



## Stacey's Ex-Best Friend

*Ann M. Martin*

Download now

Read Online →

## Stacey's Ex-Best Friend

*Ann M. Martin*

### **Stacey's Ex-Best Friend** Ann M. Martin

Stacey can't wait! Her best friend from New York, Laine Cummings, is coming to Stonybrook for a whole week. She can spend a day at SMS, attend club meetings, and maybe go to the Valentine Dance.

But from the minute Laine arrives, nothing goes as planned. She thinks Stacey's sleepover with her friends is childish, and can't believe Stacey's still into baby-sitting. Laine's more used to hanging out at high school parties with her fifteen-year-old boyfriend.

Stacey doesn't want to lose her childhood friend, but Laine's growing up way too fast for Stacey. Is this the end of their friendship?

### **Stacey's Ex-Best Friend Details**

Date : Published April 29th 2014 by Scholastic Paperbacks (first published January 1st 1992)

ISBN :

Author : Ann M. Martin

Format : Kindle Edition

Genre : Fiction, Young Adult, Childrens

 [Download Stacey's Ex-Best Friend ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Stacey's Ex-Best Friend ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Stacey's Ex-Best Friend Ann M. Martin**

---

## From Reader Review Stacey's Ex-Best Friend for online ebook

### Tiffany Spencer says

#### Stacey's Ex-Best Friend

PLOT: Since Layne is on (well I really don't know what break this is since it's too early to be spring break and winter break is probably over) Stacey decides to invite her for a visit. Layne starts acting like a snob. She really isn't feeling the trip but comes anyway. She compares all the guys to her new 15 year old boyfriend King, and puts down the one that likes her (Pete) and asks her to the Valentine's dance. She insults the members of the club. She's critical of everything about the dance. Until all things come to a head at the Dance and Stacey and Layne have a blow up. It looks like the end of the NY Bff's. The B plot is the BSC decide to throw the kid's a Valentine Masquerade party. They figure out two of their charges may have a crush on each other.

#### MY THOUGHTS:

\*In a few books I've read it seems ok to have a visitor spend maybe a week or so with you at school. Is this really a thing? I don't remember seeing anyone else but the ones who were supposed to be there You couldn't just bring your cousin or friend from another city or who-ever you wanted to

\*school. And then I'm with Layne. I didn't want to be at school when I had to be when I was in school. It was kind of inconsiderate of Stacey not to have at least thought of that. She could have just invited Layne on a holiday.

\*"You have hair like gossamer?" Gossamer? This just does not sound like a line a 13 year old guy would say. Not even back when these books were written.

\*Ok so I don't really think I blame James and Matthew for the confusion because when I read Valentine Masquerade Party, the first thing that came to MY mind was a party with formal attire and masks. Not with games and cookies. If it were going to be informal then why couldn't the BSC just said Valentine PARTY? Using Masquerade makes it sound like a ball. And I'm from America. I have an Australian friend and I don't think this has anything to do with James and Matt being Australian.

\*Stacey doesn't seem to get (as many boyfriends as she's had in this series) that a guy might not be too cool with letting his girlfriend go to a dance with another guy that likes her. But if the tables were turned, would she want a boyfriend of hers in NY to go with another girl if she couldn't go?

\*Bay, babe, they're all the same. None of them are that bad. Trust me I've been called a worse nickname.

\*Let's not take into account my feelings on Valentine's and get into these couple fights. Kristy is mad at Bart because he'd rather stay home and watch a game. Um since when does Kristy care about dances? She doesn't even like to dress up and wear makeup. Wouldn't she understand this? Wouldn't it make sense for them both to stay home and watch the game?

\*Logan is disappointed because Mary Anne doesn't want to do something? She NEVER does? I do NOT understand why he's acting like this is new. Mary Anne is an introvert. Typical extrovert (which I'm assuming Logan is) to not see the logic in that or understand that. Logan is lucky Maryanne is going to this dance at all. Because didn't I remember reading she wasn't comfortable in situations like this? Or maybe the ones that just called attention to her. But dances seem just as much a Maryanne thing as it does a Kristy thing.

\*With Mallory and Ben, stupid arguments happen in relationships. Fact of life. I bet they'll be over this by the end of the book.

