



# The Unquiet

*Mikaela Everett*

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## **The Unquiet** Mikaela Everett

For most of her life, Lirael has been training to kill—and replace—a duplicate version of herself on a parallel Earth. She is the perfect sleeper-soldier. But she's beginning to suspect she is not a good person.

The two Earths are identical in almost every way. Two copies of every city, every building, even every person. But the people from the second Earth know something their duplicates do not—two versions of the same thing cannot exist. They—and their whole planet—are slowly disappearing. Lira has been trained mercilessly since childhood to learn everything she can about her duplicate, to be a ruthless sleeper-assassin who kills that other Lirael and steps seamlessly into her life.

An intricate, literary stand-alone from an astonishing new voice, *The Unquiet* takes us deep inside the psyche of a strong teenage heroine struggling with what she has been raised to be and who she really is. Fans of eerily futuristic and beautifully crafted stories such as *Never Let Me Go*, *Orphan Black*, and *Fringe* will find themselves haunted by this unsettling debut.

## **The Unquiet Details**

Date : Published September 22nd 2015 by Greenwillow Books

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Author : Mikaela Everett

Format : Kindle Edition 464 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Science Fiction, Dystopia, Fantasy

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# From Reader Review The Unquiet for online ebook

## Lindsay Cummings says

THE UNQUIET is a truly gorgeous, unsettling, (depressing in a good way) book. With lyrical writing and characters so deep and so well fleshed-out, their inner emotions spread across the pages---this is a killer debut. Different, for sure, but in the best way. so good.

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## Rayne says

### 3.5 stars

The Unquiet is an eerie and bold sci-fi/pseudo-dystopia that is a lot more concerned with introspection and the emotional impact of an invasion and war than with the action, romance and fast-paced adventure that becomes the priority in YA novels about alternative universes and the training of soliders/assassins. This novel is surprisingly poignant and touching, told in a very haunting and sensitive way that resonated strongly with me. In all honesty, I don't think I've ever read a YA novel quite like this one within the sci-fi/dystopian genre and I don't think I ever will again.

Unlike any other book within the same genre, The Unquiet takes its time to develop, slowing the pace almost to a crawl in order to painstakingly detail the psychological and emotional weigh these characters must carry because of the mission they had been raised to fulfill that contrasts starkly with what they have seen with their own eyes. This novel is an examination of morality, loyalty and love, and how all of those can be twisted depending on the perspective one takes and how it can all change from a second to the other. It's fascinating to see in action the clever techniques Everett employed as an author to highlight just how important the repercussions rather than the actions were to her characters on a very emotional level. For example, it's common throughout the novel for scenes of death and violence to be brushed over, not even detailed in real time, but recalled by the character so that she could spend the narration going through the aftermath on such an event, so that we could witness the development the characters derived from such an action. I thought all this absolutely riveting.

That undeniably means that the novel is extremely slow, almost to the point of being boring. Personally, I was never bored, but that was because I was so hooked in the way this character saw the world and dealt in a very psychological level with her two different realities (what she had been taught and what she experienced). If you cannot connect with this kind of introspective storytelling, with this sensitive a story and these emotionally complex characters, then it is pretty likely you'll be bored out of your mind. This novel is not concerned with being entertaining and action-packed or even fun. This novel turns the whole YA dystopia/action/sci-fi theme and magnifies into it, focusing on the development of the characters, how they learn to cope, to live and understand the brutal reality they live in, how they handle becoming their own person with their own thoughts and ideas and morality when they have been trained to follow orders and not ask questions.

I was so intrigued by how we usually see our heroines and heroes doing brutal things for the sake of "the good side" and our minds brush over the fact that those things could be considered bad from a whole other perspective, something other heroes and heroines never seem to be bothered by. Here we have characters who struggle with the moral complications of everything they've been thought and everything they do. We

witness how they battle with themselves, their own thoughts and try to find themselves amidst it all. We see how there can be a duality of good and bad in who you are and how that may not entirely define you. This novel never actually passed moral judgement over its characters and allow them to showcase their moral and emotional complexity, a very profound and sensitive touch that speaks greatly of Everett's skills as an author.

This is a very emotionally mature novel, especially within this genre in YA fiction. I certainly never expected it to be this way. Truth be told, I wasn't even aware that I had liked and enjoyed this novel so much until well after I had finished it. For most of my reading experience with this novel, I thought I was just mildly invested in it. It wasn't until the last few pages came around that I realized how much of an impact this melancholic novel had on me. This is not a happy novel nor a fun reading experience, and it's not interested in being either of those. A haunting experience, *The Unquiet* might just be one of the most original and touching novels I've read this year, one that took me entirely by surprise and still refuses to let me go.

