



## Jessi and the Bad Baby-sitter

*Ann M. Martin*

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With Dawn in California and Mallory out sick, the Baby-sitters Club must recruit a new member, but the girls begin to wonder if the new girl they have selected fits the bill.

## **Jessi and the Bad Baby-sitter Details**

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## From Reader Review Jessi and the Bad Baby-sitter for online ebook

### Amie says

I don't own this book, and I don't think I read it as a kid because Wendy didn't stick around for later books. I tended to skip books that didn't seem to 'matter.' Anyway, I enjoyed it this time. I like to read books narrated by the younger members to get a feel for their perspective on the club and happenings. Three stars because Wendy could've been an associate member like Shannon & Logan, but I'm glad with the way her and Jessi's friendship continued.

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### Abbie says

I don't dislike Jessi's character, but I'm not fond of her either. When I read the BSC ten years ago I loved all books. Now, I kind of question a couple of things. Like, if their age range is from 11-13 why do they act like 16 year olds? I mean, Stacey has a boyfriend! I wasn't even allowed to find a boy cute at that age.

But anyway, I liked this book.

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### Shira says

#### **this is my first time reading this book!**

in this book by ghostwriter Suzanne Weyn the bsc is feeling a little lost since dawn moved to california for six months. mal is starting to get sick (foreshadowing her mono diagnosis in Get Well Soon, Mallory!), and with the bsc down two members, they are overworked and are looking for an additional member. jessi's new friend wendy seems perfect -- she loves babysitting and horse books, for goshakes. but she isn't willing to abide by kristy's borderline fascist rules, so it doesn't work out, and shannon ends up agreeing to temporarily be a full bsc member. meanwhile, margo pike has a secret: she's been shoplifting and playing with all her stolen tiny toys in her room.

highlights:

- at one point wendy is late to a sitting job at the pikes with jessi, and she explains that it was because she was looking after her neighbor's baby while the neighbor did phone selling. "all of a sudden she hit a hot streak and people were ordering stuff like crazy from her." hahahaha this is so weird and I love every bit of it.
- the margo shoplifting plotline is handled really well. she bursts into tears once she's found out, but you can tell up until then she feels really good about having a dirty little secret. I was so totally *that* kid.
- wendy ends up leaving on her own because she doesn't like the rules. I LOVE THIS SO MUCH. it's sort of like a non-frustrating version of the frank grimes episode of the simpsons: someone who is normal comes into the bsc and shows the reader how unusual their strictness is. I hate the frank grimes episode because I think suspending our disbelief with homer simpson is the only way to handle his outrageous plotlines, but in the bsc I love it because it grounds everything so well.

lowlights:

- jessi says that wendy likes horse books as much as she and mal do but hasn't read any by Marguerite Henry.

I call bullshit. what horse girl hasn't read Misty of Chincoteague?

-in an inane subplot, the bsc members and kids make a video for dawn, only to discover that she made a

similar video for them! what a leave it to beaver-tinged gift of the magi-style plotline! \*barf\*

-eventually shannon takes over for dawn. uh, why didn't this just happen before they bothered with trying to hire a new member?

claudia outfits:

-*"For example, today she was wearing an oversized white shirt under a black vest covered with a design of shiny beads. (She'd sewed the beads on it herself.) She wore neon green leggings and black ballet slippers (on which she'd sewn a matching bead design). From one of her pierced ears hung a dangling earring made from the same beads and on the other ear she wore a small green hoop earring."*

-*"Claudia wore hot pink stirrup pants and a fuzzy pink sweater that made a nice contrast with her neon green pads and helmet."* (skating outfit)

stacey outfit:

-*"Stacey looked cool as ever in jeans and a short brown leather jacket. Her helmet was black with silver streaks."* (skating outfit)

snacks in claudia's room:

-potato chips (n.s.)

-frosted cupcakes in the bottom drawer of her bureau

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### **Samantha says**

Why are Jessi books so boring? Also, sadly, this one barely even had anything to do with her. The poor kid.

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### **Rachel Brand says**

This was definitely one of the more fun BSC books involving Jessi. For some reason, her books just aren't always the most interesting, or discuss serious topics. Here, the BSC are struggling to fit in all their sitting jobs because Dawn has moved back to California, so they allow Jessi's friend, Wendy, to join the club. But Wendy doesn't like all the rules and is constantly turning up late. Fair enough, most eleven year olds wouldn't want to have to follow rules set by people only a few years older than them, but she also turns up late for a sitting job, which isn't good when a parent is relying on you. Eventually, Wendy decides that the club isn't for her but she and Jessi remain friends. The two sub-plots are that Margo has been caught shoplifting (quite uncharacteristic, but interesting enough) and that the kids are making a video to send to Dawn. The video was really amusing and it was quite touching to see how much everyone missed Dawn. All in all, one of the better later-series BSC books. Sometimes the ghostwritten books can fall a bit flat, but that wasn't the case with this one. And there's also a bit lead up to the next book, in which Mallory has glandular fever, which is one of the books that I remember quite vividly. Also, what is with the bright yellow cover? I'm sure none of the other books have covers quite this garish. 9/10

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### **Kate says**

Gasp! A teen baby-sitter who chews gum at meetings? Let me guess - she invites boys over and talks on the phone instead of watching the kids, too. Maybe after the BSC kicks her out, she can go star in a horror movie.

