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Lulu #3: Lulu's Mysterious Mission

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Lulu is her usual bratty self in this series sequel. In this scenario her ever doting parents are leaving her at home to take their first independent vacation since she was born. It is long overdue. In their absence, they have hired a babysitter. A concept that Lulu finds only slightly less infuriating than being left out in the first place. She throws her usual tantrums and tries her best to lay the guilt on thick. Miraculously, her parents leave her anyway. The babysitter, Sonia Sophia Solinsky out maneuvers her chagrined charge with wily ease. All out war ensues, but miracle of miracles, Sonia holds her own, until they arrive at an impasse. Sonia suddenly reveals that she is really a secret agent with a code name. This wins Lulu over at last and they arrive at a compromise contingent on Lulu’s absolute, willing obedience as Sonia trains in the arts of international intrigue. All is well by the time Lulu’s repentant parents return home, but Lulu has decided that they should be gone more often, a lot more often.

It is somewhat disturbing to think that Lulu has combined her aptitude for obnoxious behavior with the professional skills of James Bond. It will be miracle if the world and her parents survive. Lulu still manages to be lovable, due mostly to her complete lack of self-awareness, and it is hard to hold her responsible. Thank heavens for Sonia. It requires a secret, professionally trained agent to bring such a holy terror to heel. Sonia is merciless in her unrelenting counter measures and is at last the opponent Lulu needs. Mr. B and Fleischman became friends with her, but Sonia has no need of friendship if it gets in the way of protecting a little girl under her care. The plot, characters, and illustrations are humorous and fun and will keep readers engaged. It is sad to note that this book introduces a different illustrator. His skills are excellent but the illustrations in previous series offerings have a softer, more unique touch that has more appeal for some readers. If you enjoy Lulu’s escapades this is a good, but not great, sequel.