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## **Sarah says**

(Source: I received a digital copy of this book for free on a read-to-review basis. Thanks to HarperCollins and Edelweiss.)

***“There may be two versions of everything, but only one can stay. Only one reflection is real.”***

This was an interesting of a YA sci-fi story, with a bit of a sad ending.

Lirael had a rough life in this story, not only was she thrust into a life that she didn't want, but she was forced to kill, and forced to act like it didn't bother her. Even having friends put her in a difficult position, to the point where being alone was her only defence.

***“By the time they realise that our sleeper program is in effect, that we are coming to take over their world, it will be too late.”***

The storyline in this was split into three; Lirael's time at the cottage, her time as a sleeper, and the time when things changed. The story really was quite different between these three sections, and showed three very different times in Lirael's life.

There was a little bit of romance in this, but only a very little bit.

***“Close your eyes and pretend you're somewhere else, okay?”***

The ending to this was really sad, and I actually found myself crying. I found the pace of the story to be quite slow, but the emotional ending made up for it a bit, although I really wish things could have been different for Lirael.

### **Erin says**

**The river is not the same thing as a tree. You cannot blame a river for your fear because a river never lies to you. Already, even before you approach it, it is dark. It has no bottom. If you want it to, it will even do you the very worst favor of your life.**

Just like that river, my thoughts on this book are murky. I had such a difficult time reading the book, the characters (specifically the main character) seemed so distant and many of the transitions between chapters felt disjointed. There were some great moments in the story, but they were wedged among a great abyss of nothing really happening. Quite disappointing!

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### **Marcy says**

Reminiscent of *Never Let Me Go*, but with more action and bad-assery. Stellar writing, and wonderful insights into the human condition. Disturbing in the best kind of way.

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### **Allison says**

SO SO GREAT.

A chilling and moving sci-fi thriller and one of the best novels, teen or adult, that I've read concerning parallel worlds. More raw and complex than any of the easy comparisons like *Hunger Games* or *The Host*.

Some light romance (just enough to be a little heart-breaking and add to the narrative, but not enough to annoy me), heart-stopping action, and the right kind of "world-building" for the parallel-Earth setting. The simple yet beautiful writing, emotion, and deep characterization lean me towards a general comparison to *Archivist Wasp*, one of my favorite reads this year, and also, of course *ORPHAN BLACK*.

Absolutely wonderful. I will be looking forward to more from Everett.

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### **Kirsty-Marie Jones says**

I'm actually sad this is not a series, although, couldn't see where it would go after that ending, BUT I WANT MORE, OKAY?

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IS IT BAD I'M ONLY NOW NOTICING THE COTTAGE ON THE COVER? Probably. The comparison to *Never Let Me Go*-which I haven't read-so guess who's out of her depth? Yes, Me-but now I do want to read it because *The Unquiet* was bloody brilliant.

The thing is though, you have got to like what the story is underneath, and the way the story is told, and by that I mean, *The Unquiet* is subtle. It's not overly dramatic, it's not in your face gorgeous writing, and it doesn't have badass characters you want to route for, but despite all that, I loved it. Because while it's not overly dramatic, it's intense and dramatic in its own way, and the subtle and strength in the writing is what makes it beautiful and melancholy.

*The Unquiet* also doesn't have a lot going on, it's not action packed, there's hardly any action at all, in fact, plot wise, there's not a lot going on either. When I first read the synopsis for *The Unquiet*, it reminded me a little of *Dual* by Elsie Chapman, though I haven't read that one, so I don't know how true it is to it. But there's a second earth, there's alternates, and things used to be good between two earths, on the surface, but there's underlying animosity, and then they cut off communication. One earth is now dying, they raise children, abuse them both physically and mentally, although the physical is mainly the children fighting against one another as training. And when they're ready, there comes the test, and if you pass, you get to go to earth. And kill your alternate, and wait, wait, wait, as a sleeper, until the war begins. There are sparks of rebellion and revolution. The plot is slow, and most of what happens, is towards the end, but I didn't think the plot was the goal of the story.

*The Unquiet* is very character driven, it delves into the psyches of what it is to be human, and what it takes to not be, and if you really can shut that off. The characters have so much growth, or should I say de-growth of what Madame and the cottages have done to them. Lirael, our MC, especially goes through the ringer, and she sees what she is and doesn't like it, but still does it, doesn't question, does what she's supposed to be. A good little sleeper. Until some twists and turns happen that makes her see the truth.

