



## The Meq

*Steve Cash*

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*In every generation, a fantasy novel is published that captures something essential and enduring about life that no other book has expressed in quite the same way. Here unfolds a journey of discovery—in a story that surprises us on every page. . . .*

## THE MEQ

On May 4, 1881, the day that Zianno Zezen-Z, for short—turns twelve, his life changes forever. Amid the confusion of a tragic train wreck, he has the first inkling that he is no ordinary boy . . . that he is not human at all, but instead a member of a race known as the Meq. The Meq have lost all memory of their origins; they do not know why they heal with astonishing speed, or why, once they turn twelve, they stop aging unless they meet the single other member of their race destined to join with them.

Certain Meq possess even more amazing powers, thanks to mysterious Stones they have carried since before the dawn of recorded history. Z's father carried such a Stone, the Stone of Dreams. Now that Stone is Z's to bear . . . and to protect.

The Meq are far-flung and elusive, but Z finds allies. He will need them; for a challenge comes from the renegade Meq called the Fleur-du-Mal—the Flower of Evil. A sadistic assassin in the body of a twelve-year-old boy, the Fleur-du-Mal will become Z's archenemy in a story that spans decades and continents and features an unforgettable cast of characters, human and Meq alike.

## The Meq Details

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Author : Steve Cash

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## From Reader Review The Meq for online ebook

### Haley Kerwin says

One of the best series I have ever read.

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### Darlene says

What if you found out at twelve years old that you wouldn't age any further? And that it is a hereditary condition that only a few have. And that there are others out there like you.... oh, and you have special powers (of course). Well, it might not work nowadays. No adventures can happen to that seeming twelve-year-old as you would be told you should be in school. And there are labor laws preventing your going out and finding a job. But around 1900 this might just work. And so it did in the book. The Meq was an imaginative story.

My cousin, Tammy, recommended this book to me. She thought it was great. Maybe I would have loved it too had I not just gotten out of the Daughter of Smoke and Bone trilogy. Which was fantastic, by the way. Maybe it was because I didn't have a narrator and had to use my text-to-speech on my new Fire. At first, I thought it was due to the fact that I was using the female voice which sounded like the boy's mother was trying to tell the boy's story. So I changed it to the male voice. But that voice sounded too grown up. At twelve the voice would have sounded spunky by in the treble clef. It did work better than the female voice. So I speeded up the TTS and found it helped with getting involved in the story.

And so, once I was involved, I found myself curious as to where the tale was heading. This wasn't the best book I've read, but I have to admit that I do want to read the next book to see where the next adventure leads. Which reminds me, points given for lack of cliffhanger. Points taken for not only being rather expensive but not being loanable. Boo! Still it was interesting. Hey maybe by the time I get to the point I can afford the next book, there will be an Audible version to help me out.

There does seem to be quite a variety of ratings for this book. So maybe you will like it like my cousin did. Try it!

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### J.Elle says

I have tried VALIANTLY to read this twice now. I think my efforts have been sufficient, especially as I got at least half way through the book this time but now, I'm going to move on with my life. I've already lost time that I cannot get back, so I'm going to stop now and minimize my losses.

Zianno loses both his parents in a train wreck on his twelfth birthday, which is a huge loss not only because it's his parents, but also because they neglected to tell him he isn't human. Instead, he has to traverse the life of a perpetual 12 year old virtually alone. Eventually, he meets others like him and they band together to search for another of their kind who has turned evil.

This book is long and the font is tiny. If you feel competitive and want to best me, go ahead and read it. Then

feel free to tell me what gloriousness I missed by not finishing it in the comments below. Or admit I was right. Either way.

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### **Terry says**

Thoroughly enjoyed. Highly recommended.

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### **Michael says**

I thought this was going to be a 5 star book after the first 100 pages. I liked the premise and it seemed interesting. Then it pulled back and basically it seemed like a historical synopsis of what happens over the next 20 to 30 years. I had to force myself to finish it. Not recommended by me. I won't read the sequel as I don't care much what happens to the characters.

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### **Catherine says**

I'm not quite sure how to express the enjoyment I felt while reading this book. I was completely blown away by the amount of creativity in the plot, the characters, and even in the format. While each chapter had its own theme, they were interwoven in such a way as to enhance the overall flow of the story. While it is a blend of sci-fi and fantasy, the use of our human history makes it more realistic. Like maybe those weird children in Goya's or Vermeer's paintings are in fact Meq. Maybe I met one as a child or just the other day. Ok, maybe not. But, I loved seeing our human history through the eyes of a being attached and yet detached from time and disease and from many of our daily human fears and obstacles. Maybe through the eyes of a Meq we can fully appreciate our own sense of time and aging and the short life we are given to live. That is the ultimate beauty of a book such as this. And it still remained immensely entertaining and unforgettable. On top of that, the images of Saint Louis or New Orleans at the turn of the century, including all the amazing technological advancements and the contemporary culture to boot. But also an equal amount of details for those remote parts of the world, China and Africa. How could I ever doubt that each moment in our human history at each place in time could have been anything but momentous, magical and unique? And then there are the Meq individually, who have lived and still live through these periods of times, and they carry with them proof that these places and happenings were real. They speak these languages and talk about famous forefathers like common people and friends. They were sometimes the famous forefathers themselves. And, if that wasn't enough to fill pages with, they too have their mystery and history revealed page-by-page. Why are they the way they are? What are these mysterious stones they carry? What will we learn about their existence? Will human life and human history in turn shed light on the Meq existence? I really hope the next book blows everything up a bit more!