\*Layne sounds like a jerk. Not because of how she's acting in this book but if she's the kind of friend that isn't tolerant of a friend having an illness, that's sign number one, (and an early one at that). I have diabetes and if anyone didn't want to be my friend because of that. Sayonara!

\*Hmm so Stacey and Aria have something in common!

\*Whose middle school lets them leave campus?

RATING: 6 This book was blah. It was centered around a holiday I DESPISE! And it showed how crazy it makes people because of it and all the pressure it puts on people. All over a STUPID dance! And it was ironically nice to see everything went down around that day. As for Layne, I say GOOD RIDDANCE! She was a jerk from the first minute she called. But people change. Which is the lesson here. People that have been there for you (seemingly) for years, that you "think" you know and have grown close to you could turn around tomorrow and they could be someone entirely different. I know what it's like to be in Stacey's shoes and sometimes it's hard to accept but when people change like that all you can do is just let them go. And I think Stacey was right to let go of her friendship with Layne when she saw there was nothing else there to hold on too because that would have been the worst thing for her to do.

---

## Ciara says

this one opens with laine calling stacey from new york & gusing about how much she's looking forward to her winter vacation. she gets a whole week off school & she doesn't know if she should go to florida or europe or hang around new york city or what. she is being really fucking obnoxious, calling stacey "anastasia" because she thinks it sounds more sophisticated, bragging about how she's allowed to fly alone, & describing her lame-sounding 15-year-old boyfriend king. first of all, his name is king. second of all, his hair is kind of long & he dyes the tips purple & then mouses it into a bedhead kind of look. i bet he also reads the "dragonlance" novels & dresses up like dr. who every halloween. what a nerd. but laine thinks he's cool because he's in high school. laine's staring down the barrel of a teen pregnancy, that's for sure.

for some reason, stacey thinks it would be "totally distant" if laine used her vacation to visit stoneybrook. stacey will have school that week, but she imagines that laine would just LOVE to go to school with her, go to babysitters club meetings, maybe even come on sitting jobs! because laine has showed so much enthusiasm in the past for visiting stoneybrook & hanging out with members of the babysitters club? the club & laine have interacted several times before, & it seems to always result in either huge fights or cold, indifferent tolerance. laine is clearly not pumped about this idea, but she caves to stacey's excitement & everything is arranged.

prior to laine's visit, stacey races around the house, organizing everything & hiding anything that laine might find childish. such as the china clown that stacey bought off a home shopping show. or the rag doll claudia left behind the last time she spent the night. or stacey's extensive collection of stuffed pigs. but no attempts at sophistication prevent stacey from wearing one of those tacky hair ornaments made out of shoelaces. i know they were popular in the early 90s, but surely laine wouldn't approve?

stacey gives laine a guided tour through stoneybrook on the way back to the house. laine asks where the town is & what people do for fun. stacey's feelings are hurt. but seriously. stoneybrook...new york city. they are kind of two completely different worlds. i am reminded of the vague depression i felt when i moved to kansas from boston. it's just kind of a letdown, you know?

anyway, laine continues to act snooty & superior. she doesn't seem to have too much fun at the BSC sleepover stacey arranges, asking what the girls are going to do for fun when they are clearly already having fun. she scoffs when claudia says she thinks a seventh grader is cute. when stacey brings laine to school, laine wants to leave campus & walk into town during lunch, which is against the rules. she asks why only one kid at a time is allowed to go to the bathroom. like these are completely crazy rules that just do not exist in new york city. at lunch, stacey arranges to sit with boys, thinking that will be more laine's speed, but the boys are playing with their food & laine is surely thinking about how king would never do this because he spends his lunchbreaks reapplying his nail polish & reading "the sandman" series. it makes him more mysterious. pete black inexplicably falls in love with laine & tells her that she has hair like gossamer. she

laughs at him.

there's a valentine's day dance coming up at the end of the week, & all the babysitters have dates. stacey encourages laine to go to the dance with pete. laine says she can't, because pete is a dweeb, & what will all the other people at the dance think if they see her with him? plus, king might think she is being unfaithful. just then, king calls, probably to let laine know how his debut as dr. frankenfurter at the nightly live-action stage version of "the rocky horror picture show" went. laine shoos stacey out of the room & stacey goes. she overhears laine say something something about someone being "childish" & assumes that laine must be telling king about some of the BSC's charges. she smiles & is glad laine is there. because she's a fucking dumbass.

