



## Everything Changes

*Ann M. Martin*

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It's a summer of change for the Baby-sitters Club, with major changes in the look and focus of Ann M. Martin's classic series. Throughout the summer members of the club share feelings about who they are and where they're going in a special journal. Four members drop out of the club, bringing the group back to the original characters: Kristy, Mary Anne, Claudia, and Stacey. Four Friends Forever.

## Everything Changes Details

Date : Published September 27th 2016 by Scholastic Paperbacks (first published July 1999)

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Author : Ann M. Martin

Format : Kindle Edition

Genre : Young Adult, Childrens

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## From Reader Review Everything Changes for online ebook

### Abi says

i liked it! not a lot... but i liked it! i didn't really like the ending though... not very good...

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### Meaghan Steeves says

It was kind of nice to re-read this again I just reaaaallly wish Kristy and Claudia could write/spell better. It was painful to read at times.

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### Alex says

"Everything changes", indeed. I remember being slightly horrified by this book when it first came out, because I thought it destroyed my beloved BSC. Weirdly enough, though, it soon became one of the books I liked to re-read the most as years went by. Reading this again now, I'm struck by the fact that there really isn't much of a plot here, but I still found myself loving it for nostalgic purposes.

The Friends Forever spinoff was very short-lived, but I actually liked the series once I got used to it. The focus is back on the four original members, and the obligatory baby-sitting chapters are mostly gone. I've always felt that it would have made more sense for the girls to be entering high school for these books, but I guess they will be 13 year old eighth graders for all time.

I'm kind of glad I'm sick right now, because it gives me a good excuse to binge-read this entire series. =)

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### Ciara says

so, after mary anne's house burnt down in the final book of the regular babysitters club series, they came out with this pile of crap, the first in the truncated post-BSC "friends forever" series, which follows the four original members of the babysitters club beyond graduation from the eighth grade & the dissolution of the babysitters club. it is all told in the form of journal entries, letters, & e-mails between the girls--thankfully, not in their penmanship fonts, but claudia's entries are still totally misspelled anyway, which is fucking obnoxious. we find kristy heading off to camp mohawk again to be a CIT, along with abby, who is allergic to everything & has a very bit role in this saga. mary anne is supposed to go to camp too, but she is still bumming hard because of her house burning down--having nightmares & shit. & she is anxious about her dad maybe taking a job offer in philly, forcing her to leave stoneybrook. & she is kind of over her assbasket of a boyfriend, logan, & maybe wants to break up with him. so she begs off camp to hang around stoneybrook & figure shit out. stacey goes to new york to stay with her dad for a month or so, & hang out with her older boyfriend, ethan. & claudia's parents decide that they are going on a back-to-nature family vacation on monhegan, off the coast of maine. first, logan quits the BSC. then jessi applies to ballet school & quite the BSC. then abby thinks things over & decides to quit the BSC. so kristy is enraged with everyone. mary anne's grandma comes to visit & brings along some family heirlooms so mary anne will have some of

her mom's stuff. that must have been halla awkward for sharon. the mary anne's dad opts against the philly job & they decide to re-model the barn, because it wasn't damaged in the fire. & then claudia falls in love with monhegan & eats lobster everyday for like six weeks, which seems kind of crazy to me. & stacey's dad decides ethan is a bad influence & says she can only see him two hours a day, which seems like more than enough to me. i mean, she is 13. what the fuck? & then she is all distraught because her dad wants his girlfriend to maybe move in, & stacey is a total baby about it. & at the end of the summer, they all get together & realize that they have so much going on, they have to scale the BSC way back & maybe disband altogether. FINALLY. really, the whole book is a yawn. i was surprised that the most sensible & interesting character was mary anne, because i always found her dull when i was a kid. but she's really the only one with any sense at all.

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### **Runa says**

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### **Samantha says**

Why I am reviewing all my Baby-Sitters Club books in random order? Because why wouldn't I do that!? Anyway, moving on.

The Friends Forever books came along during a period of time when I really should have been phasing out of reading the BSC and moving on to greener pastries. That being said, I am now 32 years old and still reading this dibbly fresh shit so clearly that never happened for me. Still I wasn't as hardcore as I had once been when this rebrand hit shelves, and though I bought the first one...I never followed up. I had literally not read another single one of those until a few days ago when I got one at a book sale.