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### **Emma (Miss Print) says**

I just finished reading The Meq by Steve Cash yesterday. And, at the risk of gushing, the word "awesome" really doesn't do this book justice. The Meq was Cash's first novel, but the richness of the text and the strong characters seem like the work of veteran writer. So, you may ask, what is the Meq about? The quick version

is that it's a story akin to the Highlander movies. But that doesn't really explain much.

The Meq are a mysterious race of immortals that have been around since, well, the beginning. They stop aging when they turn twelve, they cannot get sick or die, and they do not continue aging until meeting their ameq (soulmate). The catch is they have no idea why they are immortal; no knowledge of their origins.

Cash's book begins when Zianno Zezen turns twelve (for the first time) in 1881 and learns that he and his parents are Meq. This book, the first in a series, spans from 1881 to 1918. Cash's writing style lends itself to the breezy way that the Meq can deal with time (what's a few years when you can live forever?). And, while it may seem strange to read about centuries-old people living in the bodies of children, Cash makes that work too. While the story has adventure and romance, the main conceit of this novel (and I presume later ones in the series) is Z's search, along with his fellow Meq, for the truth behind their origins.

The book is generally categorized as YA, but I really think it's a must-read for anyone who has any interest in fantasy novels.

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### **Lucy says**

On Zianno Zezen's twelfth birthday, in the ruins of a train crash that kills his parents, his life changes forever. Not only are his parents dead, but Zianno, or Z, is soon to discover that he is not quite human—he is Meq, an ancient race of people who do not get sick, and cannot age past their twelfth birthday until they meet their soulmate.

And so begins an epic that sprawls nearly a century, as Z creates a family for himself, searches to understand who and what the Meq are, and hunts down another Meq, a sadistic assassin in the body of a twelve-year-old who calls himself the Fleur-de-Mal, and who has set himself against Z and his makeshift family.

This book is gorgeous and sprawling and vast. It is sort of dreamy and rarely urgent—as the Meq do not age, time doesn't mean the same thing to them, and Cash brilliantly captures the dreamy, timeless world of the Meq. It took me a little while to get really captured by this book, but once I did, I couldn't put it down. Seeing the world—and history—through Z's eyes is intoxicating.

And now I hear that there is a sequel! I have already requested it from the library, and I await it eagerly.

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### **Alice says**

Recommended to me by my friend, Condra, who is a scifi/fantasy geek girl with great Prada boots, I was not sure at first if it was gonna be any good.

That was on page 1 and when I resurfaced a day later I was done and was so glad I listened to her...again(she also recommended Black Jewels Trilogy).

It's impossible to sum this book up into a small amount of space. Just give it a chance if you are looking for a unique vision.

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## **Kayla says**

The Meq  
By Steve Cash  
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True love, special powers, stuck at twelve for centuries or millenias, and you heal at an incredible rate. What could you possibly not like about being Meq? But then again, this secret race is nothing like anything the world has ever seen and trying to keep it secret is hard enough. Zianno Zezen has to face the secrets of his people with no aid and when he finds people he loves, there's no way he can face what the people that he's supposed to relate to can do to them.

When Zianno Zezen and his parents get into a train crash on his twelfth birthday his whole life changes. His parents never get to tell him the truth and his world changes drastically. With only a baseball mitt and ball left to remember his parents, he doesn't know where to go or what to do. He feels himself changing but finds the aid of kind people. When he finds family in an unlikely pair of twins, he finds a place that he can call own and one of his own. Spiraling events cause the people he loves to be hurt. In search of their past, the meq gather in search of the truth but they need "Z" to help them. And then, he finds his ameq, his true love, the one he's meant to be with when and if they want to age.

I loved this book. I thought it was amazing how Steve Cash was able to create a story line that went on for decades and kept the reader interested. At the end of the book, i wondered what it would be like for this type of race to actually exsist. The part about being 12 until you meet your ameq (true love) was really cool and that you were able to physically stay 12 even if you're not mentally 12 until you meet the person you're supposed to be with. I really suggest reading this book, it'll keep you turning pages through decades of Z's life.