then pete black calls to ask laine to the dance. she accepts, without a lot of enthusiasm.

also, B plot: the babysitters are arranging a "valentine's day masquerade" for some of their charges. it's basically a big party in dawn's barn, & the kids are all making homemade valentines & signing them with code. the babysitters are all excited because nicky pike has a crush on a second grade girl, & carolyn arnold has a crush on an "older" (third grade) boy. the sitters realize they must like each other & they think it's really cute. these girls really do need to find lives. maybe king can introduce them to a local dungeonmaster or set them up with a vampire: the masquerade league.

laine is still being snooty & snobby. she makes fun of stacey for wanting to wear red to the dance. she mocks stacey when stacey admits that she bought her nail polish from a home shopping show. such forth & so on. also, some of the babysitters have been having issues with their dates (bart almost bailed on kristy to stay home & watch a game on TV, mallory & ben had their infamous argument over how to most efficiently utilize the library card catalogue, & mary anne's feelings were hurt by logan when he dared suggest that it might be fun to actually dance at the dance). stacey hopes everyone can pull it together & not embarrass her in front of laine.

the dance happens. pete is nervous around laine & drops the corsage he bought for her. it is trampled by other students. laine says the decorations are babyish & the refreshments (heart-shaped cookies, punch) seem more appropriate to a kindergarten snack time. pete steps on laine's feet while they dance, & then she blows him off to dance with a cuter boy. stacey loses her temper & pulls laine aside to confront her about her rudeness. laine is oblivious. stacey yells at her. laine says she wants to go home--to new york, tonight. stacey calls her mom to come pick them up. stacey & laine yell at each other, stacey's mom & laine's mom yell at each other, & laine is packed on to a train back to new york. stacey is sad but relieved.

she talks to claudia the next day, & claudia suggests that stacey might feel better if she writes laine a letter. so stacey does, letting laine know the friendship is over. she includes her half of their best friend necklace in the envelope. then she invites claudia, her REAL best friend, over to hang out. good riddance, laine!

oh, also, the babysitters discover at the party that nicky got mixed up & actually liked MARILYN arnold. & she likes him too. carolyn had a crush on one of the hobart boys, which is reciprocated. nicky & marilyn even hold hands for a minute, which does seem bold for eight-year-olds. what about cooties?

---

## Jenn says

This one was kind of boring. Laine visits Stacey and is a total snob about everything. That's pretty much it, but since that doesn't make much of a review, let's dive a little deeper. Here we go.

It's snowing in Stoneybrook and Stacey is reminiscing about how much her life has changed in the last year, when Laine (her NYC BFF) calls. She calls Stacey "Anastasia" because it sounds more sophisticated and is all excited about her winter break coming up. Laine doesn't have any plans yet, except maybe go to a bunch of parties with her 15 year old boyfriend, King. I'm sure his real name is Walter or Herbert or something like that. He has long black hair with purple tips that he wears in a ponytail. Totally distant. (Oh wait, Laine didn't know what "distant" meant. Guess the BSC slang hasn't gotten to the big city yet.) Stacey suggests that Laine come to Stoneybrook and stay with her instead. Because that's what a teenager wants to do on their vacation: spend time at another school.

When Stacey tells the other BSCers about Laine coming, they're all excited and Mary Anne conveniently mentions that she'll be there for the Valentine's Dance. Which is being held on Friday the thirteenth, oh noze!! That's like total bad luck! (This would have been a prime time for another Cokie Mason mystery, but alas, the ghost writers didn't think of that.) All the girls have dates and then Kristy has a Great Idea, suggesting they throw a party for the kids they sit for. They decide to have all the kids make cards to trade, but using riddles instead of their real names. Throughout the book, we find out that nearly all the kids have crushes on each other. The sitters think that's adorable and encourage it. Because these second graders need encouragement to express their love. Yeah.

