



# Jessi's Baby-sitter

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## **Jessi's Baby-sitter** Ann M. Martin

When Jessi's mom goes back to work, Aunt Cecilia moves in with the Ramseys to help out. Jessi is mortified that she has a baby-sitter and can't stand her aunt's bossy ways.

## **Jessi's Baby-sitter Details**

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## From Reader Review Jessi's Baby-sitter for online ebook

### **Samantha says**

Jessi always had the makings of being an interesting character, but her books were always some of the most boring. This one was very meh too, especially the B-plot about the science fair. I never cared for Aunt Cecelia when she started showing up, and I don't know how Jessi dealt with her for so long. I'd have gone squealing to my mom asap.

Anyway the whole thing was kind of a snooze fest. A lot of build up, for not much payoff.

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### **Maria Elmvang says**

Yet another book where it REALLY frustrates me that people don't speak up early enough. I was a shy 11-year-old, but I'm pretty sure I wouldn't have accepted being treated like a little kid like that.

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### **e.zulaykha says**

This is so funny and weird. I can't see why Aunt Cecilia gets really mad about simple things easily. I mean, for the least to let Jessi go to a BSC meeting, right? Find out more in this book!

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### **Ciara says**

this is the one where mr. & mrs. ramsey invite aunt cecelia to come live with them & help out now that mrs. ramsey is going back to work (at an advertising firm, like 92% of all working mothers in stoneybrook). cecelia is mr. ramsey's older sister--much older, as far as i can tell, if jessi's parents are close in age. cecelia has children of her own, but they are grown & she was recently widowed, while mr. ramsey has an infant son. so there's like a twenty year age difference between cecelia & mr. ramsey? hmmm.

anyway, jessi & becca are not psyched about this development. jessi is still upset because cecelia acted like it was jessi's fault when becca got stranded on that desert island off the coast of connecticut. jessi & becca are used to have a certain degree of independence & autonomy, & cecelia treats them like babies. & even with squirt, who is a baby, jessi is upset because cecelia doesn't spend much time playing with him or engaging with him. she leaves him in his high chair while she cleans & plunks him down in front of "sesame street," she won't let jessi & becca take him for walks, & she lets him nap too late in the day. she also forces jessi & becca to snack on cookies, rather than the sandwiches to which they are accustomed (& jessi is quick to specify that they aren't even good cookies, but some kind of healthy grain bar situation), & once when jessi is ten minutes late coming from from a babysitting job, cecelia won't let her attend a babysitters club meeting. which is pretty fucking out of line. you'd think mr. & mrs. ramsey would have had a detailed chat with cecelia before she moved in, detailing the kids' after-school responsibilities & privileges. cecelia won't even let jessi ride her bike to mallory's house because cecelia hasn't met mallory, & she almost doesn't let jessi leave for a scheduled sitting job.

not that jessi & becca handle things all that well. they leave fake spiders in cecelia's bed & fill her shoes with shaving cream, hoping to drive her out of the house. it doesn't work.

subplot: the stoneybrook elementary school science fair is coming up, & various babysitters are helping out various kids with their entries. jessi is helping jackie rowdowsky build a real exploding volcano. but mostly she is just doing the project for him. all jackie wants to do is make a mess, & jessi forces him to memorize a speech about igneous rocks & shit. when jackie bombs in front of the judges because he failed to actually learn anything & can only repeat that facts jessi made him memorize verbatim, jessi realizes that she was babying & bossing jackie the same way cecelia has been doing to her. this motivates her to have a talk with her parents, who proceed to talk to cecelia, & everything gets better. although i had to roll my eyes at the part where cecelia claimed that she came down like a ton of bricks on the girls because she feared she wouldn't be as good a babysitter as jessi is. really? a grown woman who has raised children of her own feared she wouldn't measure up against an 11-year-old? unless cecelia's kids are ritual murderers/cannibals or never learned how to use their own thumbs or something, i think cecelia has little to fear.

this one was kind of boring.

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### **Julie Decker says**

Jessi's Aunt Cecelia is a drag. When she moves in with the family, she suddenly starts telling Jessi what to do and treating her like a baby, commenting on her diet and trying to control whether she pursues her babysitting. Jessi's had it, and she hopes her actions will make Aunt Cecelia feel as unwelcome as her unsolicited comments feel!