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## **Shinynickel says**

For the love of all that is holy and sacred, why do people inflict writing like this on other people?

I should open by saying that this book is not as bad as Shadow of Omen, because nothing is. There's something resembling a plot, some attempt at characterization, and an admittedly interesting idea behind the whole thing.

The grab to it is that there are a race of people who live forever - the catch is that they stop aging at 12. They run around for centuries with adult minds in the bodies of little kids. They have some kind of mating signal that occurs when they find their one and only beloved, at which point they can choose to 'cross over' and begin to age normally so that they can have kids and die.

But 'plot' pretty much equals chase the McGuffin around and around and around, characterization is all tell and no show, and none of the decisions that everybody makes have any sense to them at all once they're looked at closely. It's constantly irritating, because every couple of pages some detail or other will come up

that blows holes in things we were told earlier (though of course the narrative doesn't acknowledge this), and the actions and personalities the characters display are utterly in service to the plot, and so jump around and jitter weirdly from chapter to chapter.

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### **Amanda says**

I really enjoyed this book; it was a little slow-paced at times, but it was a good story.

At the age of twelve, Zianno Zezen (Z) is left orphaned with the knowledge that he is not like most people. He is Meq—an ancient race whose members do not age once they reach the age of twelve until they meet their ameq (beloved) and cross over with them when the time is right. It is only after this that they age and bear a Meq child. There are very few Meq left in the world, and Z befriends several and slowly learns more and more about the Meq although much is left unknown, as the Meq have forgotten much of their past.

All Meq are not kind, though. Z encounters a Meq named Fleur-du-Mal, an assassin, who becomes Z's nemesis and Z spends many years obsessively tracking the Fleur-du-Mal with the intent to kill him.

The story starts out in the late 1800s and ends after WWI and it also spans several continents. For some, it would be a difficult task to create a story that spans so much time and space, but Cash does it quite well.

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### **Sarah says**

This was the last student book club book for 2006-2007!! And it was a good one. This fantasy novel is also on the 2008 Abe Lincoln H.S. Book Award list, so the book clubbers are getting a head start on next year's list.[return][return]This was a very unique fantasy, so I appreciated reading it. I liked how the Meq remain twelve years old, and I loved all the historical tidbits thrown into the plot--Einstein, Jesse James, Scott Joplin, and the list goes on and on. [return][return]Z loses his parents at the beginning of the novel and they try to tell him that he is Meq and different, but he has to figure things out for himself. There are others like him in the world and he runs into a lot of them. Of course, there is the evil one who markets girls as slaves. But, most of the Meq are good and trying to use the power of the stones for good. Z travels to China and Africa for many years on his mission to rescue a friend's daughter and meet his beloved. [return][return]There is a sequel, Time Dancers, that I'll have to purchase next school year!

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### **Karen Malvin says**

The characters are well written and the concept good. However, I got tired of the same hide & seek theme half way through. I finished it because of the reading challenge.

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## **Keifer Laverty says**

Summary: The Meq is a great book for the science fiction lovers. Zianno Zezen starts out by celebrating his 12th birthday. Both his parents died early in his life from a horrible train accident and they told him one last thing before they died, he needs to find Sailor. After a year passes he celebrates his 12th birthday again... Zianno is a Meq a special race of people that never age and heal exceptionally fast. This, for obvious reasons, aids him very much in his quest to find sailor and find out who he is and what he must do. He meets many new and helpful people along the way, one of which is Solomon who helps him the most throughout his journey.

Genre: Fantasy/SciFi

Favorite quote: "I answered the old man the way Solomon would have answered. I said, 'St. Louis, kid...St. Louis'" This was my favorite quote because I love how at the end of the book he ties everything back and connects you back with Solomon and Zianno's home.

Stars: I gave this a book a 4 out of 5 stars because over all I enjoyed it very much but there were some points in the book that kind of lost you and you would get bored or lose interest. Other than the low points all the high points kept you going through the entire book and completely outweighed the "bad" or low points in it.

Text-To-Text Connection : As much as I don't like saying, The Meq is somewhat similar to the Twilight saga where they all have these abilities and they never age.

Text-To-Self Connection : When I was growing up (age 10-12) I had a cousin that never really changed. As I grew up and got taller and such she never got taller or looked any different. She seemed like she never aged or never changed.

Text-To-World Connection: I remember reading a Science article on the internet about a Standford science project where they found a way to increase the speed of bone reproduction or healing. I found it quite fascinating and it easily ties into Zianno's ability to heal exceptionally fast. (Article found here: Standford Science Article)

Recommendation: I would definitely recommend this book to anyone that enjoys a fantasy SciFi book that has a very interesting story line and that through a majority of the book keeps you turning the pages. I wouldn't recommend this book to the younger audience due to some of the graphic scenes in the book.

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