In a way I appreciated this short lived spin-off series. I liked going back to the four original characters without all those side bitches they picked up along the way. This one made me sad as a kid though, because it was clear that the story I loved was changing/ending. Hypocritical of me? You betcha, but I do not care.

This book, at it's core, is pretty boring. Kristy and Abby go to camp Mohwak to be CITs for the summer. First Logan quits the BSC...and nothing happens. Then Jessi, who got into a new fancy ballet school, quits the BSC...and nothing happens. Then Abby, super balls to the wall to Kristy's face, quits the BSC...and nothing happens except Kristy is a baby who stops speaking to her for awhile. Still. Nothing happens.

Mary Anne ends up not going to camp that summer because she needs time to chill out. Her house burned down, they're living in a tiny cramped rental house, it's hot and miserable, and her father might get transferred to a new job in Philly. Nothing happens to her at all. AT ALL. Her grandmother comes to town and brings some of her deceased mother's old things with her. Still not very exciting. She wants to break up with Logan, but loses her spine. She just bums around being mopey until her family decides to turn the barn into their new house, but that doesn't happen in this book. They just talk about.

Stacey goes to NYC for five weeks and her dad busts her much older boy toy, Ethan, outside some kind of strip club (he keeps emphasizing it's for adults). He only lets her see Ethan for two hours a day after that, and nothing happens. She banks up the time (isn't that against the rules) to spend like 10 hours with him on

Saturdays, but they still don't do anything exceptional. Oh and her dad's girlfriend is going to move into the apartment, and Stacey throws a toddler fit.

Claudia is on an island off the coast of Maine, where the most exciting thing that happens is she eats lobster every day for a month and busts everyone in her family being normal human beings. Things sort of happen, but not really because they're on a freaking island 10 miles off the coast of Maine.

Also 10 miles seems excessive. I assume it's 10 nautical miles? Who knows, it's Claudia. She's a thirteen year old with un-diagnosed dyslexia.

Anyway yeah. I wanted more from this series, but it never happened. I wanted something more California Diaries, less BSC in a different format. I'll try to read all of these eventually as I gather them up to complete my collection. We'll see how THAT goes.

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### **Ashley says**

I used to love this book when I was in elementary and middle school. It was a really cute book and a great spin on the original Babysitter's Club.

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### **Vineeza Shakeeb says**

I think that this book is okay. But not very interesting. :)

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### **PurplyCookie says**

Remember the Baby-Sitters Club book series when you were growing up? It's a summer change for the Baby-Sitters Club, with major changes in the look and focus of Martin's classic series.

Throughout the summer, members of the club share feelings about who they are and where they are going in a special journal. It was a bit confusing confusing to read as it was in letters, emails and diary entries with sometimes incomprehensible "handwriting". I normally love these sorts of books as a child growing up but Martin didn't do a very good job of it and should stick to narration ones.

I thought so many members leaving all at once was a bit sudden--some of them should have left earlier. In the end, four members drop out of the club, bringing the group back to its original characters: Kristy, Mary Anne, Claudia, and Stacey.

#### **Book Details:**

**Title** Everything Changes (Baby-Sitters Club Friends Forever Super Special, 1)

**Author** Ann M. Martin

**Reviewed By** Purplycookie

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### ★???Ø??★ (Nix) says

I would have liked this more if I didn't have to struggle through Claudia's chapters. I know she's a bad speller, but geez! My editor brain cringed and I had to skim through a lot of it.

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### Corinne Fowler says

Bittersweet and full of hope. Ann M. Martin still moves me, that's for sure. I will FOREVER love the Baby-sitters Club. Just saying.

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### Carley Adair says

#### **This book seemed more like a fan fiction**

This book was not like the others in this series which I was starting to get used to this series. Claudia's spelling had got worse in this book. I also hated how Kristy used peoples initials instead of their name. The story was OK though.

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### Logan Hughes says

This un-numbered, secret first book of the new Friends Forever series is a Super Special, in a way. It shifts from one point of view to another, but it's told entirely in diary entries and letters between Kristy, Mary Anne, Claudia, and Stacey: no internal narration whatsoever. It's also about the length of an ordinary book. All of the girls are in different places for the month of July, so it really is four different storylines with none of them contributing to the others much except for some commentary and advice. So it reads like one of the shortest books in the series, and not much can possibly happen in any of the four storylines: there's no time. Which is fine, since there's not a lot to tell.