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### **Marian says**

Lookit, another babysitter in the 'Brook who doesn't happen to be part of the BSC. When Jessi brings Wendy into the BSC-fold after Dawn goes back to California for a visit, no one sits the new girl down and explains the nine-billion rules a BSC member must live by. Shock and surprise, Wendy breaks rules left and right and doesn't fit in with the club.

Which is actually refreshing. Doubly so the fact that while Wendy didn't cut it as a BSC member, Jessi still wants to be her friend and wants Wendy to be her friend as well.

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### **Alex says**

I still kind of legitimately love this one - mostly because of the "Snow White and the Seven Zorbs Unite with Captain Planet" play they put on for Dawn.

However, I never understood why they didn't just make Wendy an associate member? She's a great baby-sitter but can't stand the rigidity of the club, which I completely understand. So why not just call on her when she's needed? I guess she was late to jobs too, so maybe that wouldn't work, but it seems like it would have been a good solution.

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### **Maria Elmvang says**

I loved the video of the subplot! Wasn't too keen about the main plot though - seemed to show everybody from their worst side.

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### **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!

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### **Kim says**

How could someone NOT want to join the BSC?

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### **Jennifer says**

I actually never read a BSC book before! I am rating it 3 stars, cause I think that I would have really liked this series as a kid... I don't know why I didn't read these books (everyone else was! I read Sleepover Kids instead). My adult-self rates it lower since it really is fluff... and the title of this particular one is misleading. I was interested in what was considered a "bad baby-sitter", but the title should be changed to "bad club-member". The would-be member is really just guilty of getting to meetings late and taking on side jobs (without club approval). Oo. I don't think that I personally would have wanted to be in the BSC (too strict with too much time commitment), but I would have liked to read about all of their fun projects and situations.

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### **Ciara says**

i think this may the best jessi book. it's a shame that it has very little to do with jessi. i don't hate her character, i swear! her books are just mysteriously boring.

so, dawn has shipped off to spend six months living with her father in california, leaving the babysitters club short-handed. & now that school is back in session (for their tenth time through this grade), they are busier than ever. they rely on logan & shannon to take more of the extra jobs, but it's just not enough. everyone is struggling to balance their schoolwork, babysitting, & other responsibilities. & to top it off, mallory hasn't been feeling well & asks not to be scheduled for any jobs for a little while.

kristy suggests taking on another sitter on an at least temporary basis, until dawn comes back from california. jessi suggests her new friend wendy. they have been hanging out a fair amount recently (despite the fact that we have never heard of her before this book & will not hear anything more of her after this book), she likes to babysit, & she seems to be really good with kids. she helped jessi out with a chaotic job sitting for becca & squirt. kristy tells jessi to bring wendy to the next meeting.

of course, the next meeting is totally bananas. the phone is ringing off the hook, the babysitters are all shuffling their schedules around to cover each other's jobs & fit in the new calls, & they are trying to interview wendy to judge her fitness as a sitter to boot. kristy only manages to ask wendy a few basic questions, but wendy answers them well. but kristy remembers what happened the last time they let new sitters into the club without proper screening (book #3, when they were battling the babysitters agency). wendy will have to go on a supervised job with jessi before she is allowed into the club. they'll be sitting for the barretts together.

wendy is a little sluggish about getting to the job on time, which freaks jessi out, but once they are there, wendy is great with the kids. jessi reports back to kristy & wendy is voted into the club. but things

immediately go foul when wendy is late to a sitting job at the pikes. all the kids are home except for mallory & mrs. pike wants two sitters present. jessi ends up calling mary anne away from an important paper to fill in for wendy. wendy shows up about twenty minutes late & is all, "what's the big deal? i knew you would be here." when she sees mary anne, she makes up an excuse about being late because she had to do something at school. after mary anne leaves, wendy admits that she had another sitting job after school & couldn't leave until the job was over. i'm not sure why she wouldn't admit that in front of mary anne, because it makes her sound a lot more responsible than having to do some vague "something" after school. though jessi points out that all the members of the babysitters club are supposed to share their jobs around. they wouldn't have any clients if they all had private jobs. wendy protests that no one else knows her client & the baby won't go to just anyone...which is think is a fair point. it seems really unrealistic that every kid in stoneybrook is okay with being babysat by a revolving door of like nine different babysitters (counting associate members--more when you start adding people like wendy & abby to the mix). when i was a kid, i was a holy terror who hated being touched or talked to by anyone, including my parents, but especially babysitters. living in stoneybrook, with its loosey-goosey child care regime, would have been my worst nightmare.

