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## 23 Minutes

*By Vivian Vande Velde*



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### 23 Minutes By Vivian Vande Velde

By both society's measure and her own, fifteen-year-old Zoe Mahar is pretty much a loser. Then one day she ducks into Spencerport Savings and Loan simply to get out of the rain—and witnesses a bank robbery gone horrifyingly wrong. The good news is that Zoe has a unique ability: she can play back time and repeat events. But it's not an unlimited deal—she can only jump 23 minutes, and her first playback creates an even more disastrous outcome. Zoe has only 10 tries to get it right before this particular 23 minutes becomes irreversible. In the process of trying to become the heroine she doesn't believe she can be, Zoe learns about herself and realizes that there is more to who she is than she thought.



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## 23 Minutes By Vivian Vande Velde Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 6–9—When 15-year-old Zoe ducks into Spencerport Savings and Loan to escape the rain, she finds herself in the middle of a bank robbery. But Zoe is unique, and it isn't her blue hair, ragged clothing, and tendency to make the people around her uncomfortable that make her so. Zoe can play back time—but only the last 23 minutes and she only has 10 chances to get everything right before that window of time becomes permanent. The teen isn't sure that her ability will be enough to save the life of Daniel, the man in the bank who was nice to her. And she doesn't exactly have the best history when it comes to playbacks, anyway. With only two main characters and a simple plot told 10 different ways, *23 Minutes* could easily be a tedious read. But with new details in each playback, a gradual explanation of Zoe's background, and a slowly forming bond between Zoe and Daniel, readers will remain engaged and invested in the story line. An open ending underscores that, as in each of Zoe's attempts at changing the bank robbery, anything is possible, while at the same time serving as a reminder to readers that things are always more complicated than they seem. **VERDICT** For middle school and early high school fans of speculative fiction.—Maggie Mason Smith, Clemson University, SC

## Review

"(G)ripping from the start... Zoe is a compelling heroine in a tense situation... an ideal option for reluctant readers -- they'll dive in in spite of themselves and likely find it hard to put down." —*The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*

"(W)ith new details in each playback, a gradual explanation of Zoe's background, and a slowly forming bond between Zoe and Daniel, readers will remain engaged and invested in the story line... for middle school and early high school fans of speculative fiction." —*School Library Journal*

"Blue-haired Zoe Mahar ducks into a bank to escape a downpour and comes face to face with a robber who's not afraid to use his gun. The violent encounter leaves two people dead, including a friendly young man who shields Zoe from a bullet. But Zoe, 15, has a special ability to turn back the clock 23 minutes just by saying "playback," allowing her to change the outcome of events....Zoe comes across as a clever girl with a sense of humor about her own opinionated nature. A gripping page-turner for time fantasy enthusiasts." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"[Zoe] can travel back in time—within limits. She can play back exactly twenty-three minutes and can redo the same time block up to ten times... Just when she thinks she has things figured out, in the next rerun of those not-quite-the-same twenty-three minutes, a fresh revelation clobbers her. Vande Velde strengthens the tension with a third-person point of view that allows readers to be clobbered more deliciously at a distance." —*VOYA Magazine*

## About the Author

**Vivian Vande Velde** is the author of numerous fantasy and speculative-fiction novels for children and teenagers, many of which were ALA Best Books for Young Adults. She won the Edgar Award for *Never Trust a Dead Man*, which was also named a *School Library Journal* Best Book of the Year. She lives in Rochester, New York. Visit [vivianvandevelde.com](http://vivianvandevelde.com).

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Laura Crabtree:**

Have you spare time for the day? What do you do when you have a lot more or little spare time? Yep, you can choose the suitable activity for spend your time. Any person spent their spare time to take a go walking, shopping, or went to the actual Mall. How about open as well as read a book allowed 23 Minutes? Maybe it is to become best activity for you. You already know beside you can spend your time with the favorite's book, you can smarter than before. Do you agree with it is opinion or you have additional opinion?

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#### **Marcella Baird:**

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