Laine is not impressed with little, boring Stoneybrook or Stacey's lame sleepover. And she doesn't really want to go to the Valentine dance with some geeky 8th grader, especially after she meets them at school. Which she didn't want to go to in the first place. But Stacey gives her this heart-warming speech that changes her mind.

*"...we used to be part of each other's lives. When I was living in New York and we went to the same school, we were practically sharing one life. Now our lives are so different. We talk a lot, but we hardly see each other. I feel as if I'm losing half of ME, and I'm trying to figure out how to get myself back. I miss you, Laine, I really do." aw....*

So at school, Laine is horrified to find that they can't leave campus or go to the bathroom in groups and that the boys at SMS are huge geeks. Even though Stacey got the cream of the crop: Logan, Pete Black, Rick Chow, and Austin Bentley. Pete is completely enamored with Laine and tells her "[she has] hair like gossamer." Hah! Pete asks Laine to the dance and she agrees, after talking to King first. Oh, she calls King "Heart" and he calls her "Babe". Gross.

Over in baby-sitting news, the Hobart boys are disappointed when they find out that American kids don't wear suits and carnations to Valentine's parties. Poor kids. At the next BSC meeting, half the girls are mad at their dates and Kristy says boys are trouble. (Well yeah, you would think that.) Laine asks them if they're still going to be baby-sitting in the summer and Stacey is like, yeah duh. Laine suggests she get a "real job" like her, cashiering at a boutique. (What business owner in their right mind would hire a 13 year old?? I'm pretty sure that wasn't even legal back then.) Stacey gets peeved and is starting to wonder why she even invited Laine.

It's finally the night of the dance, which means the book is almost over yay! Laine is horrified, yet again, when she finds out they are meeting the boys at the dance. And when Pete gives her a corsage. And when she says the pink heart decorations. And when she sees Pete's sneakers with his suit. (He'd be totally in style now.) And so on and so on.

Stacey finally has enough and yanks Laine off the dance floor and they have a big argument. Laine wants to go home (to New York) and Stacey agrees. She is over it. The whole friendship. A week later, she writes Laine a long letter basically about all the things she (Laine) did wrong and why their friendship is over. You know, typical junior high stuff. She even returns her half of her friendship necklace, so you know it's really over. I wonder if we'll see Laine again. I can't remember, but I'm guessing yes.

And that's it, except for the kids' Valentine party, which is a huge success of course. And Stacey dresses like a red elf: *red leggings, red ankle boots, a bulky red sweater, and red barrettes*. What's the deal with the city girls and their leggings and ankle boots???

Read my full review (including all the outfits!!) at [Give a Hoot Read a Book!](#)

---

### **kb says**

Have always found Laine to be conceited, and in this one, she acts like she's just above it all. So good for Stacey for cutting her out of her life. Sometimes, people just have to let other go, especially when the connection is no longer there.

*I loved the BSC growing up, and have decided to re-read (or read for the first time) some of the books in the series. Which of the members are you? :)*

---

### **Leah says**

I wish Lane hadn't become such a jerk. I wonder if Stacey stayed in New York if she would have turned into what Lane did.

Best friends fall apart. People change.

I think Martin did a great job portraying the changing of tides that sometimes happens to best friends. They live in different worlds. Stacey's in Stonybrook. Lane's in New York. Lane's always been a snob. Stacey hasn't so much, or at least the Stonybrook Stacey hasn't been.

I really enjoyed reading and re-reading this book.

---

### **Swankivy says**

I remember really relating to this one for some reason, probably because jerks really love trying to make you feel embarrassed about your interests and I had to deal with occasional "omg you like that you're such a baby" type shamings. You know, from people who liked the same thing six weeks ago but take great pleasure in telling you that they've "outgrown" it. Well, people who have to tell you how immature everything is have a lot of growing up to do, and that's what I liked about this book. Stacey gets her sophisticated New York City best friend Laine to come visit her in her small sleepy town, and Laine acts like an ass the entire time--dissing the town, dissing what Stacey likes, playing up her own supposed maturity by stressing how old her boyfriend is and being condescending to everything and everyone. I imagine she's probably feeling insecure and homesick and that's why she puts herself on a pedestal, but Stacey keeps sort of bouncing back and forth between thinking her friend is being harsh and wanting to join in with Laine's opinions, leaving behind the "babyish" things her friend is dissing. And finally, after Laine pretty much doesn't learn anything the whole time and becomes too insufferable for words, she leaves and Stacey breaks up with her in a letter. She's got a new best friend now! Here's the other half of our BFF necklace back! (Not kidding. That's really in there.)

