



## The Accidental Time Machine

By Joe Haldeman

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Joe Haldeman "has quietly become one of the most important science fiction writers of our time" (*Rocky Mountain News*). Now he delivers a provocative novel of a man who stumbles upon the discovery of a lifetime-or many lifetimes.

Grad-school dropout Matt Fuller is toiling as a lowly research assistant at MIT when, while measuring subtle quantum forces that relate to time changes in gravity and electromagnetic force, his calibrator turns into a time machine. With a dead-end job and a girlfriend who has left him for another man, Matt has nothing to lose taking a time machine trip himself-or so he thinks.

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

*Starred Review.* Hugo-winner Haldeman's skillful writing makes this unusually thoughtful and picaresque tale shine. Matt Fuller, a likable underachiever stuck as a lab assistant at a near-future MIT, is startled when the calibrator he built begins disappearing and reappearing, jumping forward in time for progressively longer intervals. Curiosity and some unfortunate accidents send Matt through a series of vividly described, wryly imagined futures where he gradually becomes more adaptable and resourceful as experiences hone his character. The young woman he rescues from a techno-religious dictatorship gives him a chance at a mature relationship, while teaming up with an AI that intends to press on to the end of time forces him to decide what he wants from life. Rather than being a riff on H.G. Wells's *The Time Machine*, this novel is closer in tone to Neil Gaiman's *Anansi Boys*, another charming yarn about a young man who's forced out of a boring rut. Producing prose that feels this effortless must be hard work, but Haldeman (*Camouflage*) never breaks a sweat. (Aug.)

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From [Booklist](#)

Since H. G. Wells' heyday, the time travel scenario has undergone so much variation that it's easy to envision the river of ideas finally running dry. But here the ever-inventive Haldeman offers a new twist: a device that travels in one direction only, to the future. Lowly MIT research assistant Matt Fuller toils away in a physics lab until one day he makes an odd discovery. A sensitive quantum calibrator keeps disappearing and reappearing moments later when he hits the reset button. With a little tinkering, Matt realizes that the device functions as a crude, forward-traveling time machine. With visions of Nobel Prizes dancing in his head, he latches it to a car and leaps into the future. The interesting wrinkle here is that each jump ahead is 12 times longer than the last. Matt's successive futures involve jail time, unwelcome celebrity, and assorted holocausts in the earth's climate. He begins to long for his native era. As usual, Haldeman's ingenuity delivers cutting-edge technological speculation and irresistibly compelling reading. Hays, Carl

About the Author

Joe Haldeman is a Vietnam veteran whose classic novels *The Forever War* and *Forever Peace* both have the rare honor of winning the Hugo and Nebula Awards. He has served twice as president of the Science Fiction Writers of America and is currently an adjunct professor teaching writing at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

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