, etc. And there is zero thought given to how a school trip would actually be arranged, or whether kids this age would EVER have this much freedom to separate from the group and do their own thing, which seems to happen all the time. But the Super Specials are supposed to be big, wild adventures, so I don't really mind them taking place on a different plane of reality than the normal series. The book was supposed to deliver a European vacation, and by god, it hits all the marks! If you're going to make a big adventure book, I'd rather it be a rollicking good time than a bore, like the Disney propaganda that was the cruise adventure. And it's not like there weren't also lower-key stories, like Claudia and Janine learning to work together, and Stacey befriending a WW2 vet (for some reason).

Author Gratefully Acknowledges: I can tell without looking it up that this is a Lerangis. It has Peter Lerangis's fingerprints all over it. The juicy, action-and-romance-packed plotlines. The willingness to be a little "out there." The edgy, pre-YA themes and language. Most BSC ghostwriters err on the side of inoffensiveness, but Lerangis doesn't mind throwing in a little more of the adult world, be it a car accident (thankfully there wasn't one in this one) or a mention of terrorists (explaining TSA procedures). Lerangis doesn't care if the book causes a young girl to ask "Mom, what's a terrorist?" Other key Lerangis tipoffs include background adult drama, sentences. Separated. By. Periods. For. Emphasis, and humor that is actually pretty funny.

Timing: Summer vacation, obvs.

Revised Timeline: First summer after college graduation. Prime backpacking through Europe time, I guess. And, of course, prime time for half of your friends to say, "uhhhh I can't afford that I have to work."

Carolyn says

I thought maybe I had read this book, but starting out, I wasn't so sure. A BSC adventure to Europe, how could I forget that?!? The story slowly, but surely, did come back to me. But in reading this book, there was hardly any mention of London, then at the very end, they explored France, so we finally got a bit more! So that's probably why I didn't remember their trip. A lot of it was going back and forth between a few of the girls being in Europe, and the rest of the girls back home helping run the Playground Camp. I loved reading about the Chunnel, and they sightseeing they did in Paris, though, which reminded me of the trip I went on--I saw the same things!

I started reading reviews of this book, and then had the shock of my life! If you are a die-hard BSC fan, maybe you knew this, but I had no idea. The last few books were written by ghost writers, not our beloved Ann M. Martin. WHAT?!? It's true, I even found a web site BSC community, which had a lot of good information. Check it out here.

There was a tv show based on the books on the Disney Channel?? I feel a whole new world has just been revealed to me! To find out which books are written by ghost writers, she lists them in the acknowledgement on the first page. This one was written by a *boy*! Sigh. I could tell, this just didn't quite have the style, and talk-ative phrases a good Ann M. Martin book would have had. BSC, you were always good to me--thanks for the memories!

Christina says

Ah. BSC. I don't know why I thought of this today, but what I remember most is that I can't do a french accent and Kristy/Sarah got to kiss the French-Canadian Michel on top of the Eiffel Tower. It remains the best group-read-aloud-book-time I have ever experienced. Fond memories.

Leah says

The only *Super Special* that I didn't like. This one was boring, and it shouldn't have been. Half of the BSC goes to London and Paris. The other half stay in Stoneybrook, which was also boring. I just wasn't surprised about that part of the story. Kristy, Stacey, Jessi, Mallory, and Abby go to London and Paris. It is a school trip and includes a middle school in Canada. Kristy begins a romantic relationship with one of the Canadian students, Michel. Stacey meets a WWII veteran. Mallory meets some of her relatives. Abby almost meets royalty. Jessi dances in London. Mary Anne, Claudia, Dawn, Logan, and Shannon are in Stoneybrook. The remaining BSC members, minus Shannon, are working at playground camp, which is a local day camp. Dawn spends one day at a different camp. Claudia spends most of the time fighting with her sister, who is also working at the camp. Shannon is off doing something else in this book.

Debra says

For my written review, please check out the link below:

Debra's Book Cafe

Debs :-)

Kayla says

They sure travel a lot, don't they?

Lindsay Collett says

This one was published after I graduated high school, and long after I stopped reading the series, so this was my first time reading it. It was also my first introduction to Abby. It was pretty much what I expected, with the typical Super Special travel diary format that I remember from the SSs I did read.

Mostly, I was surprised that after all these years I still felt like skimming through the whole introduce-the-club review chapter. I was disappointed in the lack of clothing descriptions. How can Stacey write chapters without describing her "fashion forward" outfits? How can anyone in sight of Claudia fail to describe her unique style? The chapters felt very short, and it felt like each character's story was even shorter and not well developed. Since I didn't read this one as a kid, I'm not sure if all the SSs were like that or if it's just reading

this from an adult perspective? Otherwise, picking up these characters was like greeting an old friend.

Morgan says

This was cute! I was feeling nostalgic and the Babysitter's Club always helps. In this book some of the sitters go to Europe while the rest help out at a summer camp back in Stoneybrook. We get a different POV in each chapter, which I think really adds to the story.

Steph says

I read every BSC book as a kid - mostly 3rd and 4th grade - and while I was traveling through Europe this summer I thought it would be fun to read this one again.

Whhhhy was I reading this series as an 8-year-old?! Lol... so many teenage issues that I'm sure were over my head, so it's funny to look back! Still love the BSC girls and their adventures!

Alex says

I re-read this in anticipation of my upcoming trip to Europe. Unfortunately the girls are mostly in London, which I'm not visiting, and they definitely skimped on the Paris scenes, which I will be visiting and was looking forward to reading. For some reason I remembered this having a lot more details on the culture and food but I must have been wrong, because they were few and far between.

This is the last of the Super Specials and it's definitely the worst one. It's not a terrible book, but it doesn't even hold a candle to the other classic Super Specials.