I found the babysitting plot kind of ridiculous in this one, though. Very young kids are getting crushes on each other and the babysitters are all about encouraging them, getting all invested in the romantic lives of eight-year-olds. (Oh, and of course a twin switch-a-roo was inevitable since one of the involved children was part of a set of twins. Oh no, really, the boy liked the OTHER twin? Well, no problem, because she actually liked someone else anyway and everything's fine! Let's hold hands!) Irritating how young they're pushing these crushes.

---

## Sally says

Stacey thinks it'd be an awesome idea to invite Laine to spend a week in Stoneybrook - while Laine is on holidays and Stacey still has school. Laine's from New York City, Stoneybrook is kind of epic small-town. Laine is also an obnoxious bitch. I don't like Stacey (or Laine, duh) but this one was very entertaining with all the snobbery and bitchery going on!

---

## Shira says

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

for laine's winter break (which for some reason comes around valentines day -- why do laine in this book and lewis in Dawn's Big Date have such strange vacation times?) she comes to stoneybrook to hang out with stacey, but she is way too big city cool kid to hang with lowly stoneybrookites. she is awful, and stacey doesn't really address it in any healthy kind of way and then blows up at her. laine goes home early and stacey writes her a letter basically saying she doesn't want to be friends anymore. meanwhile, the bsc throws the kids a valentines day party in which they sign their names on valentines in code, and some of the charges have some cute budding 2nd/3rd grade romances.

### highlights:

-laine's super cool boyfriend king: "I met him at this party. his hair is kind of long and he wears it in a ponytail, which I think is awesome."

-they never explicitly say that jessi is black in this book. it might be the only one so far to do that? usually the books say, "mal and jessi are similar but mal is white and jessi is black." in this they don't play up the similarities and differences and instead just describe their physical appearances, and we can infer. very interesting and unusual for a bsc book.

-there's a mini-midsummer nights dream plotline in here, wherein nicky pike writes a card to carolyn arnold (his crush), marilyn arnold (carolyn's twin) writes to nicky pike (her crush) and carolyn arnold writes a card to james hobart (her crush). turns out nicky got the twins confused and actually likes marilyn. both couples end up liking each other.

-mal and stacey have a code: mal hangs color coded towels on her patio to indicate whether she wants to walk to school with stacey. laine thinks this is uncool but I think it's cute!

-king calls laine "babe" and she calls him "heart" -- this is really weird. she is thirteen. ugh.

-the valentines day dance at stoneybrook middle school is on friday the 13th. there's a dumb cute plotline where everyone thinks the dance is cursed because kristy and bart, mary anne and logan, and mallory and ben each fight and almost don't go to the dance together.

-stacey thinks she will never see laine again when she is watching her leave. she notes that this isn't about a changing friendship but is about the end of the friendship. I LOVE THIS. sometimes you have to end a relationship, even if you've had it for years. this is an important lesson that people don't seem to learn.

lowlights/nitpicks:

- another misinterpretation of global warming like in Snowbound. everyone thinks global warming means it will never be cold again.
- second book where we have seen the narrator of the book's bsc notebook entry (the other being Mallory and the Trouble With Twins)
- stacey feels like she has to make her room cool for laine, taking down kitten posters and hiding stuffed animals. if you feel that you have to change your room like that then she's not a real friend, dude.
- carolyn has a mullet. are they or aren't they cool in this universe? (because they're depicted as so uncool in Karen's Haircut)
- rick chow sticks pretzel sticks into prunes to make molecules and starts making chemical formulas in the cafeteria at lunch. this is something you do for a school project, not with your friends in the lunchroom.
- stacey keeps thinking laine isn't being a turd but she is. for instance, when she overhears her say the word childish over the phone to king, stacey thinks she's talking about some of the kids the bsc members sit for when she's obviously talking about stacey's friends.
- kristy's notebook entry talks about how dawn kept getting on her case but she totally didn't! dammit kristy!

