



## Time Flies

*Claire Cook*

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Claire Cook

**Time Flies** Claire Cook

**In this heartwarming novel from the bestselling author of *Must Love Dogs* and *Wallflower in Bloom*, a recently separated woman faces her highway driving phobia and takes a road trip with her best friend to their high school reunion.**

Years ago, Melanie followed her husband, Kurt, from the New England beach town where their two young sons were thriving to the suburbs of Atlanta. She's carved out a life as a successful metal sculptor, but when Kurt leaves her for another woman, having the tools to cut up their marriage bed is small consolation. She's old enough to know that high school reunions are often a big disappointment, but when her best friend makes her buy a ticket and an old flame gets in touch to see whether she'll be going, she fantasizes that returning to her past might help her find her future...until her driving phobia resurfaces and threatens to hold her back from the adventure of a lifetime.

*Time Flies* is an epic road trip filled with fun, heartbreak, and friendship, and explores what it takes to conquer your worst fears...so you can start living your future.

## Time Flies Details

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## **From Reader Review Time Flies for online ebook**

### **Lisa B. says**

#### My Thoughts

In traditional Claire Cook style, this was light and funny along with some touching, insightful moments.... Two besties hook up for a HS reunion sharing their current lives while reminiscing about being teens. I never could quite guess their ages, but with references to things like Bonne Bell, strawberry Lip Smackers, and songs like Van Morrison's "Moondance" or Joni Mitchell's "The Circle Game"- I sure felt comfortable with the two ladies.

Ms Cook is my go to author when I want something entertaining and this book did not disappoint me.

Thank you to Touchstone, via Netgalley, for allowing me to read this in exchange for an unbiased review.

Publish date: June 11, 2012.

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### **Tracy says**

This author needs her own category of over-the-hill female bonding with a hint of romance. If I weren't so fond of this author's early works (Must Love Dogs and her follow up - Multiple Choice, I think), I would have ditched her by now. This book is not an completely unreadable account of a woman recently separated from her husband who goes to her high school reunion with her best friend from high school, it was just not that good.

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### **Kathryn Laceby says**

Originally reviewed at Novel Escapes

I had high hopes for this novel and although there were aspects of Time Flies that I liked I found it slow and difficult to get attached to in the end.

The main character, Mel, was undeveloped. I didn't really feel for her and given that she'd just been through a separation from her husband it could have been made more of so we had that feeling of sympathy for her. I loved her artistic sensibilities and the fabulous sculptures she made throughout the novel but that was really the only thing that gave her any personality. Cook made a particular point of describing the sculptures so that themselves came alive but I wish she had put some more time into the relationships with Mel's sons, her friends (apart from best friend BJ) and her sister-more background about her sister and their growing up would have helped me immensely.

The road-trip and high school reunion were fun and I liked all the references to songs from their school years but there wasn't enough about their friendships. Also peculiar for me was the developed fear of highway driving- it was made a point of but never delved into - just brought up and then somehow she copes with

driving when BJ takes a nap? Other things came in and out too: the contact with her ex, the email flirting with the ex from high school, the constant eating of French fries, all of these things were peppered throughout the story but didn't do much for me to link the people together.

My favourite character was the man who bought her sculpture for his restaurant but he wasn't given enough time in the book. All in all I'm still not entirely sure what the focus of the story was supposed to be- a voyage of rediscovery or a story of friendship? Either way it left me a bit bored I'm afraid- not what I would usually expect from Claire Cook- I've read her novels before and enjoyed them so this one was a bit disappointing.

Thank you to Touchstone for our review copy. All opinions are our own.

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### **S.E. says**

Here's what The Literary Bookie has to say about *Time Flies* by Claire Cook

(FICTION/CLOTH) Summer approaches, the plovers are nesting, its time for a cozy summer read and no one out there dolls out the pick-yourself-up-by-your-bootstraps with the help of a friend by your side and smell the sea air better than Cook. Her recipe seems similar, two friends at a crossroads, an emotional train wreck up ahead and further up the road a life lesson learned. The trick is each time out the author finds the uniqueness of her characters and allows them to find their own way. Relating with her characters and following them through their trials is like test runs for ourselves when we get to our own forks in the road. Here Melanie faces divorce, a looming high school reunion and the fantasy of a new start with an old flame. The only thing stopping her is the miles between Atlanta and New England and a fear of the highway. Enter friend by your side... Essential accessory for visiting the shores, sunglasses, sunblock, and this feel-good novel.