Kristy is doing the CIT thing at Camp Mohawk with Abby. While there, she worries about the future of the BSC, especially since she keeps receiving resignations from club members. Logan wants to focus on sports; Jessi is switching to Stamford Ballet Society, a new, intensive ballet school that would put her "on track for a professional career." Even Abby wants to leave, leading to an extended not-talking-to-you sequence. Kristy is hurt and worried and angry--the BSC is her baby, "the best thing I ever did," and it seems like nobody else cares that it's going down the tubes.

Claudia is taken by her parents to a surprise vacation spot: an island off the coast of Maine. She is upset by the lack of modern amenities, including phone service in the cabin. It is in other words exactly like the Maine vacation chapter in Stacey's Book, although Stacey, with whom she is primarily communicating, never mentions that the exact same thing once happened to her. Eventually Claudia starts to appreciate the natural beauty (and she bonds with some artists who are summering there), while her parents and Janine sneak work and trashy novels. Although Claudia was the one who complained most to start with, she ends up being the

only one who gets the intended point out of the vacation. Oh, Henry!

Stacey is spending the month with her father in New York. She's excited to spend a lot of time with Ethan, but her father doesn't like her seeing so much of an older boy and limits their time together to two hours a day. (He's at work all the time, though, so I don't see why Stacey doesn't just disobey.) She is also upset at the news that her father's girlfriend, Samantha, is planning to move in.

Mary Anne commits whole-hog to the *spinning our wheels and accomplishing nothing* plot philosophy of the book, and does exactly nothing. She is supposed to go to Camp Mohawk, but she decides last-minute to stay in Stoneybrook, living in the cramped rental house she hates, because she doesn't want to go away while her whole future is up in the air (her father hasn't decided whether or not to relocate to Philadelphia). Oh Mary Anne, you dumbass. She has every reason in the world to go to camp. Literally all of her problems would be, if not solved, at least alleviated by going away to camp: (1) She's worried that her father will take the Philly job, and she feels anxious and powerless just waiting for that to be resolved. Surely she will know pretty much exactly as quickly if she's there as at home, and as Kristy fruitlessly points out, the distraction would keep her from going insane while she waits for the decision. Plus, it would help her rack up some final good memories with her best friend before the possible move. She might miss Stoneybrook if they leave, but it's pretty dead right now with everyone gone. (2) The rental house she's living in is tiny and cramped. Camp might not be better in this respect, but it wouldn't be worse. Going away would not only help her but also Richard and Sharon. Again, this is a problem with an end point, so it's not like leaving is just putting off the solution until later; it actually removes the problem. (3) She is annoyed at Logan, whose attempts to be there for her in the wake of the fire feel like stifling to her (they seem like ordinary gestures to me, but when you're sick of someone, you're sick of him). She doesn't know if she wants to break up with him or not. Seems like going away for a bit would help her clear her head and figure out if she misses him. Anyway, it's not like he's her reason for sticking around.

Urg, she pisses me off so much. She's martyring herself, but not only does nobody want her to, and not only is nobody helped, but people are actually hurt by it! The camp was depending on her (not as much as if she were a full counselor, but still), and I'm sure Richard and Sharon would be happier not to have a third person using the bathroom and moping around like an unhappy lump.

In the end, (view spoiler)

The Friends Forever series rebrand frustrates me so much because it feels like such an obnoxiously, pointedly wasted opportunity. Essentially it feels like the rebranding changes, including the title change from *Baby-sitters Club* to *BSC: Friends Forever*, were meant to shift the focus from baby-sitting to the school and dating and family stories that the writers/producers/marketers/whatever were now more interested in telling. All *Baby-sitters Club* books had to contain a certain amount of baby-sitting, and I think one of the main reasons for the change was to get rid of that obligation. Which is fine; I don't really care about the baby-sitting, and I love school and dating and family stories. Scaling back to focus only on the original four is fine with me too. In *Baby-sitters Club*, it did sometimes feel like the number of characters raged out of control.

