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A new passion for photography has Claudia snapping pictures everywhere she goes, including the Stoneybrook Bank, and when it is discovered that a robbery took place at the bank on the very same day, Claudia thinks her photos may contain evidence.

Claudia and the Clue in the Photograph Details

Date : Published November 25th 2014 by Scholastic Paperbacks (first published January 1st 1994)

ISBN :

Author : Ann M. Martin

Format : Kindle Edition

Genre : Fiction, Childrens, Middle Grade, Mystery, Young Adult, Realistic Fiction, Novels

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From Reader Review Claudia and the Clue in the Photograph for online ebook

Kate says

I think perhaps this book fueled my interest in photography in high school...

Jenny says

21/25
4 original
4 good topic
4 fast read
5 plot
4 opinion

Kerri says

Ciara says

it's STILL summertime in stoneybrook. this is the longest summer ever. & the warped timeline is really starting to freak me out. mallory & jessi meet & become friends at the beginning of the sixth grade year, & join the babysitters club soon after. but this is the summer both before & after they attend the sixth grade. ahhh! it's scaring me!

anyway, claudia is in summer school. even though she finished up summer school earlier in the summer, before she joined the other members of the babysitters club in sea city back in super special #10. but she was not in summer school in book #76, when she vacationed for two weeks on fire island with stacey & her dad. & what about back in super special #8, when she joined the thomas family & the babysitters club in shadow island? & the forthcoming super special (#14) in which the thomases & the schafers & the babysitters club (including abby) caravan across the country in RVs...?

okay, moving on.

claudia is in summer school. in addition to a remedial math course, she is taking photography just for fun. she loves it. her dad even helped her convert the bathroom she shares with janine into a darkroom so she can develop her own photos.

this leads to someone in the club (or maybe it was buddy barrett) suggesting that the sitters get together with a bunch of charges & make a photo album for dawn. the theme will be "a day in the life of stoneybrook". the

kids will borrow cameras or buy cheap instant cameras & fan out across town to photograph the interesting events of a single day in order to entice dawn into coming back to stoneybrook. it's not that interesting. & this plot has really not aged well, what with the advent of digital cameras & everything. oh well.

so they take photos. it's a sunday. claudia joins one group of kids downtown. she kind of goes nuts taking photos of the facade of the stoneybrook bank. mary anne thinks claudia is being silly, taking photos of boring building, & jokingly snaps a few photos of claudia taking photos.

a few days later, at a babysitters club meeting, there is a breaking news bulletin on the radio. apparently someone has robbed the stoneybrook bank of several hundred thousand dollars. police & bank officials are baffled because there wasn't, like, a heist or anything. i'm wondering if this is really the kind of thing they would announce on the radio. aren't they afraid it will cause a panic & that people all over stoneybrook will rush to close their accounts & stuff their money under their mattresses instead?

the sitters are like, "what if the robbery happened while we were outside the bank taking photos?" but they agree it's pretty unlikely, since it was a sunday & the bank was closed & everything. a few days later, there's a news report on the radio announcing that the money went missing on sunday between 1pm & 4pm-while the sitters were there with their cameras. pretty fucking convenient, huh? claudia rushes to develop her photos but there is nothing suspicious in them. just a dude in a suit & a woman with a baby carriage.

the sitters decide the the guy in the suit & the woman with the carriage are their only suspects right now. they decide to stake out the bank to see if the culprit returns to the scene of the crime. they spot the woman with the carriage right away. she is all shifty & angles the carriage away from them so they can't check to see if there's actually a baby in it. claudia actually suggests that it might be full of moneybags instead, prompting a, "that's pretty unlikely," from stacey. i'll say. anyway, finally claudia distracts the woman by dropping quarters all over the street & whips the blanket off the carriage to discover...a baby. the woman catches claudia in the act & is pissed & storms off. way to go, claud.

that leaves suit guy. shannon learns that the dude is the vice president of the bank & his name is mr. zibreski. they tail him to lunch but he doesn't say anything incriminating, like, "i robbed my own bank." a dead end.

a few days after that, claudia remembers that she shot a few more photos of the bank that day, which are on an unfinished roll of film in her camera. she rushes to develop it, but someone opens the darkroom door & wrecks the film. claudia is blinded by the hallway light & doesn't see who it is. she rushes into the hall, but the person is already gone. no one is home & all the doors are locked.

dun dun dunnn!

of course claudia thinks that somehow mr. zibreski knows she's watching him, knows she took his photo, knows the photos have something incriminating on them, figured out where she lives, got inside her house without having to disturb anything, knew where her darkroom was, knew she was on the verge of developing the incriminating photos, opened the door & wrecked the film at the very last moment, & then spirited himself out of the house without leaving a trace.