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### **MB (What she read) says**

Enjoyed.

More upbeat and fun than some of these women's lit books, although I wish I'd come across some using a trope other than 'long-time husband/lover does her wrong'. (I'm bored with that one.) And they all seem to have that basic plot. This book had more variety than just that, some themes: accepting the past, moving forward, reconnecting with friends and family, trying new things...

Some random thoughts: Glrgh...the thought of willingly and purposefully drinking all of those Tabs! I'd forgotten about it (blocked the memory?) until being reminded by this book. Yuck! Instantaneous flashback to that horrible taste! Also, this woman needs a real job with an income. I doubt that metal sculpture as a hobby is ever going to be enough to survive on post divorce. However, Melody's creative process was a nice touch, I enjoyed sharing and it felt familiar/realistic to me.

Cover Art: Missed a chance here. Should have shown 2 women in the car, as that is a big part of the plot. Points for the scarf and the red convertible. Someone is at least trying....

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## **Wendy Wax says**

Loved this reunion and reinvention story! Claire Cook totally gets it! Time Flies is the perfect read for Boomers getting ready for those upcoming reunions.

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## **Ruth says**

Melanie, like a good wife, followed her husband as he moved to a job to further his career. She uprooted her children and left the area where she grew up and called home. Now years later, he has left her. Her best friend tries to convince her to attend their high school reunion and she refuses until one day, flashes from the past and an email from a former classmate, who she once dated, has caused her to have second thoughts. Now she is filled with dreams of the connection they will make on this special night.

Cook has done a fantastic job of describing the high school years along with the music and make-up that were a part of life during those times. She also has a moral to her story and what it takes to truly find yourself.

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## **Claire says**

So grateful for these lovely pre-pub reviews:

"Like all of Claire Cook's exuberant novels, *TIME FLIES* will make you laugh, make you cry, get you thinking and leave you with the feeling that the best part of your own life has only just begun!" - Jill Miner, Saturn Booksellers

"...don't let Claire Cook's humorous style fool you. She is one heck of a writer with pitch perfect comedic timing and plenty of heart. Trust your instincts, women everywhere, and read *TIME FLIES*." - Ellen Ward, Foxtale Book Shoppe

"This book is another winner - for Cook - and most of all for the rest of us who will get to enjoy what will surely be the most-fun must-read of the summer for women everywhere." - Joan Lang, Front Street Book Shop

"Claire Cook always satisfies, as she has an uncanny knack for finding the humorous in the everyday lives of her female characters. I found myself laughing out loud, and expect to hear laughter at the beach from other readers this summer." -Karen Vail, Titcomb's Bookshop

"Along the way memories are shared, song lists are played, bridges are crossed, phobias are revealed, apologies are made, awareness is heightened and laughter is abundant. Cook has a talent for transforming the familiar into the funny. Her characters are woven from the school of experience and their actions will make you LOL (laugh-out-loud) as you join them on the way to the reunion." - Totsie McGonagle, Buttonwood Books & Toys

"I always enjoy a book that brings out a variety of feelings or emotions and then when you come to that last page and close the book, you feel it was time well spent with the characters and their journey. Perhaps, even sparking some personal soul searching. Claire Cook's TIME FLIES does just that." - Cat Blanco, Book Exchange

"It wouldn't be summer without an absolutely delightful story by Claire Cook that deals with family and friends in situations that are hysterical. Sit back, relax, and enjoy your "road trip' with Melanie!" - Joanne Doggart, Where the Sidewalk Ends

"Time Flies is the perfect summer read for any women looking to go on another journey into Cook's witty writing style that will make you cry so hard you will laugh and laugh so hard you will cry and be eager for life's next adventure!" - Lindsay DiTocco, The Book Shack

"After accompanying Melanie and B.J on their hysterical road trip, readers will feel like they've made friends for life." - Kirkus

"A spunky, lighthearted road trip down memory lane. . . . The banter is a lot of fun, and the characters' realization of what is important is certain to make readers yearn for reconnections of their own. Another delightful beach read from the author of Wallflower in Bloom." -Booklist

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## **Jackie says**

Yes, it's officially summer now because there is a new book by Claire Cook on our shelves. Time Flies is a good one (but aren't they all?). This time it deals with a divorced woman and single mother trying to make her way in the world with her metal sculptures. She has two looming problems--her fear of driving on highways, and her high school reunion. This is a wonderful book about becoming yourself again, celebrating it, and flaunting it when you can. I really identified with Melanie, and ended up doing no small amount of cheering for her, mentally and occasionally physically. Cook's characters always leap off the page and into your heart, and this one is not different. Trust me, you want to hang out with Melanie this summer, so read this book!

