

Bedford, Martyn. *Flip*. Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2011. Print.

Martyn Bedford is a lecturer in creative writing at Leeds Trinity University College in the UK and is the award-winning author of five adult novels, including *The Houdini Girl*. *Flip* is his first foray into the genre of young adult fiction.

Fourteen-year-old Alex Gray rushes home one December Friday night in an attempt to beat his curfew. Feeling a bit foggy upon waking the next morning, he realizes that not only is he in a strange bedroom but he does not recognize the clothes he is wearing. An unfamiliar voice calls for “Philip” to get ready for school, and when he descends the stairs to the breakfast table, he does not recognize the people seated, though they seem to recognize him. It’s now the middle of June. Upon looking into the mirror to wash his face, another boy stares back. Alex does not know if he has gone mad, or worse—if it is all real.

Alex has no choice but to go through the day while trapped in another’s body, that of Philip Garamond. Nicknamed Flip, Philip is an athletic, sociable girl-magnet who goes to a posh school, and though he is Alex’s age, seems the complete opposite in every other way. For a while Alex even enjoys his new, fit body and the attention that comes with it. But where is Philip, and where is Alex’s body? Alex needs to figure out why his psyche has become trapped in Philip’s body and how he can get back into his own before it is too late.

This is an excellent psychological thriller and not your average teen fare. The characters are realistic and the plot is action-packed, yet believable. Bedford dips into heavy topics like existentialism and concepts such as the soul and memory with adeptness. Body-swapping stories have no doubt been done before in teen fiction, but Bedford has given this tale a contemporary flair with a satisfying conclusion.

Highly recommended: 4 out of 4 stars

Reviewer: Debbie Feisst