sigh

the sitters take their photos to the police, but the police are like, "you want us to arrest someone for walking by the bank at the approximate time the robbery took place? hit the road, you little vagrants." all except sergeant johnson, who is all, "if you find anything more incriminating, like mr. zibreski holding a suitcase

full of unmarked bills, let me know." he also tells them that mr. zebriski is being investigated, & then gives them details about how the investigation is going (not well). because THAT'S professional.

the kids finish up their photo album for dawn. claudia stops by to help make some last-minute decisions about what photos to include...& finds a mysterious series of photos in which a woman in a jogging suit is withdrawing an enormous stack of bills from the bank ATM machine during the time the robbery happened. if they are hundreds, it is easily enough money to account for all the money that went missing. claudia thinks she may have cracked the case.

but she keeps coming back to the photos of mr. zibreski. finally she takes photos of some of the detail in the photos & blows them up big. she notices that mr. zibreski is wearing both a wristwatch & a pocket watch. & the pocket watch doesn't seem to work. claudia deduces that it doesn't work because there is a safe deposit box key hidden inside it, & that the missing money is in the safe deposit box.

the babysitters take these photos & claudia's theory to sergeant johnson, who just so happens to be interrogating mr. zebriski. he actually allows the babysitters into the interrogation room, where claudia lays out her theory. mr. zebriski cracks & confesses to everything, hands over the key, & tells them which box it's for. apparently he was obsessed with his "retirement years" & was stealing money to live on when he's old. o...kay. because that totally makes sense, right?

no word on what the fuck was up with the crazy photos of jogging suit lady & her ginormous stack of money. or how exactly the bank deduced that all the money went missing between 1pm & 4pm on sunday when in fact mr. zebriski has been stealing it in dribs & drabs for god knows how long. basically, once the mystery is solved, the entire plot of the book falls apart completely.

but dawn loves her photo album & says her "heart is in stoneybrook." shut up, dawn.

Samantha says

I really do not remember reading this one as a kid. So it's possible that I didn't. The mysteries were definitely not my favorites, because even back then I thought they were more ridiculous than even the basic BSC plots were. This one was especially bad, so either I totally shut it out of my mind or just avoided it all together.

I could probably go into the plot and talk about how insane this was, but I will spare you. And myself. Mostly myself. I can't rehash this, I just can't.

Shira says

this is my first time reading this book!

in yet another dumb mystery by dumb mystery aficionado/ghostwriter Ellen Miles, claud is taking a photography summer school class and is somewhat obsessed. the bsc and bsc kids decide to make a present for dawn, a book inspired by A Day in the Life of America, in which a group of people photograph things/happenings all around stoneybrook on a single day and compile the best ones. when claud hears about

a bank robbery that happened on the same day that she was photographing that bank, she tries to find evidence in her photos.

highlights:

-claud's photography teacher is named mr. geist. I'm just picturing this:

-a classic case of teaching the reader the basics of photography, developing, darkrooms, etc. claudia is so excited about it that she makes it interesting.

-the barretts have gotten a veritable menagerie of nonallergic pets in the wake of having to get rid of pow (see Claudia and the Perfect Boy), which is very cute

lowlights/nitpicks:

-janine ruins claudia's prints by going into the bathroom that's being used as a darkroom. this immediately after claudia says she is going to the darkroom. janine may be a total doogie howser, but she's an idiot.

-there are references to the barretts and dewitts that indicate that cynthia and franklin haven't gotten engaged yet. this means that in spite of the fact that this came out the same month as Dawn and Whitney, Friends Forever, this one MUST take place first. oops, read 'em out of order!

-how convenient that claud happened to find the facade of the bank so fascinating that she took many photos of it on the exact day that the robbery occurred!

-finally claud discovers that one of the bank managers is carrying a pocketwatch in the photos, and she sees that the time on it never changes so she realizes it's a fake. how did she accomplish this feat? thanks to the magical phenomenon of ZOOM AND ENHANCE! no joke. ellen, how in all your photography research for this book did you not discover that zoom and enhance is not grounded in reality?

claudia outfits:

-*"Staring back at me was a medium-height Japanese-American girl with almond-shaped eyes and long, black hair held back by a pink, star-shaped barrette. She wore a silky pink tank top with a man's white shirt tied casually over it, white jeans, and flip-flops decorated with more pink stars."*

-*"I dressed quickly, in jeans and my Hard Rock Cafe T-shirt."*

-*"That day I'd worn one of my favorite outfits to school: a lacy white shirt with big ruffled sleeves over a deep green leotard, with a short blue-jeans skirt and my favorite shoes (at least my favorite shoes that summer): big black chunky boots."*

-*"Since I knew I was going to be in the darkroom, I threw off all my good clothes and pulled on an old pair of shorts and my ancient green Sea City T-shirt."*

snacks in claudia's room:

-milky way beneath the pillow on her bed

-fritos (n.s.)

-three musketeers (n.s.)

-hershey's kisses in a box of pastels

-mallomars (n.s.)

-popcorn (n.s.)