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## **Jeananna says**

I just finished Time Flies. I am breathless! What a fantastic journey CC took me on! Fave read of 2013 so far! I will write my complete review tomorrow...

### **TWO BEST FRIENDS, A HIGH SCHOOL REUNION, AND A ROLLICKING ROAD TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE**

YEARS AGO, Melanie followed her husband, Kurt, from the New England beach town where their two young sons were thriving to the suburbs of Atlanta. She's carved out a life as a successful metal sculptor, but when Kurt leaves her for another woman, having the tools to cut up their marriage bed is small consolation. She's old enough to know that high school reunions are often a big disappointment, but when her best friend makes her buy a ticket and an old flame gets in touch to see if she'll be going, she fantasizes that returning to

her past might help her find her future . . . until her highway driving phobia resurfaces and threatens to hold her back from the adventure of a lifetime.

Time Flies is an epic trip filled with fun, heartbreak, and friendship that explores what it takes to conquer your worst fears . . . so you can start living your future.

First off let me say that if ever another of Claire Cook's books needed to be made into a movie this is the one!! (she also wrote *Must Love Dogs*) This is a story that every woman, mom or best friend can **TOTALLY** relate to!! And the soundtrack for this movie would be a # 1 hit overnight! I started highlighting the songs that were mentioned and created a playlist that I will keep **FOREVER!**

In my opinion, high school reunions are a special kind of torture that you either dread or anticipate as they approach... it depends on how content you are in your life at that time. At the time of this reunion Melanie is not content and she has major reasons not to be: her soon-to-be ex-husband and the infamous Crissy, she is still adjusting to an empty-nest and her highway driving phobia she cannot seem to conquer. But the light at the end of her tunnel of discontent comes in the form of emails from an old high school flame. So begins the road trip of a life time!

The dynamic between Melanie and her best friend BJ and two of their other girlfriends from high school is so true to life and made this reader assign these characters to friends in my own life (and I vow to be a better friend thanks to CC's gentle reminders). Shouldn't we all have those people in our lives that force us to look outside the box and live a little!! The emotions that Claire Cook evokes from Melanie's interactions with her sister made me as angry as BJ was for Melanie's tears. And I cheered as Mel finally came to the conclusion that she will never be able to live up to her expectations and being the bigger person to apologize, say *I Love You* and simply move on. And Kurt... BOOOO. I agree that Mel "was always too good for him".

As I finished this book I was emotional and breathless and excited for Melanie to start to live her future. At the same time I was so disappointed that the journey had to end! This was my favorite ChickLit read so far for 2013 and this story will stick with me for a long time to come!

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### **Judy says**

Loved this book, perfect summer read! BJ is the best friend we all want. Like that there wasn't a "storybook" ending, but that it was believable and hopeful. Characters were well drawn and the story was allowed to evolve and not end abruptly. Read it, especially if you've ever been on a South Shore of MA or Cape Cod beach, you'll be transported back in this book! Enjoy!

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### **Alexa Darin says**

I would like to preface this review by saying that I had no problem with the writing in this book. The writing was stellar. That being said, let's get on with this.

The opening pages of *Time Flies*, by Claire Cook, held great promise, with the main character (Melanie) cutting up her marriage mattress. Loved the potential there for a fast, fun read. And when she and her friend B.J. set out on a road trip, destination high school reunion, I was expecting all kinds of craziness. But when

Melanie turned into a whiny whiner, and B.J., who turned out to be a needlephoebe (someone afraid of needles...and yes, I realize that's not the proper medical term for someone who's afraid of needles), came down with crybabyitis, the story flat-out fizzled.

Okay, let's talk about the whiny whiner. Melanie doesn't like to cruise the freeway (understandable), she has an ex who done her wrong (but we never really get to the why, how, who, or what of it), and for three hundred long pages, we are forced to endure her love for Tab (soda pop, not a man). I kept wanting to pound my fists and scream, "C'mon, ditch the tab, pick up some Cuervo, and go raise hell at your reunion." Only the reunion fizzled too, as in never did happen. In fact, I think the reunion premise was just a tease. Instead, all we got for our efforts was a tattoo. Um, I mean the whiner and the crybaby got tattoos. Which didn't make a whole lotta sense, so I'm thinking it was filler material.