This felt like a wholly unnecessary book to me because its problems are solved by doing what every other book has advocated: ENGAGING IN COMMUNICATION. I cannot understand why so many of these books feature one of the babysitters getting upset at someone else and thinking it's going to solve the problem if they just treat that person like crap, harass them, scare them, or do something otherwise passive aggressive to them. I also thought it was a bit of a stretch to have Jessi realizing she's being too controlling herself in her babysitting life. The parallels that most of the books try to draw between the babysitter's life and the babysitter's charge's life seem so thin.

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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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## Jenn says

Jessi's mom has decided to go back to work and they need somebody to watch Squirt during the day and Becca after school. So Jessi's dad's sister, Aunt Cecelia, is going to move in with them. She's apparently way older than her brother, because she is a widow(er?) with grown kids and doesn't want to live at home alone anymore. Jessi and Becca are horrified by this turn of events, but of course, they don't sit down and have a rational discussion with their parents. No, they decide to play stupid pranks on her to make her want to leave. Because pranks always work out well. Aunt Cecelia moves in with a UHaul stuffed full of all her old crap and they have to cram it in anywhere it will fit. Jessi is upset because her room doesn't say "Jessi" anymore but "Jessi and some old lady" haha!!

Full review here!

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## Jeremy says

My daughters review: This book was a pretty good book. My favorite parts are: - when the pikes make a lending library. They are organizing the house to make it like a library with all the books, but I just have to wonder HOW THE PIKE KIDS CAN GET THE BOOKS SO ORGANIZED IN SUCH LITTLE TIME WITH JUST 1 PERSON LEADING IT?? I think it's cute that they organize it, but why does only one chapter cover it? - Jessi and Becca's aunt Cecelia comes to stay with them and she's all like "Jessica fix your hair" "no Rebecca, you can't" and I think that she is one of those prim and proper ladies who have, like, no respect for 11 and 8 year olds opinions. But the pranks they play on her are SO WEIRD because if aunt Cecelia is all like "I am in charge blah blah", you probably shouldn't be messing with her. - aunt Cecelia doesn't let Jessi babysit with out her knowing where she's going. Ugh. I think you can trust an eleven year old to go to another house for a little over an hour, lady!! - aunt Cecelia forbade Jessi to go to a babysitter club meeting, but they call her 14 times to make Cecelia think that the bsc needs Jessi a lot. So the bsc may not be smart enough to get their charges under control in kristy and the snobs but they can figure out how to set up a decent plan with jessi's aunt. - Charlotte johanssen wins third place in the science fair!! I always thought that shyness means nothing compared to smarts. But you are reading a review by a very shy and smart girl, so whatevs. My least favorite parts: - the entire science fair plot. If Jessi realizes she's being treated unfairly by aunt Cecelia then she should know that she's treating Jackie rodowsky like a baby by doing his project for him. Jessica Ramsey, you are the craziest babysitter ever by not realizing any connections between the two parts!!! - from the way Ann m Martin puts it, it sounds like Jessi goes to school but Becca doesn't at some points. Literally, there is SO MANY WRONG THINGS with the books . Inconsistency and typos and see above. - Jackie can't answer the judges questions!! Literally, Jessi, if you did this for him you should have just went ahead and practically made everything from him. I hope this doesn't affect Jessi later on if Jackie is accepted into a good job and he's gotta answer some questions and Jessi will prepare him. That's all!!!

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## Shira says

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

as was foreshadowed in the previous book, Baby-sitters' Island Adventure, jessi's aunt cecelia comes to live

with them. she throws the whole ramsey routine out of whack, treating jessi and becca like they're stupid babies and not playing with squirt at all while not letting jessi and becca play with him either. meanwhile, jessi decides to help jackie rodowsky with his science fair project and treats him like a stupid baby herself (doing all the work for him) and straight up cannot see the parallelism happening in her life.

highlights:

-the pikes make a lending library. IT IS SO CUTE. their process is to divide the books by animal stories, mystery series, science books, sports books, etc. then there are index cards in each book that have the book title, and they keep the index card and write the kid's name and check out date on it. they write the due date on a post-it and put it on the book for the kid. the library is open to the neighborhood kids after school and weekends! enterprising pikelets.

-some of the mean things jessi and becca do to aunt cecelia to try to make her feel unwelcome, namely SHORT SHEETING HER BED. I love any time short-sheeting happens in the bsc series, because short-sheeting is the most innocuous and hilarious prank for these 1950s-style tweens to pull.