anyway, wendy is again great with the pike kids & jessi tries to put wendy's lateness to the job & her private clients out of her mind. but when wendy shows up late to the next babysitters club meeting, & kristy confronts her about being late to the pikes' (mary anne had told her), the shit hits the fan. kristy jumps down wendy's throat over breaking the rules, & wendy protests that the rules are needlessly strict. she says she resents having to drop everything to come to club meetings three times a week, & she doesn't like the idea of handing her clients over to the club. kristy says, "you knew the rules when you joined," & wendy points out that actually, she didn't. the meeting she attended was so chaotic that no one got around to explaining the rules to her. all wendy knew was that jessi liked the club, & wendy liked jessi, so she thought the club must be cool. but she doesn't think it's a good match for her, so she quits. everyone is gobsmacked.

stacey says something about how "kristy finally met her match," & kristy is like, "yeah right," & is all disgusted with wendy. even though wendy was actually not a "bad babysitter" at all. she was a great sitter--she just didn't like all the rules involved in the babysitters club, which is pretty much the first time in the series that anyone has ever really questioned all of kristy's crazy dictatorial tendencies. jessi reflects on the fact that wendy & kristy have a lot in common, but kristy is a leader while wendy is a loner. um...wendy really doesn't seem like a loner at all. she seems like a well-adjusted, friendly, bright eleven-year-old who just doesn't want to commit to an after-school activity more rigid than the marine corps. that doesn't make her a "loner". (not that there's anything wrong with being a loner. i am one myself.)

jessi wonders if she & wendy can still be friends. she calls wendy when she gets home from the meeting, & wendy expects jessi to yell at her. but instead, they agree that they still want to be friends. & then we never hear anything about wendy ever again, because rule #37 of the babysitters club by-laws states clearly, "no outside friends." careful, jessi. you're already pushing things with all your ballet classes.

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### **Logan Hughes says**

The BSC is having trouble keeping up with business as they launch a new year without Dawn, and things devolve further as Mallory develops a mysterious lingering fatigue which makes her unwilling to accept new jobs until she feels better. Jessi introduces the club to her new friend, Wendy, who's great with kids and has neighborhood babysitting experience. She seems perfect, and does well on her test job. However, Jessi begins to regret her choice when Wendy earns Kristy's wrath with her constant lateness, both to meetings and jobs. Once, she leaves Jessi alone at the Pikes' when a better job comes up. She's unwilling to turn over

her previous regular clients to the club, which is against (possibly unwritten) club policy. She quits after a few weeks, stating that the club has too many rules, and Kristy is relieved that she doesn't have to fire her. Shannon swoops in at the last moment with a sudden gap in her schedule for a few months, allowing her to become a regular member until Dawn's return.

I like that this book doesn't villainize Wendy; she and Jessi stay friends even after she quits, and really, she isn't a bad baby-sitter. She just has understandable irreconcilable differences with the club. It would have been nice to see more of this main plot, which doesn't really get off the ground for about 100 pages, and less description of the complicated kid plot of a video the Barretts and other neighborhood children make for Dawn.

Lingering Questions: Why is the club so averse to taking on a new permanent replacement for Dawn? Kristy simply states that "Seven main members is plenty. Eight would be too many," but she doesn't say why. It seems like they have plenty of work to go around, and they're more in danger of overextending themselves than of not getting enough hours. Is there not enough space in Claudia's room? Even if they didn't want a permanent replacement, surely it would be easier, not harder, to find a temp. Club membership is a big commitment, but I can see plenty of kids willing to put in the effort for a few months, bank some cash, and bail in favor of sports or general bumming around when the weather gets nice. Or couldn't they just recruit, like, an army of associate members? Wendy would do fine at that, I feel.

Slash Watch: "I think Wendy has a really pretty face," Jessi asserts before describing her.

Timing: Fall of eighth grade (sixth for Jessi/Mal/Wendy), before Halloween; probably late September or early October.

Revised Timeline: I guess it would work a little better for my college theory if one of the older girls were making a new friend right now, but high school juniors can make friends just as easily as anyone else, I suppose.

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### **Nancy says**

In which an alleged bad babysitter comes on board for a minute.

Had a hard time rating this one. I hate Jessi so much. But I liked Wendy a lot. A middle school student who ACTS like a middle school student. No wonder K. Ron and the gang didn't like her. I loved that she was the titular "Bad Babysitter," yet she didn't really do anything that would *make* her a bad babysitter.

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