stacey outfits:

- "This was the outfit I had chosen in which to meet Laine: a purple shirtwaist top over flowered leggings, my cowboy boots (cowgirl boots? cowwoman boots?), a purple hair ornament made from shoelaces, and long dangly silver earrings."*
- "I was wearing red leggings, red ankle boots, a bulky red sweater, and red barrettes."*

laine outfits:

- "She was hard to miss, considering she was wearing a jean coat with a fur collar (I sincerely hoped the fur was fake), black capri pants edged with lace, very chic black ankle boots, and on her head, a brilliant red oversized beret."*
- "Laine was dressed in black from head to toe. Black leotard, long black jacket, black leggings over black stockings, black shoes. Her jewelry was silver, though. And big."*

**no claudia outfits. no snacks in claudia's room.**

---

## **Amie says**

SPOILER: Stacey really does lose a friend. There isn't any resolution. Lots of fights and name calling. Definitely not a favorite.

---

## **Julie Decker says**

Stacey's always been the sophisticated one in the BSC. She's from the big city and the other babysitters think she's more mature. But that doesn't stop her from feeling insecure when her NYC friend Laine comes to visit and starts insulting everything she and her friends like. Is Stacey just going to take it--especially since she wants to be mature, too!--or will she stand up for her friends and stick to her own opinions? Sometimes having a best friend is not all about seeing eye to eye. . . .

The Laine/Stacey plot was a tad over the top, but these books usually exaggerate so we can make black and white judgments of who's wrong. So Laine did a huge number of absolutely condescending and rude things to the babysitters and stayed on her high horse constantly, which made Stacey angry but also made her want

to join in so she could feel mature too. But after she sees how it affects her friends, she decides it only makes sense to "break up" with Laine. The other plot, which actually involves babysitting, was even more absurd. All the little kids the girls sit for are getting crushes on each other at the same time, and the babysitters are practically playing dating show hosts over these third graders. And of course when it looks like there might be tragedy when one kid didn't like her "match" back, everything is resolved when it turns out all along it was really her twin sister that the little boy liked (and of course she DOES like him back). Next will the babysitters host baby weddings? Hmm.

---

### **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!

---

### **Allison Floyd says**

Well, this is one of the better ones, I think. I admire that Martin didn't slap a tidy resolution on this in which everyone makes up. Also, it contains some doozies:

"I tried to say good-bye to eight years of friendship with Laine Cummings without actually talking to her."

Who hasn't been there?

At least Stacey still has Claud!

---

### **Logan Hughes says**

Stacey begs Laine to visit Stoneybrook on her February break, but when she gets there, things don't work out. Laine mocks the BSC girls for being too suburban and immature. Attempting to manufacture fun for Laine, Stacey convinces her to accept Pete Black's invitation to the Valentine's Day dance, but at the dance, Laine is mean to Pete. Stacey and Laine get into a huge fight, and Laine goes home early. Stacey reflects sadly that despite years of friendship, Laine has become "a person she no longer wants to be friends with," and sends her a letter to say so.

Meanwhile, the BSC plans a Valentine's party for local kids and there's a dumb subplot involving Nicky Pike and James Hobart having crushes on the Arnold twins.

While the book does a pretty good job of painting Laine as an unpleasant person--while remaining true to both the good and bad sides of her we've seen in past books--it's off-putting that Stacey sees herself as a

hero/victim when she's not. She's quick to anger, and to see this as an issue of "Laine has changed" and not "I have changed" or even "Laine is in a bad mood." While it is certainly believable that Stacey takes her own side in the argument, it feels like the Book is agreeing with Stacey (I mean, she's the narrator, but you know how you can sometimes tell when the Book disagrees with the narration character). The letter at the end is supposed to provide satisfying closure on the Stacey/Laine friendship, but I don't buy that the friendship was already over; Laine is pretty clearly just going through a pretentious phase. No, what ended the friendship is that terrible letter.

**Weirdest Moment:** One shining moment of Laine's underlying "good" personality is when, at the end of an otherwise unsatisfactory sleepover, Claudia picks up the TV Guide and says, "Hey, you know what? To Kill a Mockingbird is on!" "All right!" says Laine. I mean, To Kill a Mockingbird is a deeply emotional and thought-provoking movie and all, but: "All right!"?