-speaking of which, once jessi and becca talk to their parents about the problems with aunt cecelia (FINALLY.) cecelia tells them (mr and mrs ramsey) about the short-sheeting and other pranks. they say they are going to ground jessi and becca, but cecelia asks them to let her deal with jessi and becca instead. so she pulls the exact same pranks on them: puts shaving cream in their slippers, short-sheets jessi's bed, puts fake animals on their pillows. I love this grumpy old woman acting like a little kid prankster.

-more foreshadowing for stacey feeling ill and for mallory's dad losing his job.

-the baby-sitters all are helping kids with their science fair projects (a la the pageant in Little Miss Stoneybrook... and Dawn) but aside from jessi they mostly don't get too involved/don't pressure the kids/don't do the work for them. they just point out spots where the project is lacking in science and point the kids in the right direction to find better project ideas, and then they don't get super competitive about it and mostly don't care when the kids lose (except charlotte who ends up winning 3rd place -- see the next highlight for more info).

-the two really good science fair projects. margo pike makes a shadow box depicting what life would be like if we lived on the moon (and it has barbies in jetsons-style outfits drinking tang). charlotte johannsen tries to grow three plants, with the only different condition for each of the plants being that for one, she doesn't play any music; for one, she plays it 30 minutes of classical music per day; and for one, she plays it 30 minutes of duran duran per day. the duran duran one grows way better than the others, and she ends up getting third place in the science fair.

lowlights/nitpicks:

-why do we see a notebook entry for a time that jessi baby-sits? it seems like this tends to happen more when the narrator is either jessi or mallory. it's like ann doesn't count them as real narrators because they're junior members.

-jessi is such a jerk with jackie. it's really frustrating to read.

-when talking about frogs, mallory says, "don't we have a book on reptiles?" mallory is way too nerdy to not know that frogs are amphibians.

-I hate when they say that emily michelle is having trouble with language acquisition because up until recently she was hearing "a foreign language" i.e. vietnamese. no, vietnamese was her first language, and ENGLISH is still a foreign language to her, you idiots.

-once again, a missing-the-point racism moment. cecelia says that sometimes black people have to work harder to prove themselves, and jessi compares it to jackie rodowsky (a white boy) having to work hard because everyone thinks he's a klutz. that's not a systemic thing, you idiot! even if she said, "he has to work hard because everyone thinks he's a klutz because he's a ginger kid," that STILL wouldn't be the same. UGH.

claudia outfit:

*- "Claud was wearing a fake leopard-skin vest, a fairly tame blouse, and blue leggings. She had made her jewelry herself--five papier-mache bracelets that were painted in soft desert colors."*

stacey outfit:

*- "Stacey was wearing tight black pants that reached just above her ankles, and sported a column of four silvery buttons at the bottoms. (The buttons were just for show, I think.) Over the pants she was wearing a long (past her knees) blue jacket made of soft material. Under that she was wearing a sleeveless blouse."*

jackie disasters (only two! amazing considering how present he is in this book):

-slips on the rug and falls on his bottom

-gets his foot stuck in one of his old rain boots

-not sure if this counts...when making papier mache he scratches his cheek and gets papier mache goop on it.

dawn's kid-kit:

-skipper doll with sleepover stuff

-jigsaw puzzle with a poem on it

snacks in claudia's room:

-planters peanut bar under her armchair

-necco wafers (n.s.)

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## **Logan Hughes says**

Jessi's aunt Cecelia moves in, primarily to help care for Squirt, when Jessi's mother gets a full-time job. Jessi resents having to answer to Cecelia, who is more strict than her parents; dictates what Jessi eats and how she dresses; and always seems suspicious that Jessi is trying to pull a fast one, undermining the life of baby-sitting responsibility and ballet achievement Jessi is trying to live. A subplot in which Jessi tries to help Jackie Rodowsky enter a model volcano in the science fair and ends up doing all the work herself so that it will be done right teaches Jessi that Aunt Cecelia micromanages because she loves.