However, the following elements feel like major cop-outs:

(view spoiler)

Sometime I'll have to tell you how I really feel.

Now for the good. Larger-series and within-book plot arcs aside, on a line-to-line reading basis, this, to me, was one of the most enjoyable BSC books of any of the series.

The epistolary format totally works. The girls tell the story in their own writing (but thankfully not in their own handwriting), rather than the usual samey narration, so there's greater focus on giving each girl her own, distinct voice. Because the documents are personal diary entries and letters, the writing is informal and not formulaic like BSC notebook entries; it feels like a rare glimpse into the way the girls actually think. Mary Anne's diary entries are introspective, detail-oriented, wordy, whiny, and, I happen to know, extremely realistic, as her writing reminds me exactly of all my most Mary Anne-like friends (example: she writes out the word "Sigh.") Like her notebook entries, Claudia's letters are irritatingly full of misspellings, but she has a refreshingly simple and direct way of speaking (refreshing after Mary Anne, anyway). Stacey sounds pretty normal, occasionally trendy/Cluelessy, with some melodramatic capslock, which seems about right. (She also gets some of the best incidents to recount, such as shopping with Ethan constantly looking for "guy couches" and her bratty-but-justified mockery of her father's family meeting: "Shall I take minutes?") Saving for the best last, let me tell you about Kristy's diary entries. They're brilliant. She writes in an inconsistently terse shorthand reminiscent of Bridget Jones. I didn't know Ann M. was such a good comedic writer--it seems to come out so rarely in the other books, but it's like this format has set her free.

**Lingering Questions:** Why didn't Richard and Sharon encourage Mary Anne to go to camp? And when they agreed she could stay home, why did Richard get a deposit back from the camp? I thought the CIT deal was that you go for free, because you're working (but not paid like a full counselor).

When Janine lets Claudia use her computer to send email to her friends, why does Claudia say Janine "added me to her account"? She's sending from CKishi, so obviously she's not just using Janine's e-mail address. In reality Janine would have just shown her how to open a Hotmail or something. I guess maybe she made a CKishi user at her own domain, but you still wouldn't say "she added me to her account." I guess it's plausible that Claudia is computer illiterate, since she just learned about spellcheck in book #78.

**Timing:** July (between eighth and eighth grade, as per uzh)

**Revised Timeline:** *This is where I figure out how old the girls would be if they aged one year for every year of book time.* The summer after the second academic year postgrad, making the girls about 24. My revised timeline is depressing me. At least while they were all in high school or college, it made sense to count in academic years, and for the gang to take special summer jobs of the kind students would get (just age up CIT to counselor, for example). I guess I could use the rebrand as an excuse to reboot (I actually think the FF series works pretty well if you assume it starts in ninth grade as I wish it would have), but I've come this far, and anyway as long as the girls are all still pretending that all of the experiences from the BSC series are in their backstory, I might as well keep on keeping on.

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### Allison Venezio says

I started re-reading parts of the "Baby-Sitters Club" series as my way of celebrating the 30th anniversary of what is probably my favorite book series of my childhood. On this go-around, I had torn through a lot of the ones I'd read in the numbered series (I read up to #88 by the time I stopped reading the series in the summer of 1995), but I didn't know the "Friends Forever" series existed until I had started going through the numbered books. Being that this part of the series was published four years after I had stopped reading the original series, I was actually quite happy to see there was more than just the ones I had been accustomed to

reading.

That said, I wound up shelving this one quickly (I started it in December 2016, but stopped very quickly) - I started to have a feeling this one was going to trample on the series I knew and loved. I cycled back to it a few days ago, and found that once I got into it, I was as engaged with it as I had been with the other books. I basically read the entire book in about 3 hours (non-consecutive - it took a few nights to finish it). I was pleasantly surprised.

While a departure from the series I knew and loved growing up, this was actually a fun read. The idea of the book shifting perspectives surprised me a little at first, but I really did enjoy reading through their thoughts on how everything around them was changing, and how things really weren't going to be the same anymore. Like growing up in our world, the girls were growing up (though they are seriously eight years older than me, and I was in 11th grade in 1999, they should have been at least finishing college and getting married by that point!). I am considering giving the other "Friends Forever" books a chance at some point (got a few other books to read!!!), but I was very happy that I gave this one a chance. :-)

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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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