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The Pages Of Time: A Time Travel Thriller



Synopsis

After suffering a traumatic brain injury in a shocking terrorist attack, sixteen-year-old Sam Rayner wakes from a coma to discover that he has developed seizures during which he is transported into the body of his past or future self. Can Sam and his friends somehow defeat the sinister forces that want to use his powers for their own ends? Can they manage to save Sam's family from violent deaths that are already in the past and maybe also win the girl he loves by turning back the pages of time?

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Customer Reviews

Most time travel books seem to be leisurely, allowing the protagonists to explore part of their old lives, or sample the forbidden future, or tour a life totally in a different era other than their own. Not this one! It reads like a spy thriller, particularly near the end. In what amounted to be a good sign of the book's appeal, I found myself wanting to push forward and read some more, so I can discover

what happened. The super ability of Sam's was fascinating and I imagined what I would do if I had his ability. He was like his own time machine! The author was also wise to put some limits on this super ability, so that he had to scheme or rely upon others to pick up this ability. This shows the main character's resourcefulness. The only drawbacks I could think of (but those did not distract from my enjoyment of the book overall) were; a) some jarring moments where I would have to re-read and figure out what had happened (I do realize time travel novels can get quite complex easily; this is a fun read however) and b) the violence imposed on loved ones at the very end seemed a bit out of proportion to the level I grew accustomed to throughout the book (but without giving away the ending I can state that the author managed to pull it off such that I forgave him easily). One landmark of a good thriller is a villain I could easily boo and hiss. That was fulfilled in spades by the antagonist, Dr. Lara MacHayden, who had so many self-imposed positive attributes that I could fear her (and not snicker at her like other cartoon villains in other stories). She is also steeled to her mission, without one iota of hesitation. There are many moments when the book is like magic, the plot just soaring to new heights. Highly recommended.

I really liked this book and am waiting for the next one!!! The explanation for the ability of time travel was so well constructed it was believable. I think that the characters were written deep enough for the storyline. This is, after all, a science fiction/fantasy and not a heavy duty novel. The whole idea was great fun and describing it like the pages in a book was spot on making it almost realistic. Sam was someone I liked. I think Chrissie got almost too good as things progressed. Nobody changes that much, do they? But she at least became likable. Loved the characters that he slipped in and then "lost" them until the very end: Michael and Isaac. The end was good as it definitely wrapped the story up but also left room for the next book which I will be reading.

good

Always love a time travel story. Great!

This book is so close to a five star for me that it's hard to give it less. It's a fast, smooth, well-written timeslip thriller with many likeable characters, clever twists, and a nail-biting end. But all that great stuff doesn't start until about a quarter of the way into the book. There's a prologue, which confused me because it isn't really a prologue in that it doesn't happen before the

beginning of the book. Instead, it's a scene from about a quarter of the way in, a teaser, which I'm sure the author put there because he realized a reader might wonder at the beginning where the book is going. At first it seems to be just a story about a boy who has to leave his friends and his plans because his mother got transferred to America, and he's a shy kid who struggles to fit into his new school. There's even a conflict between him and his sister that's given a lot of weight. But I'm not sure how much of that adds anything to the story. I feel the parts that are important could have been handled with backstory and the book started much later. That said, once I got into the real story about distortions in time, a weird drug that enhances it, a mad scientist trying to harness it, terrorists, and all the complications that multiple realities can cause, I was just swept along. Toward the end I couldn't put it down. So my advice to readers who like timeslip thrillers is to press on. I was given a review copy of this book.

Kudos to Mr. Knight for imagining a novel and creative time travel mechanism and using his invention to stir up a nasty brew of terrorism, coercion and ambition whipped up by villainous foes who can only be defeated by a brave sixteen-year-old boy. In this debut novel, Damian Knight slyly sets us down in mundane family drama, slowly turns up the heat to scorch us with family tragedy and then ratchets up the pace and the stakes when he eventually deposits us on the run in a thriller world of gun-brandishing spies and counter spies with national consequences in the balance. "The Pages of Time" is a high concept story, deriving its power and engagement from the clever mechanism Mr. Knight has imagined for enabling time travel. Like all good magic, this mechanism has costs and limitations. Even when mastered, its powers are not enough to allow our young hero Sam to escape a terrible, soul-charring choice. The ending is spectacular, worth the ride and only visible a page or two before it explodes in the reader's face. While the story is a standalone, Mr. Knight has set up an industrial-grade titanium hook into a great sequel or series. The book is smoothly written and scrupulously well-edited, aside from a few rather Germanic capitalization choices here and there which perhaps obey British rules foreign to this American reader. I did not like the writing, smooth and perfectly copy-edited though it was. A screenplay of the same story, plot and characters would be a fast-paced delight, vividly highlighting Mr. Knight's intricate plotting, memorable visuals and thriller genre black-and-white villains while moving the story along to its brilliant finish. The screenplay version by its very format, conventions and constraints would burn away the distractions and digressions that mar an otherwise good story. Take a blow torch to most

of the side character descriptions, most of the domestic drama, most of the "hello, how are you?" chit chat, most of the backstory digressions, most description of mundane moments like the decisions of what tea biscuits to eat or the full read of flight captain's take-off speech, and the camera would show us clearly and easily where we are in space and time, leaving only a spare and fast-paced imaginative and innovative exploration of time travel and its consequences set in a high stakes thriller world. On the page as written as a novel, a reader can easily struggle with jumps between heads and time locations. "Is this the young version of that character?" "Are we in present time or the past?" Upon a careful re-reading, to make sure I understood, I saw that Mr. Knight in fact diligently marked these transitions with reminder clues, but his pathfinding breadcrumbs were often obscured by extraneous detail or side dramas or random conversations that did not keep reader focus pinned firmly on the core drama of his story, a teenager's battle to save his family from the terrible destruction visited upon them by using his powerful--but in the end tightly limited--time travel ability. My peevish quibbles aside, "The Pages of Time" is a solid addition to the time travel bookshelf, and Mr. Knight exhibits in this first book a great natural gift with plotting, world-building and sheer imaginative scale as well as disciplined care in the editing and presentation required to deliver a quality book. I look forward to his next book in the series. * * * I was given a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest and unbiased review.

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