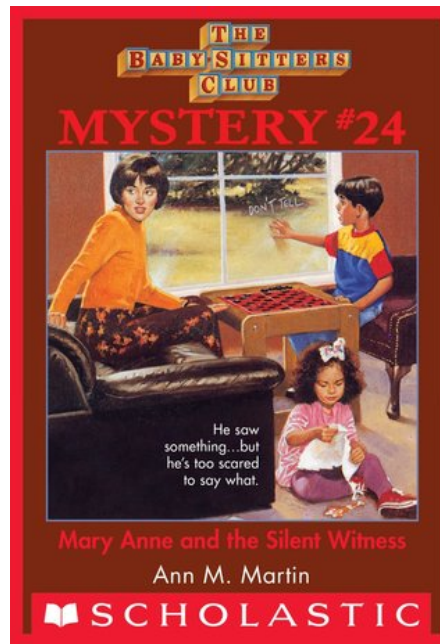




Mary Anne and the Silent Witness

Ann M. Martin

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Hoping to overcome the distrust of eight-year-old Luke, the Baby-sitters Club's newest charge, Mary Anne believes that Luke holds the key to a mysterious fire and a mean developer's plans to take over Stoneybrook.

Mary Anne and the Silent Witness Details

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From Reader Review Mary Anne and the Silent Witness for online ebook

Kat17 says

Ah, nostalgia :)

Conley Morris says

I like mysteries so I read this book. Its a good book and I will probly read it again. Its about a man who wants to take over the town by by building buildings over areas many people love. I liked the suspense of the book.

Samantha says

You have to be kidding me right now.

I have nothing more to say about this insanity.

Jenny says

23/25

5

4

5

5

4

Amy Holcomb says

The Baby-sitters Club series was my favorite growing up! :)

Alex says

This was kind of an odd BSC book, even for the mystery series. Still, it was fun to read.

Susie says

A great Baby-Sitters Club mystery. It includes new characters and a good plot. It was a fun read.

Logan Hughes says

[who is secretly twins (!!)] (hide spoiler)]

Ciara says

i hope that whoever made the choice to greenlight the babysitters club mystery series was fired. this book doesn't culminate in a couple of dudes in gorilla outfits snagging the bad guy, but it is ridiculous. it also got marked down for having mary anne as the narrator.

mary anne is reading the newspaper one morning, as 13-year-old girls are wont to do, & she reads an article about some new development proposed for miller's park. an evil rich dude named mr. fowler is behind the plans. in order to fulfill his vision, several homes along the periphery of the park will have to be bulldozed, including a house that recently caught fire. the house is more or less okay, but the cops are investigating the fire as a possible arson...which makes mary anne & the other babysitters wonder if mr. fowler could be the culprit. because that's how the world works: babysitters are good & talented detectives, while developers are evil & like to engage in arson.

at the next babysitters club, the owners of the recently burnt house call for a regular sitter for their two kids. they are the martinez family & their regular sitter recently quit. they need someone to fill in until they can replace her permanently. mary anne takes the first job, & nosily asks how the martinezes feel about the development plans. they are opposed & refuse to sell their house to fowler. also, their son, luke, seems to be feeling anxious after the fire. their daughter, amalia, is really too young to know what's going, but luke is cagey with mary anne but also won't let her out of his sight.

a creepy neighbor tells mary anne that he has sold out to fowler & is going to be pissed if the martinezes don't sell & end up wrecking the deal for everyone. cary retlin's family are also neighbors. luke is best friends with cary's little brother, steig. in fact, luke & steig run off into the woods one afternoon while mary anne is babysitting. cary takes amalia while mary anne looks for luke. she doesn't find him, but she does see someone who looks an awful lot like mr. fowler handing a wad of cash to a teenage boy, & then she finds a brick splattered with green house paint. she finds the brick at the same moment the cops find her. they were responding to a call about damage to the old mill in the park. someone smashed some windows & threw green paint everywhere. luke wandered home on his own, but mary anne is taken in for questioning.

luckily, sergeant johnson is there & he's all, "i know mary anne! she's no vandal! unhand her!" this guy is the worst cop ever. i mean, mary anne didn't do it, but all sergeant johnson is basing that on is thinking she's a good kid.

mary anne tells the other babysitters about all the weird shit going on: the man who looked like mr. fowler paying off the teenager, luke's strange behavior, a mysterious empty bag of tobacco in the martinezes'

backyard, the presence of cary retlin, the angry neighbor, etc. meanwhile, the babysitters club & mr. fowler are having a war of words in the letters section of the stoneybrook newspaper over the proposed development.

the babysitters start investigating & discover that mr. fowler has a twin brother. they do a little more sleuthing & figure out that he has changed his name & is living in the next town over. could he be behind the vandalism? is he doing it to thwart the development? or is he in cahoots with his brother, trying to...i don't know. make the local teens look bad or something. or maybe it's the neighbor, trying to scare the other homeowners into selling out. or maybe it's cary, being sneaky as always. or maybe luke is involved somehow. maybe he is being tricked or blackmailed into committing vandalism. he is getting creepy threatening phone calls during babysitting jobs, & menacing notes about "not telling" something.

