



## The Unintentional Time Traveler

*Everett Maroon*

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## **The Unintentional Time Traveler** Everett Maroon

Fifteen-year-old Jack Bishop has mad skills with cars and engines, but knows he'll never get a driver's license because of his epilepsy. Agreeing to participate in an experimental clinical trial to find new treatments for his disease, he finds himself in a completely different body—that of a girl his age, Jacqueline, who defies the expectations of her era. Since his seizures usually give him spazzed out visions, Jack presumes this is a hallucination. Feeling fearless, he steals a horse, expecting that at any moment he'll wake back up in the clinical trial lab. When that doesn't happen, Jacqueline falls unexpectedly in love, even as the town in the past becomes swallowed in a fight for its survival. Jack/Jacqueline is caught between two lives and epochs, and must find a way to save everyone around him as well as himself. And all the while, he is losing time, even if he is getting out of algebra class.

## **The Unintentional Time Traveler Details**

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Author : Everett Maroon

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## From Reader Review The Unintentional Time Traveler for online ebook

### Shay West says

I enjoyed this little time traveling tale! I have always been a sucker for time travel (Quantum Leap and Doctor Who!!) and this book didn't disappoint. What intrigued me was the genre swap that takes place when Jack goes back in time and in Jacqueline. The author takes the reader on an emotional roller coaster ride as Jack learns to navigate being a girl, gets used to being a girl, then has to go back to being Jack again. Not only that, but Jack figures out that he needs to stop a certain thing from happening in the past, save the people he loves, and all without the help of someone to guide him (well, mostly). I can't wait to read the rest of the books in the series and find out more about Jack and his abilities.

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### Aj Sterkel says

The concept of this book is amazing. I really wish the execution had been better.

When teenager Jack Bishop agrees to participate in a medical study, he hopes that it will help with his epilepsy. He does not expect that the study will send him back in time, but that's exactly what happens. During the study, the doctors induce a seizure, and Jack wakes up in 1926. To make things more bizarre, Jack isn't in his own body. He's in the body of a girl named Jacqueline. Can Jack/Jacqueline use their newfound time travel skills to save Jacqueline's town and navigate the tricky relationships in both of their lives?

**This book puts a unique spin on a time travel story.** When Jack travels, he doesn't take his body with him. He has to adapt to whatever body he finds himself inhabiting. This raises a lot of interesting questions. How much does a person's body influence their personality? Could you still be yourself if your body was suddenly different? Would you be more comfortable in a different body? **I love that the author doesn't moralize** or try to give concrete answers to these questions. He just allows Jack/Jacqueline to be themselves and explore their identity. Whatever happens happens.

**The plot takes a while to get going, but once it does, I was totally hooked.** There are so many twists that I didn't see coming. The ending is nuts.

I enjoyed the action and the body-swapping, but I had a ton of issues with this book.

First, **I was frustrated by how uncurious the characters are.** If I woke up in 1926 inside someone else's body, I'd have *a lot* of questions. I kept waiting for Jack/Jacqueline to ask my questions. When they finally got around to asking the important ones, the questions weren't answered. I know that this book is the first in a series, but I think more answers could have been given. It's frustrating to not fully understand what's going on. I mostly want to know who is in Jack's body when he isn't using it. I spent the whole book waiting to find out, and I never did. There were a zillion opportunities for Jack to ask that question.

Also, Jacqueline disappears for a few years and then suddenly shows up again. Some people (including her mother) thought she was dead. When she unexpectedly comes home, nobody bothers asking where she was. Wouldn't they be curious about this? I was.

Next, the **instalove is strong in this one**. Jack meets Jacqueline's friend, Lucas, and immediately becomes obsessed. I don't understand why. They kiss a few times, and then they're in love. That must have been a mind-blowing kiss.

I think **a few more rounds of editing would have done this book a lot of good**. I sometimes had a hard time picturing the blocking of the scenes. There were a few times where I got confused about something and had to back up and reread. For example, there is a scene where Jack is in a tunnel and wishes he had a screwdriver. A few scenes later, he has a screwdriver. (I think?) Where did it come from? There's another scene where part of a conversation is missing. In another scene, a horse disappears from one place and appears somewhere else. Editing could have fixed these inconsistencies.

Finally, **I questioned the representation of mental illness**. Jack's doctor is sent to a mental hospital after he claims that he has sent his patients back in time. The hospital gives him medication that turns him from a highly educated person to a gameshow-obsessed man-child. Can medication do that? Would doctors allow that to happen to a patient? I'm not sure.