**Read as a kid:** Yes, many times.

**Timing:** Late January through just after Valentine's Day. They are getting really sloppy. It's only been ten books since the last Valentine's Day of eighth grade.

**Revised Timeline:** February of eleventh grade. A lot in this book has to do with ages and maturity, and in general it does seem to work better if you go ahead and add the 3 to everyone's age and grade. Stacey is scandalized that Laine has a 15 (18) year old boyfriend in high school (college). Nicky and Carolyn are starting to develop crushes at eight (eleven). Laine thinks baby-sitting is a kids' job and they should be thinking about getting real work, such as the cashiering job she's signed up for. (Most places can't legally hire teens under sixteen.) There are a couple of places where it pointedly doesn't work--specifically, when Laine thinks it's lame that their dates can't drive them to the dance; if they were all sixteen, somebody would probably be able to. But this is understandable; as fast and loose as the writers often are with the level of independence these kids have at thirteen, the driving age is one place where they really can't abandon the pretense.

As a general feel, I do think the story works much better if you (a) assume a lot more time has passed since the last time Stacey spent a lot of time with Laine than the few months or weeks that would be required if this were all in the same year as Stacey's Emergency, Stacey's Mistake and New York, New York; and (2) see Laine as the kind of high-school girl who's yearning for it to be over so she can move on and move out and grow up, while the BSC girls are the kind of high-school girls who love high school.

---

## **lisa says**

Stacey invites Laine to visit her in Stoneybrook for a week, only to discover that Laine has changed. She is now snobby and pretentious, and makes Stacey feel bad for the things she likes, and does.

### **Things I remember from reading this as a kid:**

I remember Pete Black getting a massive crush on Laine, which I thought was very awkward considering he used to have a crush on Stacey and take her to lots of dances. I guess Stacey doesn't mind, and it's not like she ever obsessed much over Pete Black. . . but still. It was weird to read.

The baby sitters freaking out because their Valentine's dance was on Friday the 13th. I thought that was lame.

Laine dates an older boy named King, whom she calls Heart (as in King of Hearts, ha ha). I remember one of my friends saying that was a stupid nickname, but it made sense to me. I have always made up stupid

nicknames for people even to this day, and I could totally see myself as a teen calling her boyfriend Heart. (Sadly, I never did this!) I was actually pretty intrigued by Laine's boyfriend when I was a kid because I wanted to be thirteen and date a high school boy and get invited to cool high school parties. I was nine or ten when I read this book. By the time I actually was thirteen I didn't want to go to high school parties, I wanted to go to college. Not because I wanted to learn anything, just because I wanted to live in a dorm and go to parties every night of the week.

### **Things I've considered since reading this as an adult:**

There are red flags from the beginning of the book, when Laine calls Stacey to tell her about her winter vacation. When Stacey invites her to come to Stoneybrook, Laine never actually agrees to come. It sounds like she gets swept up in Stacey's excitement and probably thinks, "Oh why not? It won't be so bad." I don't understand why Laine couldn't come visit Stacey for a long weekend instead. She's just hanging around the house, doing nothing while Stacey is in school. Then Stacey has to rush around her house making sure it's up to Laine's standards. She removes all the tacky knickknacks, she hides her pig collection. If I'm going to that much trouble to impress my friend, then maybe I don't want her over in the first place. But this book does a great job of portraying the end of a friendship. Laine is a little snobby, a little mean, but she still gossips with Stacey, and there are times when she and Stacey get along just fine. Laine is not a monster, she's just changed into a person who doesn't have anything in common with Stacey anymore. When Stacey figures this out she knows they probably won't be friends anymore, but she's sad because she thinks of all the good times she's had with Laine. It's always hard to grow apart from a friend, especially when you can see glimmers of the person she used to be.

I love the Hobart boys so much. They are dying to wear suits and ties to their Valentine's Day party. When Jessi suggests that they wear jeans like everyone else, they are appalled. "I can't give flowers to my date if I'm wearing jeans," says James, who I think is eight years old. I just love their old-fashioned standards. James wouldn't dream of asking someone out if he couldn't get her flowers, and he wouldn't dream of giving her flowers looking like a mess. He's a young Cary Grant.

