It was a dark and stormy night... Both inside and out, you have to start paying attention!!

Claudia!!

You have to start paying attention!!
FINE...WHAT WERE WE TALKING ABOUT?

TIMES TABLES. WHAT'S THIS ONE?

13?

NO, CLAUDIA; 6 PLUS 7 IS 13. THIS IS MULTIPLICATION. WHAT'S 6 TIMES 7?

...23?

NO! IT'S 42. IF YOU DON'T HAVE THESE MEMORIZED BY NOW, IT'S UNLIKELY YOU WILL PASS YOUR MATH CLASS.

I'M CLAUDIA KISHI.

MULTIPLICATION FACTORS HEAVILY INTO THE EVERYDAY LIVES OF MOST PEOPLE IN OUR SOCIETY. IN FACT...

AND THIS IS MY OLDER SISTER, JANINE. JANINE THE GENIUS.

SHE'S SUPER-SMART, AND I'M SUPER... UM... WELL...
I like to draw, and paint. Scientists believe that perhaps...

And make stuff!

I make jewelry and customize my clothes.

Janine would never dream of doing those things.

Claudia!!
Mom and Dad insist that I tutor you, but you spend all of your time daydreaming!

That's because you keep rambling on about boring stuff!

Math isn't boring! It's a fundamental brick in the foundation of --

CRACK~

Janine... remember when we were little and would crawl under Mom and Dad's bed during thunderstorms?

BOOM!

Yes... I do recall we were often frightened.
Very interesting, psychologically. The fear process --

I was just talking about thunder and lightning.

Can’t you speak normally for once?!

I am! I was just talking about thunder and lightning.

Well, I don’t understand a word you’re saying.

Never mind.

I was simply trying to uphold my end of a meaningful conversation with my sibling.

You were trying to what?!

Talk to you!

I did!!!

Well, why didn’t you just say so?!
Hello, my Claudia.

Hi, Mimi.

Mimi is our grandmother.

What is the matter?

Oh . . . it’s just Janine.

She was trying to help me with my times tables, but she was really just making me feel stupid.

Mimi is endlessly patient. She always listens to me.

I’m sure she was not trying to make you feel bad, my Claudia.

You and Janine simply see the world in different ways.

Yeah . . .

And she has a nice way of explaining things.
She wants to help. It is true that math is important. But it's so boring!

May I help you? You must practice, practice, practice if you want to learn.

I guess so.

I don't know what I would do without Mimi.

I don't know what anybody in my family would do.

Did you study for your math exam, Claudia?

Thank you, mother.
Of course I studied. I can't promise to ace my exam, but I studied.

Look, just because Miss Perfect over there studies 24 hours a day, that doesn't mean I'm going to do the same.

Are you sure you studied enough?

I've got my paintings, and I've got the Baby-Sitters Club, and --

Well, if you don't pass your math class, you might need to give those things up.

What?! No! Mom, I need my art . . . and the club needs me.

Rioko, I am sure Claudia will try her hardest.

It is the last week of school. There is plenty of pressure on both of the girls to do well.
THAT'S TRUE.

CLAUDIA, ALL WE ASK IS THAT YOU SHOW YOU'RE MAKING AN EFFORT.

I HAVE FAITH IN YOU, MY CLAUDIA. HAVE A GREAT DAY AT SCHOOL.

THANKS, MIMI.

THERE'S REALLY NO SUCH THING AS A "GREAT DAY AT SCHOOL," UNFORTUNATELY.
YAK, YAK, YAK...

BOURING, BORING, BORING...

FREE, FREE, FREE!!