Jessi is at probably her most immature in this book, particularly when she and Becca play practical jokes on Cecelia as revenge, but it's not unrealistic considering her age (even her revised age) and the situation; it should come as no surprise that children who are treated like immature little monsters meet expectations. Jessi's frustration with Cecelia's overbearing nature, and with having to answer to someone more strict than her parents, is realistic and sympathetic; Cecelia is both a formidable adult villain (I can't believe she wouldn't let Jessi go to the BSC MEETING!) and a multidimensional person trying her best to establish a place of authority in an existing household, and to find a place for herself in a complete family after the death of her husband and the dispersal of a neighborhood where she once undoubtedly ruled the roost. I'd probably rate this book higher except that the subplot with Jackie is so painfully anvilicious, I can hardly bear to read it (you do learn about volcanoes, though).

**Revised Timeline:** Early tenth grade (eighth grade for Jessi)

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## **Jennifer says**

Not too bad. There's a continuity gap with the island trip. I think that took place in a super special. Jessi's aunt moves in and is crazy strict. I'm really not sure how the parents didn't just talk to the aunt moving in and mention important things like a recurring meeting, or that the kids can be ten minutes late. I also wonder why it's such a big deal with the snacks and clothes. The parents have bought the clothes and food, so what they wear and eat shouldn't be a big deal.

The sub plot is that Jessi takes over Jackie's science fair project. She looks up all this information and doesn't help Jackie learn it.

Overall this wasn't bad. Just had a lot of moments.

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### **Callie Ridgeley says**

I'll admit that this isn't one of my favorite books, but it's one of the more likeable Jessi books, so...yeah.

OH NO! Jessi's Aunt Cecelia is moving in to take care of Jessi, Becca, and Squirt! \*GASP\* Seriously, it's so wrong babysitting an ELEVEN-year-old.

That being said, though, despite Jessi's age (eleven) is young enough to be babysat for, A.C. is being over controlling and strict. A.C. forbids Jessi going to a BSC meeting for being ten minutes late. She chooses Jessi and Becca's clothes and decides how they style their hair, eat, etc., and she makes them go to bed early, and crap like that. Now THAT really is a bit too much.

So Jessi and Becca intervenes by pulling pranks on A.C. by putting fake spiders on her pillow and shaving cream in her slippers. Annoying, passive aggressive, yeah, but normal and realistic for kids their age.

Meanwhile, Jessi and the BSC help their charges with their projects for the science fair. Jessi is A.C.'s clone when she "helps" Jackie with his volcano.

Predictable and eye-roll-worthy, I agree, but it's better than the ghostwritten books (Ann actually wrote this one), and it's funny...both good and bad.

3 out of 3.

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### **Sp101\* says**

Jessi's shocked! Her Aunt Cecelia is moving into their house to babysit Jessi and her siblings. Jessi is going to have a babysitter when she is one herself! Aunt Cecelia even is telling Jessi what to do and exactly when to do it. Jessi thinks she's old enough to take care of herself.

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### **Swankivy says**

I remember thinking that this one was another good example of kids reacting to problems in highly inefficient, silly ways. In this case, Jessi is frustrated with her Aunt Cecelia becoming her caretaker and



suddenly turning into a dictator (questioning her babysitting jobs, controlling what she eats, etc.). So she and her sister decide the obvious thing to do is play stupid pranks on their aunt so she'll want to leave. This reminds me of the ridiculous crap Dawn pulled to get Mary Anne out of her room in a previous book. Why do these kids have to learn over and over again that being a passive-aggressive jerk to adults is something you probably ought to not resort to, especially since everything is fixed as soon as you just talk to the grown-ups and tell them how you feel? Communication, kids, communication! Of course, it wouldn't be a *Baby-Sitters Club* book without a remarkably parallel plot in the kids' babysitting lives, so Jessi finds herself babying and bossing one of her sitting charges around until she realizes what she did to him is a lot like what Aunt Cecelia is doing to her. Surprise!

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## **lisa says**

Jessi's mother returns to work, and her aunt Cecelia moves in to take care of Squirt. And Jessi and Becca. Neither of them are happy with this, and commence to childish pranks. This book was released for the first time very shortly after I discovered this series, and I remember seeing a big display of it in the bookstore. I didn't get around to reading it for awhile though.

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

Aunt Cecelia seeming like exactly the kind of person who would make living in your own home so uncomfortable. Later in the series she seems to blend in with Jessi's family a lot better, and reading about the family dynamic isn't quite so bad, but I remember being so relieved that I didn't have a bossy, shrill aunt who I had to live with everyday.