A lot of the things that Laine finds annoying about the BSC is stuff that I also find annoying about them. When the girls start having arguments with their boyfriends, they are fighting over the stupidest things. Mary Anne breaks down because Logan mentions dancing, even though they're going to a dance. If she's still afraid of kicking her shoes at the principal then she needs to get over it already. Ben and Mallory get into a fight over the best way to use a library (actually I thought that was funny). But they all make such a big deal about such ridiculous things. It's a very middle school thing to do, to invent drama where there isn't any, and I don't think Laine is in the wrong for calling them out on it. Later I agree with her when she's disgusted that the girls are sitting around discussing the possible secret romance of two of their eight year old charges. Also their dance does sound completely lame, but as an adult anything that doesn't feature an open bar sounds lame. I didn't like that Laine implied that baby sitting isn't a good job because you don't earn a regular paycheck. These girls are thirteen (and so is Laine) and there is no way for thirteen year olds to earn regular paychecks, so baby sitting is perfectly acceptable. The girls earn enough money for clothes, and trips to the mall, and other junk they want. Thirteen year olds don't need to contribute to 401ks. And while I don't think it's OK for Laine to treat Pete the way she does, the adult in me understands. She's trying to show him that she's not interested in him (maybe she's trying hard to convince herself that she's not interested in him) and the only way she knows how to do it is to be mean. If she were older and more mature she might have handled this situation better, but she's only thirteen so she has no clue how to explain to a boy she doesn't know that she has a boyfriend she really likes, and there is no way she's going to get involved with anyone else, even if he does have a massive crush on her.

Laine reads a book that sounds completely terrible called A Summer of Diamonds. I actually looked it up because it sounded exactly like the one Danielle Steel book I read years ago. But this must be a fictional book because I couldn't find the title anywhere. She tells Stacey all about it, and Stacey is so embarrassed by the book she is reading (Black Beauty that she borrowed from Mallory of course) that she almost lies and

says that she's reading *The Joy Luck Club*. I don't know why she's embarrassed. *Black Beauty*, *A Summer of Diamonds*, and *The Joy Luck Club* are completely different books. Why is she trying to compare them?

Laine makes fun of Stacey for buying "junque" off the home shopping network, which was hilarious. I would never, ever have thought I'm-so-sophisticated Stacey from glamorous NYC would shop from HSN. That is such a Mary Anne thing to do. If I were Laine I would have made fun of Stacey also.

I do not understand why Stacey writes a letter to Laine. Claudia somehow convinces her to let go of Laine or some nonsense, and instead of calling her, or waiting until the next time she is New York to speak to her face to face, Stacey decides to write a letter. It's not really a mean letter, but it isn't very nice. She asks why Laine bothered to come to Stoneybrook if she didn't want to, and then she says that she wishes that they could have continued being friends. She says that Laine isn't nice to her anymore, and she doesn't "know what happened to that Laine, but she isn't around anymore." But she's the one who's being overly dramatic, and calling off the friendship, not Laine, so why is she acting like it's Laine's fault that they aren't going to be friends anymore? I have a feeling if Stacey had just let the situation chill for a little while, then she and Laine would have continued being friendly -- not good friends anymore, but people who still enjoyed bumping into each other now and then. But by sending the letter she was in a very passive aggressive way getting back at Laine for everything Stacey felt was "done" to her. And since she apologized in a backhanded way (since the fight was so clearly "not my fault") she gets to pretend she's the good girl, and Laine is the unreasonable bitch. And Laine was probably like, "Why do I need such a needy, whiny, drama queen in my life anyway?"

---

### **Samantha says**

I think what always messed with me about this one, was how much Lane changed in such a short period of time. It's natural sometimes for friends to drift apart, but she went from fairly normal with a little hint of snobby to full on bitch pretty quickly. Also I can't believe her well to-do parents would let her date a fifteen year old named King with purple hair.

I dunno, it was weird. Ultimately I was glad that Stacey stood her ground, called her out, and put her on the next train back to New York. Good call, Stacey!

---