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E. L. Konigsburg is the only author to have won the Newbery Medal and be runner-up in the same year. In 1968 From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler won the Newbery Medal and Jennifer, Hecate, Macbeth, William McKinley, and Me, Elizabeth was named Newbery Honor Book. Almost thirty years later she won the Newbery Medal once again for *The View From Saturday*. She has also written and illustrated three picture books: Samuel Todd's Book of Great Colors, Samuel Todd's Book of Great Inventions, and Amy Elizabeth Explores Bloomingdale's. In 2000 she wrote *Silent to the Bone*, which was named a New York Times Notable Book and an ALA Best Book for Young Adults, among many other honors. After completing her degree at Carnegie Mellon University, Ms. Konigsburg did graduate work in organic chemistry at the University of Pittsburgh. For several years she taught science at a private girls' school. When the third of her three children started kindergarten, she began to write. She now lives on the beach in North Florida. Cast & crewUser reviewsTriviaPrecocious Claudia and her brother run away from home and hide in the Metropolitan Museum in New York.Precocious Claudia and her brother run away from home and hide in the Metropolitan Museum in New York.Precocious Claudia and her brother run away from home and hide in the Metropolitan Museum in New York.17User reviews8Critic reviewsYou have no recently viewed pages Feb 18, 2017 Werner rated it liked it My oldest grandson Philip is an avid reader, a trait my wife and I like to encourage. He'd encountered this Newbery award winner in his school library, and wanted to own a copy, so we gave him one for his 11th birthday last fall. When he discovered that I'd never read it (it was first published in 1967, by which time I was in high school, and focusing my reading on more "grown-up" books), he wanted to share it with me, so he loaned me his copy. (Last year, he likewise introduced me to another ki My oldest grandson Philip is an avid reader, a trait my wife and I like to encourage. He'd encountered this Newbery award winner in his school library, and wanted to own a copy, so we gave him one for his 11th birthday last fall. When he discovered that I'd never read it (it was first published in 1967, by which time I was in high school, and focusing my reading on more "grown-up" books), he wanted to share it with me, so he loaned me his copy. (Last year, he likewise introduced me to another kid's classic, *Stone Fox*.) I'd heard of the book, but had no real clue what it was about.Elaine Konigsburg (like some other women writers in the earlier decades of the past century, when the book trade was more male-dominated, she hid her gender behind her initials) became an instant success in children's literature with this essentially debut novel. (It was technically the second one she had published, but both books were submitted at the same time.) That's a deserved tribute to her skill as a writer; the craftsmanship of the book is of a pretty high order.As we learn from the outset through a short "cover letter," the body of the book is supposedly a narrative composed by Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler to her longtime (and long-suffering) lawyer, Saxonburg, to explain a change she wants made to her will. She's a childless 82-year-old widow, as rich as Croesus, and definitely eccentric, imperious and opinionated. Ordinarily, she's not the sort of narrator many kids would readily relate to; but she immediately focuses her tale on two kids, Claudia (age 11) and her nine-year-old brother Jamie. In fact, it's not immediately made clear what relation Mrs. Frankenweiler is going to have to the events of her story. That's a deft move on the author's part, giving child readers child protagonists to relate to, and a bit of mystery as a hook. Claudia's made up her mind to temporarily run away from her home in the New York City suburb of Greenwich, dragging Jamie along for the ride to get the benefit of his assiduously-saved allowance money, and plans to stay in New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art (an actual institution that's still there today) for the duration of her adventure. The expedition will involve both children in a mystery surrounding a Renaissance statuette of an angel that may or may not have been sculpted by Michelangelo –and in some life lessons and self-discovery as well.Like most books aimed at this age group (older pre-teens), this chapter book is a short (182 pages of main text) quick read. It's also well-written, with the kind of story-line that keeps you turning pages compulsively to see what happens next. The author had a genius for characterization; the two kids are extremely realistic embodiments of children their age (while being nicely differentiated individuals with distinctive personalities and speaking styles). She also laces her writing with an undercurrent of dry humor that frequently crops out. Both the humor and the characterizations, as well as the subtleties of the psychological content, IMO, might actually be perceived and appreciated better by adult readers than by kids. The plotting isn't