***From The Mixed-Up Files of Basi-E-Frankweiler***

***Chapter 2***

***Synopsis:***

The night, Jamie finds detailed plans underneath his pillow. The next morning, Jamie and Claudia board the school bus as usual and sit together in back, and as the bus pulls to a stop at their school, they hunker down in the last row and wait for everyone to filter off . They are both very uncomfortable in their positions but must try to hide as well as possible in order for their adventure to begin. Once all the kids are off the bus and on their way up to the front door of the school, Herbert the bus driver pulls away and takes the bus to the lot where it will stay until the end of the school day.

Claudia and Jamie know they have to be quiet and stay hidden until Herbert has left the bus. Claudia checks her watch and they wait exactly seven minutes and 45 seconds before looking to make sure the coast is clear, then slowly pick their heads up and look over the back of the seat in front of them to see a deserted bus, and no Herbert nearby.

Claudia hears a rattling sound as they walk down the aisle of the bus. She turns, looks at her brother, and finds that all of his $24.43 is in change, resulting in both his pockets being so heavy that they're pulling his pants halfway off. During an argument about the change and the compass Jamie has chosen to bring on this adventure, Jamie finds out that they're not going to be hiding out in the woods but will be hiding out in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

On their way to the train station, Claudia mails two letters; one to their parents telling them not to call the FBI and the other is for a $.25 rebate with two box tops from boxes of Corn Flakes cereal. On the train to Manhattan, Jamie tries valiantly to convince his sister to hide out in Central Park but to no avail, and by the time they get into the city, Jamie has convinced himself that the Metropolitan Museum of Art will have plenty of adventure to suit him. Claudia appoints Jamie the treasurer of their adventure leaving him in charge of not only holding all of their money but approving all of the expenses.

Jamie and Claudia have succeeded in putting the first part of Claudia's plan in motion; that is, not being spotted while remaining on the school bus. A turning point occurs when Claudia's plan actually succeeds and the two children make it safely into New York City on the train. Now the adventure is to see whether or not they'll be able to make it to the Metropolitan Museum of Art unscathed.

***Analysis In Detail:***

Just as Claudia had promised, Jamie finds a detailed list of instructions under his pillow. And just as he had promised, after carefully following all of her instructions to pack and prepare, Jamie attempts to eat the piece of paper. He only gets a few bites in before he discovers that eating paper is not only disgusting, but that it also turns his teeth blue.

The next day, Jamie and Claudia meet up again on the bus. They hide on the bus until everyone else leaves. When the bus arrives at the parking lot, they depart, dodging the attention of the bus driver, Herbert. However, this smooth departure is marred by a loud clanging sound: it turns out that Jamie has brought his twenty-four dollars and forty-three cents with him in the form of coins, which jangle loudly in his pocket.

Jamie has also brought his compass, as he expects that the two of them will be hiding out in the woods. Claudia, rather frustrated, explains to him that they are actually going to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Jamie thinks this is a rather crazy idea, but he is still onboard. Jamie also thinks that the train is not a very exciting way to commence their adventure, but Claudia pulls him onward.

Claudia also mails two letters: one to her mother and father, informing them that she and Jamie have run away and they shouldn't call the FBI; the other to a cereal company, mailing back box tops for a 25-cent reward.

The train station is very close to the bus stop. They board the train, and the trip is uneventful, save for Jamie constantly suggesting that they should hide out in Central Park. However, by the time they arrive in Grand Central Station, Claudia is still glad that she brought her brave brother with her on this great adventure.

Mrs. Frankweiler reveals herself in the beginning as the silent narrator of the book through her letters, making this at least in part an epistolary novel. However, she quickly bows out of the narrative, though she does make her presence felt throughout the text by offering sharp observations to Saxtonberg.

The cost of particular items does date the book - it would be very difficult today to find a hot fudge sundae for 27 cents. A link that converts the currency of the 1960s to its modern day equivalents is provided in the “Related Links” section of this ClassicNote.

There are no particularly close relationships between the Kincaid children. On page 12, the author mentions that they do not even walk to the bus station together. Claudia's decision to bring Jamie with her is based more on practicality than emotion: she knows that he has the money to finance their trip. Moreover, the parents do not appear in either of these chapters as anything more than vague presences; Claudia's mother and father seem to have little impact on her life other than laying down demands for chores and such. Perhaps Claudia is running from a very emotionally bankrupt situation.

Chapters 1 and 2 build the characters of Jamie and Claudia. Despite the fact that she will not actually be able to use the 25-cent reward from the box top to find her adventure, Claudia decides to mail it anyway, which confirms her character as a perpetual planner. As she points out to Jamie, they had just finished the cereal that morning and so she could not have taken it with her to fund their adventure.

***Summary:***

* Pinned to his pajamas is a list of detailed instructions on their whole running away venture. Jamie reads them carefully and commits them to memory.
* Then he destroys the evidence by eating it all. Bon appetit!
* After stuffing all their supplies into their empty musical instrument cases, Jamie and Claudia board the school bus. They try to look natural and blend into the background. NBD.
* When all the other kids get off at school though, Jamie and Claudia don't. Instead, they duck down and wait as the bus takes them farther and farther away from their boring old lives.
* After the bus stops, they wait, hearts pounding, for the bus driver to leave. They finally pop their heads up and look around.
* Freedom.
* Even with all those instructions, Claudia failed to mention that they are running away to the Met. Jamie, who wants to go into wilderness survival mode, is offended by her cushy choice of location.
* Claudia wins out. What else did you expect?
* Jamie takes control of the money though, since he's less likely to blow it on limos and caviar than Claudia is.
* They make their way to the Greenwich train station and take it to Grand Central—the station of dreams and possibility.