**I don't think I'm going to pick up the sequels, but the plot and exploration of gender were interesting to read.**

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### **Kara says**

I feel kind of awful not giving this a better rating, but for me 3 stars is a good book, and I would say that's where it sat for me.

The problems I had were mainly with the writing itself. Many events felt rushed, and many times the emotions didn't resonate with me. After everything Jack / Jacqueline had been through, and devoting so much time trying to figure out the myriad of mysteries, the end felt too rushed and sudden. This is book 1 of 3, so I have to wonder if some things will be explained later. I'm not the sort of sci-fi / fantasy fan who needs the Midi-chlorians explanation, but there are a few things I'd really love to find out. All in all, I think with some heavy editing and polish this book could have easily been a 4 or 5 stars for me.

As for the positives - this was a very interesting, unique story, and I appreciated that the time travel involved was unlike anything I'd read before. I went in thinking this was about a transgender character in a more explicit way than they are written in the story, and I think it definitely falls under that umbrella as the main character and the story explores gender identity. Jack is born a cis-gender male, but when he time travels into the body of a cis-gender woman named Jacqueline without knowing how to leave, he is forced to adjust. At first he dislikes it, but then when he returns to his body as Jack he feels some repulsion. In the end it seems as though Jack / Jacqueline have accepted and become comfortable in both bodies, as both genders. And in fact, toward the end of the book the character doesn't refer to themselves as Jack, they think, "Jack's body" instead of "my body". I liked reading about both lives as Jack / Jacqueline hopped back and forth, and I enjoyed most of the side characters.

I do have a few questions I'd love to see answered in a future book(s)...

(view spoiler)

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### **Dana says**

Half-baked.

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### **Anthony says**

The Unintentional Time Traveler is a fast-paced piece of YA fiction with a few interesting twists on genre and character tropes that kept me interested and wanting to read more. The characters are well-drawn and complex: no easy trope-role-filling here. There's a tendency, I think, in time travel novels to give short shrift to one set of characters or the other: either the present-day characters are given more weight than the past/future cast, or vice versa. Maroon very capably avoids that imbalance, giving us two sets of interesting supporting characters to get to know, each with character arcs and subplots that affect the main plot. He also doesn't skimp on Jack's personal exploration: how being in Jacqueline's body causes him to reassess what he's always known about himself, how it alters his relationships with his friends Jay and Jeannine in the present. The book is a time-travel novel genre-wise, but it is more so a journey of discovery.

The time-travel itself is of the "take over a past person's body" type rather than the physical transportation of the main character to another time period. Tying Jack's time-jumps into his life-long epilepsy engages the reader not only in the mystery (how is this happening?) but also in the character's fate (will Jack's epilepsy be cured, or are the time jumps making it worse?), adding a level of concern that many time travel novels lack. I also liked the aspect that present-day Jack unpredictably "loses time" when he jumps into Jacqueline's body; it adds another layer of tension to the travel, and also adds another mystery to the mix: how much time has passed and what will be different this time? I won't pretend to be able to explicate the way Maroon's cross-body cross-time travel works, but I will say that in context, in the midst of the book, it made sense to me. And really, isn't that what we want from our genre reading – internal consistency?

Plot-wise, the set-up introduced in the back cover copy would be propelling enough, but Maroon keeps Jack/Jacqueline and us guessing as to what will happen next, and how it all comes together.

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### **Angie says**

I've been enjoying reading books with time travel recently. The title of this book is a giveaway.

One word that can describe this book to me is: confusing.?

The concept of time travel but just the consciousness doing that is very weird. The world building is lacking on a lot of places. Plot holes are abundant here.

We have Jack, a time traveler. But the only thing that travels back in time is his consciousness. And he ends up in different bodies. Most of the time on a girl's body.

The concept is unique but it feels like stories unevenly patched up together. I really did not enjoy it. But I felt

connected at some parts that's why I still gave a passable 3?.

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### **MK says**

Time travel through neural synapse firings. Interesting! Engaging writing, enjoyed the read.

Starts off following Jack, whose epilepsy serves as a conduit for his initial trips through time. Just when the time traveling aspect gets interesting, the story begins to explore gender identity, via the various bodies the self travels into. The story picked up in speed after a few trips back, and more of the time traveling aspect was revealed.

