

SUPER SWEET *Unicorn Club*



BY THE TIME I WAS FIFTEEN, I was — like so many girls of my generation — fully obsessed with the wave of teen paperback series that had hit the market. The Baby-sitters Club and Sweet Valley, of course, but also the teen series like Sunset Island and Totally Hot, which targeted older readers; more obscure series like Who Killed Peggy Sue and Palm Beach Prep; Sleepover Friends and Cheerleaders and Girl Talk and so many more. It's been decades since I was fifteen, but I never stopped collecting — or reading — those books.

As an adult working in the communications field, I targeted Scholastic as my dream job mostly because of one brand: The Baby-sitters Club. When I started my twelve-year career there, Raina Telgemeier's graphic novel reboot hadn't yet been conceived. Ann M. Martin's BSC prequel, *The Summer Before*, hadn't even been announced. I was sneaking vintage BSC content onto Scholastic's social media channels whenever I could. Imagine my delight when I actually began to work on the BSC brand!

Watching a new generation of fans fall in love with the BSC was thrilling. So too are the recent Sweet Valley High updates and Sweet Valley Twins graphic novels, the Fear Street reboot, the general resurgence of 80s and 90s pop culture, and the recent spate of books that pay homage the series I loved as a kid. I've long wished for a revival of the kinds of books I immersed myself in back then — YA, but more earnest. Middle Grade, but wilder. Books where the stakes feel really high but are, in actuality, quite low, and leave the reader with optimism and a sense of safety. Our age of reboots and remixes and reimagining makes this the perfect time.

We're supposed to write the book we most want to read. Well, what I want to read is something that lets me escape to a sunny day in the early 1990s; a high school where a group of friends — and their crushes — create some hijinks that they then have to remedy. I want to read zany stories full of heart; stories that generously nod to their origins and don't take themselves too seriously. I want stories about teen girls, for teen girls...as well as stories that will resonate with their moms, the original readers of these kinds of books.

So here it is: *Super Sweet Unicorn Club*, a quirky, loving mash-up of the paperbacks that put teen literature on the map. This book pays tribute to the series that shaped a generation — including their flaws — in a light-hearted but genuine way, bursting with references and callouts to the plotlines and characters we all know and love, as well as those books' iconic structure. It's a vintage paperback with a modern twist for today's readers...both the adults who will get the inside jokes, and teens who will see through them and straight to the heart of the story.

Super Sweet Unicorn Club is my love letter to not just to the BSC and Francine Pascal, but to the women who, like me, saw themselves in those bright worlds — worlds where girls led the way — and to the girls of today who are ready to do the same.

Morgan Baden