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

Jessi says that she's always wanted to see Texas, and she hopes her family wins a trip there. The New Mexican in me died a little.

Kristy and Claudia try to reassure Jessi's fears about Aunt Cecelia moving in by reminding her about their great relationships with their live-in grandmothers. This is exactly the kind of smug thing people say when they think they are making people feel better. Jessi handles this much better than I would have at that age (or even this age). Instead of saying something lame like "You guys don't understand," or "You guys have no idea what she's like," she just smiles and nods, knowing that they won't know that her situation is not the same until they meet Aunt Cecelia. Aunt Cecelia is not a fun-loving, outgoing retiree like Nannie, or a gentle, kind, tea serving grandmother like Mimi. She's a lonely woman who misses her late husband, and is having trouble letting go of who she used to be, which makes her rigid and cold. Something that jumped out at me in this book was that she told Jessi that she had raised kids of her own. Where are these kids, and are they that much older than Jessi? How much older than Mr. Ramsey is Aunt Cecelia? Why do we never hear about Aunt Cecelia's children again?

Jessi tells Jackie that he should definitely enter a volcano project in the science fair because "Everyone else would probably just have, you know, things like leaf collections, or bugs in jars. . ." I would say that implies that no one was doing volcano projects in the 1990s, but Jackie gets the idea of building a volcano from *The Brady Bunch*, meaning kids have been doing volcanoes since the 1970s, and probably way before that, so it can't be that special or innovative. This whole exchange reminds me of my very favorite *Bob's Burger's* episode "Topsy", where Mr Dinkler puts the kibosh on Louise's recycled science fair volcano project by telling her, "Kids have been using these paper mache monstrosities to avoid real work for years, and I'll have none of it." Someone's got to take a stand, even if it is a deranged Edison impersonator.

I feel so bad for Jackie in this book. Jessi high pressures him into entering the science fair, when he knows he is terrible at science. She does all the work, learns all the stuff, and he's just tagging along for the ride, unable to say no because he's a kid. This is pretty terrible to read about, even if it's just a science project, and Jessi sees the error of her ways in the end. In fact, as an adult I could sort of understand why she gets so controlling. If she's lost control of her life in her own home due to her aunt's being in charge, then she goes looking for something that she can control. Pushing Jackie into entering the science fair, and then doing the work for him when he doesn't rise to her expectations makes sense when you hear about how frustrated she is with Aunt Cecelia's rules.

Reading this book was pretty interesting, especially since I expected it to be boring. Up until this point in the series Jessi's books have always stressed how close she is to her family. They always eat meals together, they look out for each other, and they help each other with their problems. In other words, they share everything. But during the events of Super Special Baby Sitter's Island Adventure Aunt Cecelia seemed to lose respect for Jessi's parents parenting style, and she was upset with Jessi also (probably because she was worried about her too, as well as Becca). And when Jessi's mother goes back to work, and Aunt Cecelia comes to live with the Ramseys Jessi very suddenly loses the closeness her family previously had. For the first time in the series she is uncomfortable in her family, and since they are the source of her discomfort she doesn't know how to talk to them about it. She probably hasn't dealt with much conflict within her family before, so she doesn't quite know what to do. Since the adults are probably having power struggles, and a major adjustment period of their own, they don't notice the struggles Jessi and Becca are facing. It might be odd that Aunt Cecelia doesn't go to Jessi's parents when Jessi and Becca play pranks on her, or that she gets back at Jessi for getting too many phone calls by passive aggressively "fixing" her hair, then telling her "Now you're someone I can be proud of." However, when you look at Jessi's whole extended family who have all lived in the same neighborhood, probably for generations, you can see how these sorts of spats probably always play out. They don't really know how to fight publicly with each other, so they fight quietly.

Toward the end of the book Aunt Cecelia tells Jessi and Becca that she insists they always be polished and well-behaved because black people have to work harder to prove themselves. This is thrown out there like a lit match that fizzles and dies, and it feels like a white person sentiment, something a white person would say because THEY believe it to be true. People of color do not go around saying "I must be neat, polite, well-behaved, nicely dressed, always smiling and cheerful so that white people will know I'm a good person." They are aware of it, especially when it comes to dealing with the police, and the vigilantes, but I certainly do not go out in the world every day thinking, "I have to be perfect, or white people will think I'm a drunken savage like all the other Native people in the world."

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