I'm interested to see what happens in #2! And to find out what has happened to Jack, and more importantly, Jack's body, and also to see explained what happened to the characters before Jack's hops, ie what was the story with Jac, and what happened to her consciousness? Actually, what happens to the consciousness of all the bodies hopped into! In Quantum Leap, they went into the white room ;). What happens to them in the Time Guardians?

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### **Kaylin says**

I think the main problem I had with this book, was that it fails to linger in the moment. Perhaps it's just me, but my favorite thing in a story is when the author lingers, gives you a feel for the world. The story itself wasn't bad, but I think a serious problem this book has is that it rushes through almost every single moment. In some ways that is a good thing, it gives a feeling of being caught up in time... but on the other hand I think it could just benefit from just slowing down once in awhile. The ending of the book especially suffers from this horribly, along with the reveal of Jack's Guardian, who essentially answers almost none of the reader's questions. Likewise the villain himself is defeated, but we never truly learn much of his motivations, or really get to see the events leading up to his defeat.

I think I also would have liked to have seen more of the psychological effects of time travel and body swapping has on our hero. We see very clearly that this has not done well for Jack's doctor, but we never really see a terribly huge impact on Jack. He adapts quickly to being essentially shoved into a girl body, and while I imagine there are people that would be okay with that, I don't think even under the best circumstances it would necessarily go that easily.

That said, I did enjoy the book, I enjoyed a lot of the ideas that it put forth, and tore through it quite quickly. Again, my main problem is almost that the book just did not take the time to linger in the moment.

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### **Naz (Read Diverse Books) says**

This book offers an action-packed and exciting adventure with time travel and a complex exploration of gender identity. Looking forward to book 2!

For the in-depth review, visit my blog: [Read Diverse Books](#)

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## C.K. Combs says

The *Unintentional Time Traveler* by Everett Maroon is a soon to be released young adult novel introducing Jack, a self-deprecating and entertainingly sarcastic fifteen year old boy with a knack for automotive repair and self-acceptance beyond his age. He suffers from epileptic seizures that have him despairing that he'll ever be allowed to drive or live without padding on all the hard surfaces in his home. By the time we catch up with him, Jack has suffered through numerous attempts to medicate his condition. When his mother enrolls him in a clinical study for children with epilepsy, he's not thrilled or optimistic that anything life-changing will come of it. Boy, is he wrong.

Using an engaging and entertaining narrative voice, Maroon draws us in quickly and takes us on a journey into the past. What seem to be hallucinations caused by the epilepsy study are actually trips back in time. Our hero drops into the middle of a story pitting a power-hungry con-man and his gullible followers against a small but dedicated resistance. Our hero's efforts to assist in that resistance are inconveniently interrupted by unpredictable time shifts. Though it's not a joy-ride, it isn't without it's pleasant -- if initially confusing -- moments of romantic and sexual awakening.

A couple of chapters in, I had a hard time putting this book down. As with any good speculative fiction, this story sent me down a lot of mental side paths. I already think about gender and identity quite a bit and this story added a few new twists. For example, how much of our identity is dependent on our current physical bodies? Do our identities change along with our bodies or do we transcend the physical? How flexible is identity and gender? Though the topic of time travel has been explored countless times in sci-fi and fantasy, I enjoyed Maroon's new take on it and I'm eager to read more from him on the topic.

Gender and sexuality are essential features of the storyline but Maroon handles them with a light touch, letting the characters explain and demonstrate their importance, rather than lecturing the reader. This approach is matter of fact and refreshing. From my perspective as a fiction writer, I have been thinking a lot about how to treat gender, identity and sexuality in ways that don't sensationalize or beat the reader over the head with moralizing and lecturing. I've found it a bit challenging, as enamored as I am of talking about gender until the cows come home. Maroon's approach is to let gender and sexuality take their place with other characteristics such as height, hair color and favorite color and with about as much drama as one might encounter when looking in the mirror and discovering a new freckle. Shifts of gender are a curious addition to Jack's reality but not one that throws him off the rails for long.

*The Unintentional Time Traveler* is great fun, an adventure story carried along by humor and grace, love and courage. Jack is not your typical teenaged boy, even without the epilepsy and time traveling. He's generous and honorable and accepts his fate with a grace beyond his years. There's a lot we can learn from this kid.

