



Amalia: Diary 3

Ann M. Martin

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When Amalia is verbally assaulted in a racist incident, it affects her deeply. Her family, friends, and new boyfriend help heal her self-confidence -- and restore her faith in other people.

Amalia: Diary 3 Details

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From Reader Review Amalia: Diary 3 for online ebook

Julia says

I hope i get to this book soon. it says that she is judged by her skin color!!! uh oh..

Amanda says

This book could have been better. I liked it but it was also not the best. Although Amalia's diaries are my second favorite ones.

I never really liked Ann M. Martin books and I still don't. This series was okay but it was not the best series I have ever read. Anyways I still recommend the series.

Nikki Boisture says

Another boring one for the blog. The CD series as a whole is best when Sunny or Ducky narrates. Maggie and Amalia are just kind of bland.

Samantha says

While this book was not the best in the series, it was refreshing. You don't see a lot of books for this age group touch on the subject of racism, and when they do they're very rarely about Latino people. In that was it was necessary, welcomed, and appreciated. I just wish it had had a little more substance, a little more oomph. Fare the well, Amalia! I wish I knew what happened to you after you FINALLY got past 8th grade!

Logan Hughes says

Amalia is hate crimed.

Amid various party-related plotlines (Amalia and Isabel are planning a party for their family, Sunny and Ducky are planning a going-away party for Dawn as she prepares to spend another summer in Stonybrook), Amalia is assaulted by some drunk girls who call her racist names and spit on her. She is shaken to her core. She's never experienced such open hatred based on her race. She feels diminished and disillusioned. In the end, she realizes/decides that dignity isn't something that can be taken from you, but something you have inside.

On the one hand, I think that racism is an appropriate topic for kids' books and that they need to learn about it--both for kids who've experienced the effects firsthand and for those who haven't--and I like that this isn't Amalia's first book, we're not being introduced to her as The Latina One, she's just one of the gang and we've

been in her head before and this attack seems to come out of left field and be totally irrelevant to who she is and what's important about her, and that is all correct. I do feel that pre-teen books from the 90s tend to present racism in extremely hamfisted way. "The racists" are openly evil, just outright saying nakedly racist stuff, which I mean happens, but we never see the everyday racism: the microaggressions, the effects of systemic/institutional stuff, the more subtle feelings of inadequacy at being compared to white standards of beauty, the hopelessness of lacking role models, the loneliness at being the only Latina or Black woman in the room (or, in Amalia's case every time she's at Maggie's: you and the maid are the only Latina women in the room). These books openly and explicitly present a worldview where race is such a non-issue in everyday life and the only time it comes up is in these moments of cartoonish, KKK-style racism. It's where we were in the 90s, I guess, but it's frustrating, because it promotes the erroneous idea that white people who DON'T attack people in the street can comfort themselves that they are doing all they can do and they can just sit back and consider themselves perfect anti-racist princes.

Oh, well. I guess that's a pretty heavy rant to lay at the feet of this book. Which was fine, I guess. The party-planning antics were a little boring to me, but it provided a light counterpoint to the serious main plotline.

Highlights: Amalia's illustration of the Krebs cycle.

The Ambiguously Gay Ducky: Amelia is frustrated that none of her friends can understand what she's going through because they are white. Except: "Maybe Ducky, a little bit. The boys make fun of him for being different--but that's just because of his mannerisms and the way he dresses and the fact that he hates sports."

One for the ambiguity pile: Amalia weirdly and seriously appears to assume that Sunny and Ducky are dating. "...those two make such a cute couple... They have what it takes, Nbook. Not Brendan and me." I'd let the "cute couple" comment pass as a joke if she didn't seem to seriously be sad that they are better at dating than Amelia and her boyfriend. No they're not, Amalia! They are clearly not attracted to each other, even leaving aside Ducky's ambiguous sexuality. They have each explicitly stated that they are not attracted to each other.

Amalia describes her day at the beach with Dawn, Sunny, Maggie, and Ducky as "laughter and swimming and volleyball and boy-watching." (Respectively?)

Author Gratefully Acknowledges: Peter Lerangis, a white man.

Timing: May 25 to June 19

Revised Timeline: We're coming up on the third summer post-grad. At one point, while studying for her finals, Amelia jokes that she'll be in eighth grade forever. If only you knew!

Kiana Cook says

Yet another bleak and unsettling entry in the underrated *California Diaries* series. Amalia's third diary is a harrowing and necessary look at racism, fearlessly depicting verbal (and slightly physical) abuse that she encounters outside a movie theater one night and charting her following messy emotional journey. I think this was one of the first books I read as a child that presented racism in such a frightening, real way, while still giving the heroine self-acceptance and the ability to move forward. *California Diaries* has always been

really excellent at introducing readers to very adult problems—depression, death, drugs—but I think the way it handles Amalia's experiences with racism are particularly admirable.

I also appreciated the way *Amalia, Diary Three* expanded on Amalia's friendship with Maggie and how, even this far down the line, they still have trouble communicating and figuring out how to handle one another's problems. The same thing goes for Amalia's newfound romance with Brendan, where they're both shy and uncertain about how to interact with one another, especially following Amalia's traumatizing experience. And, once again, Amalia's big sister, Isabel, is not portrayed as an evil witch but a real human being, mentor, and peer who tries to help and teach Amalia, while still having her own issues and biases.

Amalia, Diary Three is definitely one of the stronger books in this series, and easily the second-best installment in the “Diary Three” section (only bested by *Sunny, Diary Three*). This is one installment that is unflinchingly honest and really lets the character development shine through—Amalia has grown up so much since the first few books.

3.25 stars.

Brittany says

I really enjoyed this whole series of books. (I'm a sucker for books written as diaries). With this particular book you can really feel Amalia's pain along with her happiness.

Laura says

This book deals with racism, but I am not sure how effective it is. A fine installment for the series, however.
