



PLOT:

When Nancy Drew learns that she has won a holiday for two on an island resort, she is completely mystified because she had never entered any contest for such a prize. Her suspicions grow when an abandoned boat linked mysteriously to her and her father is traced to strangers at the same resort! More than ever, Nancy realizes she must contact her girlfriends, Bess Marvin and George Fayne, who have gone to the island ahead of her. But unable to reach them, the young detective finds herself on the brink of yet another intriguing mystery involving a strange old medallion and a long lost treasure! (From the back cover.)

CHARACTERS:

Nancy Drew - the eighteen year old sleuth searches for a lost treasure while trapped on an island

Bess Marvin - the timid blond is kidnapped and her friends must find her before it's too late

George Fayne - the athletic tomboy helps Nancy to find her missing cousin

Carson Drew - Nancy's father who always remains a voice of reason in difficult circumstances

Sheriff Boyd - a gruff lawman investigating the mysteriously abandoned boat near Miami

Jeff & Lena DeFoe - owners of the island resort, they have vanished without a trace

Penny DeFoe - the owners' granddaughter, mystified by her grandparents' disappearance

Avery Yates - a retired jeweler who specializes in antique jewelry

Tom - one of the island staff that picks up George and Bess from the airport

Jack - a friend of Tom's who has a treasure map for the lost treasure

REVIEW:

"Did you enter another contest, Nancy?" The housekeeper's question to Nancy starts the young sleuth on her latest mystery-solving adventure, since the Titian-haired sleuth never entered any contests. Bess and George are excited for her, however, when they discover she has won a week-long holiday for two at the Sweet Springs Resort on beautiful Anchor Island. The prize announcing letter is not signed by any

owner or official from the resort, but a telephone call to the airport advises that the airplane tickets to Nassau are indeed real. Nancy speaks with her father, who is in Miami on a case, and he not only encourages her to accept the offer, but offers to pay for Bess and George to join her. First, however, he needs her help on a mystery involving an abandoned boat found on a secluded inlet near Miami. Plans are made, and Bess and George take the prize-winning airline tickets, while Nancy goes to Miami to meet with her father.

Sheriff Boyd, who meets them at the site of the abandoned boat, is none too pleasant. He makes it clear that he feels that Carson and Nancy Drew are somehow involved with the abandoned boat, since a folder with clippings of Nancy's career was discovered on the boat! Nancy insists that she has never even seen the boat before, and she has no idea why anyone would have these clippings, but the Sheriff is hesitant to believe her. When Nancy and her father do a thorough search of the boat, Nancy discovers a secret compartment in one of the cabins and finds an old necklace with a tarnished medallion. Wondering if it could be a clue, Nancy shows her father, who suggests they let his old friend, Avery Yates, look at it since he specializes in antique jewelry. Mr. Yates comes to their hotel rooms to keep the medallion's discovery a secret, and he agrees to clean it up and try and determine its origins.

In the meanwhile, Nancy becomes worried since she hasn't heard from Bess and George. When she attempts to contact the resort, after many unsuccessful tries, she is finally able to reach someone who quickly informs her the resort is closed and there is no one by those names there - then he promptly hangs up! Confused and worried, Nancy convinces her father that they must go to the island to check on her friends. Those plans become uncertain, though, when the Sheriff accuses them of stealing the boat - which is now gone! Upon inquiry, Nancy learns the boat was owned by Jeff and Lena DeFoe - who just happen to own the Sweet Springs Resort on Anchor Island!

Finally confiding in the Sheriff the mysterious happenings regarding the "prize" that she won, Nancy and her father are allowed to leave for the island to find her friends, with one stipulation - they must keep the Sheriff informed of what is happening. Agreeing quickly, Nancy and her father stop first to pick up the medallion from Mr. Yates, who has uncovered a carved broken anchor on one side of the medallion, then catch a plane to Nassau, and from there they take a private sea plane to Anchor Island.

To Nancy's dismay, the island appears deserted until George appears. As the sea plane leaves, George explains in exasperation that they have no way off the island! The radio doesn't work, there are no planes or motor boats, and the only other person on the island is Penny DeFoe, the granddaughter of the owners of the resort. She informs Nancy that she and Bess were met by Tom, the resort's caretaker, at the airport, and he brought them to the resort but left quickly thereafter. Nancy and her father are quickly introduced to Penny, a pretty young redhead, who advises that she had come to the island to meet her grandparents but was surprised to find them gone!

It is then that Nancy realizes Bess is not with them. They walk to the resort, but they are shocked to discover Bess is gone! A search of the grounds and nearby beach uncovers a small torn fabric from Bess' outfit, but no other sign of their friend! Worried, the group returns to the resort where Penny shows Nancy the note from her grandparents informing her that they would be gone for a while.

The group's fears begin to grow when they discover that the only radio has been smashed! Not only does that mean they have no means to communicate with anyone off-island, but it also means that someone else was on the island with them - someone who wants them to remain secluded! Knowing the medallion is an important clue, Nancy and George hide the medallion in a loaf of bread and keep it in the freezer with large selections of food that is stored there.

It's an island of intrigue and fear as Nancy and her friends search for Bess and a reason for the forced seclusion on the island. A total blackout causes their fear to intensify, but hope for resolution comes when Nancy sees the DeFoes' boat near a cave entrance; however, the boat disappears before she can show anyone else. Then a rowboat that Nancy is using to fish begins to sink thanks to a conveniently placed hole in the boat - but that boat, too, disappears before she can show anyone else. More determined to get to the bottom of things and find her missing friend, Nancy sets out to uncover the meaning of the medallion.

When Penny tells her the legend of a pirate treasure on the island, Nancy begins to wonder if the medallion is part of the treasure - or a key to finding the treasure?! When she, George, her father, and Penny decide to light a fire atop a high hill in hopes of someone from a neighboring island spotting it, Nancy wonders from the group and hears a motor running! Thinking it could be a boat to rescue them, Nancy rushes to find the source of the noise - only to find herself kidnapped instead!

A narrow escape from her kidnappers in a boat, a sudden realization regarding the broken anchor on the medallion, and a dangerous search in the catacombs of caves under the island ultimately lead Nancy to finding her missing friend as well as Penny's missing grandparents! But the excitement doesn't end there - for Nancy knows there's a treasure to be found, and she doesn't rest until she finds it!

PERSONAL THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS:

I find this book sort of reminds me of the new television series *Lost* or even the reality-show *Survivor* in that our favorite sleuth and her friends are trapped on an island with no way off and must fight for their survival against the unseen and the unknown - all the while searching for a treasure with only the bare minimum of clues! So long before today's successful series hit the TV screens, Nancy Drew was already on the case!

Another thing that struck me as odd is how not only is Nancy distrustful of the Miami Sheriff, but she also takes evidence and has it “cleaned” without ever informing the Sheriff of its existence! Taking the possible evidence is a criminal offense in and of itself, but then to have it “cleaned” without dusting for fingerprints or anything - well, that certainly wasn’t very Nancy-like at all!

With a minimal of characters, this book is a refreshing change from the last few books that seems bogged down with supporting characters! Plus, instead of focusing on “whodunit” in this mystery, it’s a refreshing change of pace to have the mystery more focused on finding Bess and the hidden treasure.

These paperbacks are not the original texts - they may not be as rich in details and the characters may not be as multi-dimensional, but the stories are entertaining and original, and the cover style and the art are definitely high standard. Give them a chance - start “wander-ing” through these first Nancy Drew paperbacks - you might just find you like them!