predictable, and we get one surprise near the end that fits like a jigsaw puzzle and was foreshadowed by clues hidden in plain sight, but which most readers won't see coming. On the whole, it's a kid's book that can hold adult interest. Still, I think I might have liked it better as a child than as an adult reader. Why, you ask?As I said, Claudia and Jamie are very realistic child characters; I could recognize a lot of traits of my grandkids in them. But these include a lot of traits that (even though I love my grandkids!) are very calculated to drive me up the wall, and I expect many other parents and grandparents have the same reaction. These kids aren't evil or cruel, but they do have a basically self-centered orientation and ethical cluelessness at times, an aversion to responsibility and a feeling that mild chores are an insufferable imposition. Add to this a capacity for sibling rivalry thick enough to cut with a knife, and a willingness of a younger kid to check his brain at the door and let an older sibling lead him around by the nose into outrageous behavior that he should never even have considered. (Been there, see that every day –want to scream at it.) The whole runaway scenario factors into this. Claudia isn't an abused, unloved child trying to escape a horrible home life. She's a pampered, well-to-do kid who doesn't think she's pampered enough, and just wants to run off to subject her family to "a lesson in Claudia appreciation." Yes, she mailed them a letter (which they wouldn't get until at least the next day!) telling them not to worry –as if they wouldn't! Konigsburg keeps the adults in Claudia's family largely offstage, so that readers can put them out of mind. But you don't put people you genuinely love out of mind, and you don't put them through hell just for purely selfish reasons –and as a father and grandfather myself, whenever I'd let myself think about it, I knew Claudia and Jamie were putting the adults in their lives through hell. Yes, if I'd been the parent, I'd have been unspeakably thankful and relieved to get them back safe. But I might also have grounded them for about 47 years, and possibly packed them off for a semester at a boarding military academy in northern Alaska as a lesson in family appreciation. (Okay, I might be exaggerating slightly for effect. --) That colored my reaction to the tale in a way that it might not have as a kid. (It's also why I recommend the book only for mature kids, who wouldn't blindly consider these characters role models and be encouraged to run away themselves!)Interestingly, a book I read last year, *Wonderstruck* by Brian Selznick (b. 1966) has a similar plot structure: his protagonist is a runaway who sets out for, and hides out in, another real-life New York museum (the American Museum of Natural History). Selznick isn't a Goodreads author, so I don't know if he ever read Konigsburg's classic; but I think it's possible that he did, and that it may have been one of his literary influences. The difference between the two books, though, is instructive (and helps to explain why I rated the later book higher): Selznick's protagonist Ben manages his escape in a way that won't leave his family members insane with worry, and does tell a family member where he's going. And he has a psychological need to go, to deal with a question that's crucially important to him in learning who he is; it's not just a whim, and he doesn't pull a nine-year-old sibling along into the venture.The edition of this book that I read was a 25-year anniversary reprint, with an afterword by the author, which explained a bit about the models for the characters in her own family, the changes in New York City and the Museum itself since she wrote, some of the inspiration for the story, the reason she never wrote a sequel (and I agree with that decision, because I think this is a story that's truly artistically complete in itself, as it stands) etc.; I enjoyed this feature, and felt it enhanced the book. At the time, she mourned the recent passing of both her husband and her longtime editor, who'd both loved the book. Sadly, Mrs. Konigsburger herself passed away as well, in 2013. But this book alone would be a worthy legacy (and she wrote other prize-winning tales as well!), and I give it a solid rating of three earned stars! ...more Hey, I expected much more of the movie after reading the book. The book had way more elements than the movie. Many funny clips that made the book were eliminated. And the whole entire (Important but Minor) role of Saxonberg and the whole point of the story outline. I did like Lauren Bacall's work as Mrs.BEF since she really portrayed the right attitude. They sort of mixed up the events orders and the characters book descriptions(attitudes,appearance etc.) well it wasn't horrible. The only thing that was portrayed better in the movie was "Angel"(i cant spoil it so no more details :). They also really rushed events into one another too fast. Also they added parts that made no sense. Certain areas were better than others by much. Watch the movie and see what i mean but also read the book too! ENJOY!--MGME :J)Suggest an edit or add missing content

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