Then we have the thriller material, where Melanie and B.J. piss off a trucker and then...nothing. Oh, unless you want to count the e-mails passed back and forth between the whiner and some guy who convinced her to go to the reunion that never was.

To sum it up, *Time Flies* was full of clichés, not so full of fun, and really short on plot. If you ask me, Melanie and B.J. should have skipped the reunion, and Melanie should have stayed home and continued destroying everything her ex had ever touched. Now that would have been a fun read.

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## **Amy says**

I am a big fan of Claire Cook, having enjoyed *Wallflower in Bloom* tremendously. I was excited to get my hands on *Time Flies* and discovered that I had been looking forward to another book from her more than I realized.

I was not disappointed in the least.

High school reunions are similar to dentist appointments in that we know we need to go get checked out, but we dread the process entailed. Afterwards, though, we're glad we were cleansed.

So it is for Melanie, who moved away from her small Massachusetts town years earlier. She and husband Kurt headed south to Atlanta, where they raised two sons. Now Kurt has left her for another woman and the sons are grown, leading their own lives. But when the invitation to her reunion shows up, Melanie is determined not to attend.

Her BFF B.J., though, has other plans. She cajoles, begs, bribes, and attempts to blackmail Melanie into going. For all of B.J.'s force of nature personality, however, it's the prospect of meeting up with a former flame that truly nudges Melanie to show up.

Kurt's betrayal aside, Melanie has other issues she needs to face. She has a crippling phobia of highways and will drive as far out of her way as necessary to avoid them. This becomes the symbol for Melanie's literal and metaphorical journey: she needs to overcome her fears, whether of highways or of being alone or rejection.

Be prepared to laugh out loud. B.J. is the friend we all want to have. She is relentlessly on your side, but she isn't afraid of calling you on your crap, either. She and Melanie adorn their conversations with cultural



references to everything from Romy and Michelle to Thelma and Louise. We are never told just which reunion this is, but given the song titles, shows, and movies, it appears to be around 35 years, putting the two women in their fifties, an age where we know better but that still doesn't stop us.

The two women meet up with high school friends, discovering just how starkly out of touch they are with each other. Yet Claire Cook also wants us to know that those childhood, teenage bonds are some of the strongest of our lives, because for all of the distance between them, the friends rediscover and reclaim their connections. Melanie also has to reconnect with her sister, from whom she has been estranged throughout adulthood.

Melanie's fears are realistic and relatable. The older we get, the more conscious we are of mortality, of time running out. We become a little more fearful. Does that twinge signify something serious, or is it minor? We worry about our children, our spouses, our parents. We worry. We have fears. For Melanie, those fears are exacerbated by Kurt's departure. Now she has added fears: will she be alone? Will she be able to support herself? Will she be a burden?

The reunion proves to be cathartic in ways Melanie (and B.J.) could not have expected, nor in ways we expect. We grow to care about those two women, and that's thanks to Claire Cook's ability to write a story and create dynamic characters.

I can't wait to read her next novel.

Thanks to NetGalley and edelweiss for the previews.  
Published on cupcake's book cupboard  
@VivaAmaRisata

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### **Pamela Pickering says**

I had never heard of Claire Cook before and couldn't wait to try one of her books when I found out she had penned the book of one of my favorite chick flicks, "Must Love Dogs". Well, color me just a wee bit disappointed. I didn't get too far into this book when I just found it to be a little too silly/ludicrous. I just can't imagine a grown woman putting a pic of an old high school class mate on a mop and dancing around the room with it, let alone making out with it. Even though the character was inebriated it was just a little too much of a stretch for me and I had to set this one aside.

I'll give Cook another try though based upon my enjoyment of "MLD". The book is always better than the movie so hopefully there will be another of her stories out there that will appeal to me.

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### **Beth says**

I had the opportunity to read an advanced copy of Claire Cook's latest, and let me just say, it's terrific!

Melanie is lovable, and real, and silly ... someone I would like to be friends with. She tells her story with heart and humor, and she exposes her vulnerability during a time when her life has been turned upside down. *TIME FLIES* is a rollicking fun yet poignant novel that's sure to hit home with anyone who has ever experienced heartbreak, fought against a phobia, entertained a fantasy, or dared to say yes to an unknown future peeking above the horizon of midlife. Claire Cook has crafted another winner that's guaranteed to be a favorite of book clubs and shared among girlfriends.

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