Whether you are a fan of sci-fi, of young adult fiction, or you're interested in fiction delving into topics of gender, sexuality, identity and gender non-conformity, this is a great addition to your collection. The *Unintentional Time Traveler* is book one in the *Time Guardians* series and will be available from Booktrope Editions, on February 24, 2014 in paperback and electronic formats.

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### **Sawyer Lovett says**

I knew this book – Everett’s first foray into long fiction – would be well-written but I had some hesitation about the genre (I’m not a huge sci-fi fan.) I read this book in less than two days. Jack, the protagonist, jumps back and forth between his body and Jacqueline’s. He must learn to juggle two lives and integrate his identities. *The Unintentional Time Traveler* is, at various points, sweet, exciting, anxiety-inducing, and funny. In this, the first of the *Time Guardians* series, Everett brings up themes of family, history, and identity. Can’t wait for the next installment of this.

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### **Bhavya says**

[ who ended up being gay (hide spoiler)]

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### **Bark (Has Atrocious Taste) says**

Free for the Kindle today, 2/11/16, Amazon US. Get yours [HERE](#)

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### **Holly says**

This is a book in which time travel is done *right*. As much as I love Jack, I love Jac even more. a story of a boy with epilepsy dissolves into a story of someone displaced in time and space, trying to get back to his own world. But once the world around him starts to fall apart, the ties Jack has to reality begin to fall apart, honestly, by the time I finished this book, I couldn’t tell which head was the one he really started in, even though it’s explicitly stated it’s Jack - but then, he could just be remembering things, or imagining them.

I love books that make you think when you lose the back cover. *The Unintentional Time Traveler* brings up all kinds of questions, from 'Who are we really?' to questions of one's self and identity, the matter of a soul's gender and place, the effects of time... A boy transplanted into a girl's body, building a life in both times, places and bodies can only work in a well-written book - and this is one of those books.

I could bring up all kinds of arguments for transgenderism and non-conformist sexualities represented and alluded to, intentionally or not, but that would make this an English essay, and I hate having good books torn apart.

Summaey: I just plain loved this book.

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5.5/5

## Meredith Katz says

*The Unintentional Time Traveler* by Everett Maroon is the story of teenage Jack Bishop, whose epilepsy ends up with him put into an experimental program to try to cure him. Unexpectedly (to say the least), this causes him to travel back in time and find himself in the body of 1920s teenage girl, Jacqueline. But as Jack repeatedly jumps between time periods, losing stretches of time along the way, things get complicated in both the past, with a prohibition-era self-proclaimed prophet ruling the town by violence, and in the present (or is it?), as his actions cause rippling repercussions...

Overall, I found this a delightful read with a great narrator and a strong theme of identity. Moving between time periods (both in the "past", and by the way losing time caused him to have to resettle in his life without knowing what's gone on in it) and bodies brings up a strong theme about how identity itself is experiential. The situations you live through in both different time periods and different bodies: both affect your identity. Jack's narrative voice grows and evolves throughout as a result of this variety of experiences.

There's a lot of disconnect and skipping in the book. Both as Jack and as Jac, the protagonist finds that he 'returns' to whichever time to find that life has literally gone on without him. The changes in the world and technology aside, he comes back to Jack (for example) to find that he's gone through puberty, or got a girlfriend, or got a job. All of which he didn't remember, because the Jack who did it wasn't him—or was, but was living life as a Jack who was separate in time. The story starts out fairly straightforward and linear and gets more disconnected and jagged the longer Jack spends in a different time and body, or the more Jack goes back to reset things. I liked this quite a bit because the disconnect is deliberate and plays well into the sense of being about an experience, learning things by living them, not by understanding how they've developed.

The only way I was drawn out of the story is that at several key decision points (both in the romance and in the plot), we don't see Jack's POV on why he's making a decision to act. We just see the dialogue around it, or a skip to it happening. We're in Jack's POV throughout the story and hear a constant entertaining self-deprecating dialogue, so these moments really stood out to me. We're experiencing so many discoveries along with Jack that not seeing the mental decisions to take those steps makes it feel very blank in comparison to what we're reading the rest of the time. I feel it may be deliberate, to play around with the concept of disconnect/skipping/experience, but since we're solidly in a time/setting/body and are seeing thoughts leading up to that and right after the relevant story-driving decisions are made, the lack of seeing Jack make those steps felt odd to me.

Overall, a fun adventure with great characters and a solid theme. I'm looking forward to seeing what the next Time Guardians book will have to offer.

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