the babysitters figure out that the martinezes' old sitter is a teenage girl attending stoneybrook day school. her name is allie & she's dating a neighbor of the martinezes' named beau. they swing by beau's house & find beau & allie out in the yard, smoking. the babysitters ask some pointed questions & manage to elicit a confession: beau had stopped by during one of allie's sitting jobs & he had been smoking in the garage. he tossed his cigarette when he was done, but it wasn't out & it set some old newspapers on fire. he & allie tried to put it out but couldn't. they panicked & messed with the evidence so they wouldn't get blamed. then allie quit because she felt so guilty. beau has been menacing luke into staying silent ever since, because he knows luke saw him smoking in the garage. allie didn't know beau was doing that. she also didn't know that mr. fowler's brother saw beau running away from the fire & has been blackmailing him into committing vandalism to try to stop the development.

with sergeant johnson's help, the babysitters organize a sting. beau invites mr. fowler's brother to the little cabin in the park, & the babysitters send an anonymous message to mr. fowler to also come to the cabin. to be honest, i don't totally remember how exactly this worked (it was really convoluted, in case you can't tell), but the brothers confront each other. the random twin admits that he's been arranging vandalism to thwart the development. he loves the park & wants it to stay as is. sergeant johnson arrests him, & mr. fowler is all, "haha! i have done nothing illegal & am free to go to the city council hearing & strong-arm the good people of stoneybrook into agreeing to my evil development scheme!" but when luke was playing in the woods, he found mr. fowler's long-term development plans, which make soviet-era urban planning look quaint & homey. the babysitters display the plans at the meeting & the whole town rises up against mr. fowler. he's all, "monorail!" & they're like, "hit the highway, lyndon larouche, & don't come back!" problem. solved.

Shira says

this is my first time reading this book!

in this book by mystery ghostwriter extraordinaire Ellen Miles, a local businessman is trying to pave paradise and put up a parking lot. reginald fowler wants to demolish the historically significant ambrose sawmill and nearby miller's park to create some kind of corporate complex. the bsc write letters to the editor saying that this would be wrong because miller's park is beautiful, and it turns into an elaborate town debate: development versus preservation. the bsc start regularly sitting for a new family who lives in miller's park when their previous sitter suddenly mysteriously quit immediately after there was a fire in their house. the son, luke, seems really mistrustful of babysitters and keeps getting threatening notes that say things like "don't tell." when trying to find luke one day after he runs off, mary anne hears someone throw a brick through a window at ambrose sawmill and sees reginald fowler talking to a teenage boy. mary anne gets caught holding the brick so she gets taken in to the police station for questioning (!) but is let go when sgt johnson vouches for her. mary anne says she saw reginald fowler but the cops say he's currently at a

convention in san francisco. weird. the bsc members find an empty tobacco package at luke's house and start to suspect that the fire might have been cigarette-related. they find the old babysitter's notebook with the initials BR in hearts written in it. they know she went to shannon's school, so they ask shannon about it knowing her name is allie and are able to track her and her boyfriend beau down. turns out allie and beau started the fire by accident by smoking in the garage (PSA alert!). beau was caught by reginald fowler and fowler said he would tell the authorities that beau set the fire if beau doesn't help him with tasks like throwing a brick through the window at the sawmill. the bsc do research at the library into reginald fowler and discover that he has a twin (who must have been the guy mary anne saw at the sawmill and who was blackmailing beau, since reginald fowler was out of town). beau has been the one threatening luke, but allie doesn't break up with him over it (sidenote: really? this guy is threatening a kid, and you want to keep dating him?). luke found a map when playing at the sawmill a while ago that is fowler's idea of what stoneybrook should look like which basically turns the entire town into a big industrial complex. the bsc come forward with that map, so the town decides to shut down fowler's plans.

highlights:

- I think this is the first reference to claud having a pebbles style hairdo (from the flintstones). I mostly associate this hairstyle with Claudia, Queen of the Seventh Grade.
- mary anne wonders what it will take to reach these kids on her first day sitting for them
- at one point abby has almost gotten luke to open up and says he can trust her and he says, "but you're a *baby-sitter!*" it's very overly dramatic and funny
- all members of bsc write letters to the editor of the paper about how fowler is destroying stoneybrook. kristy makes them use their bsc titles because it will seem "more impressive." oh kristy.
- the bsc get a letter that because of their hard work to preserve the sawmill and the park the area surrounding ambrose's sawmill will now be called baby sitters walk. it's a little preposterous, but it's okay, because it turns out it was a trick from our good friend cary retlin (who seems to only appear in mysteries, right?)

lowlights/nitpicks:

- there's a reference to there being history tied to miller's park but mary anne doesn't remember what it is. really? is this the same mary anne who recited the reese, maine guidebook in Baby-sitters' Haunted House?
- mary anne gets caught with the brick and gets taken in for questioning. then sgt johnson sees her and says she's not the person who threw a brick through the window at the sawmill because he knows her and she wouldn't do that. I know she's helped him out and all but that's kind of sketchy policework.

snacks in claudia's room:

- jelly beans (n.s.)
 - cracker jacks (n.s.)
 - marshmallows in her closet
 - pretzels (n.s.)
 - punch made of ginger ale with raspberry apple juice (n.s.)
 - twinkies (n.s.)
 - ring-dings (n.s.)
 - ranch-style doritos (n.s.) (note: I think they mean cool ranch)
 - cheetos (n.s.)
 - smartfood (n.s.)
 - snickers (n.s.)
 - fruit (n.s.)
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