*The Unquiet*, is slow and subtle but melancholy and beautiful at the same time, it really depends on you like the characters or not on if you're going to like it or not because it is character driven, but it's different, and the ending's suited to the story.

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### **Meghan says**

I managed to snag an advanced readers copy of this book at the Alberta Library Conference and read it on the 9 1/2 hour drive home. I really enjoyed the premise of the book, and I think it's a very interesting plot with interesting characters. I would definitely recommend this for people who like dystopian teen fiction.

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### **Amy says**

In a world where two Earths exist side-by-side but only one can survive, teenaged orphans are being trained to infiltrate the lives of their doppelgangers and lay in wait to take over the Earth that's surviving. Disturbing in the best way, teen readers will devour this creepy sci-fi world and the story of the girl who tries to survive within it.

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### **Justine says**

There are two Earths, parallel worlds, but one is collapsing and everything is beginning to disappear. Instead of waiting to disappear, the people of the unstable world come up with a plan to infiltrate the stable Earth

with sleeper agents: children trained from a young age as soldiers to kill and live as their doubles on the stable Earth in secret until the war begins.

This is the story of one such little Nikita who struggles against the tattered remains of her humanity while she simultaneously longs to hold on to it. Lirael is alone, but she is not; she has cloaked herself in the life of a dead girl, and finds that she can't keep the bonds of family from sinking into her.

This was a surprisingly well told tale, particularly for a first novel. I would say Everett is an author to watch.

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### **Jamie (The Perpetual Page-Turner) says**

What a brutal and unflinching story that captivated me from the first page, almost lost me in the middle-ish but then really hit a home run to have me standing up and slow clapping for how everything played out. It's not for the faint of heart with a character who gets blood on her hands and a mission that is basically slaughtering of people but I loved how we see her struggle with whether she wants to be who THEY have ordered to be or who she really is. I raced through this book to find out ultimately what she would decide.

Read my full review on my blog

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### **Kim at Divergent Gryffindor says**

*I received an ARC copy from HarperCollins in exchange for an honest review.*

**Actual rating: 4.25**

**The Unquiet is a book that is like no other.** Back when I can only count the fantasy/sci-fi books that I chose to read per year in one hand, the words "parallel universes" or "time travel" made me want to immediately read a book. Because of that, most of the fantasy/sci-fi books I've read are of those topics. And among those many books, I can say that this one is the most unique.

The Unquiet proves that only one of the same thing can exist. Therefore, having two Earths, it is inevitable that one of those Earths must die. And it happens to be our main character Lirael's Earth. Because of this, a number of children have been trained since birth to take over the other Lirael from the second Earth. But as time passed, Lirael started to question what is right and what is wrong, if they are the good guys or the bad guys, and if their killing their alternates is justifiable or not.

**The Unquiet's story is very captivating and deeply imaginative.** The world was vibrant in my head, and I had no trouble whatsoever in imaging the world. Contrary to other reviewers, **I found the pacing of this book just about right.** And despite it having more than 400 pages, I found that it was easy to get hooked and that it was a quick read.

**It's kind of hard to recommend this one because I feel like this book is not for everyone, but in my case, it really suited my taste well.** If you think that the synopsis interests you, then definitely give this a shot. Fair warning though, this book is kind of violent.

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## Alienor ✖ French Frowner ✖ says

**Actual rating : 1.5 stars (DNF at 46%)**

**Despite a promising premise, The Unquiet failed in its execution and left me literally unable to finish it.** Trust me, that is not for a lack of trying.

? Am I bloody stupid?! That's what I asked myself countless times. There's only one thing I can say : YAY FOR THE BLURB! What? It did save me from understanding nothing during a long, long period of time. Indeed **the elements of science fiction are barely explained at first, and each time I started to wrap my head around this world something else would throw me off**, including :

✖ **Weird jumps in time.** Sometimes I ask my students to do this little exercise : put back the paragraphs of a text in order. Remember? Well. The book felt like that sometimes, except nobody's gonna give me a good mark because I did it well.

✖ **Nonsensical passages** where the characters dynamic sounds pretty fake to me (her baby sister of 6 talks like she's at least 12, her 'friendship' with Edith...)

As far as I'm concerned, it needs a good polish and a great deal of editing.

? **Nothing happens. I swear, most of the book looks like filler to me.** They arrive at the cottage. Filler filler filler. FLASHBACKS! They pass their exam. Filler. Filler. FLASHBACKS! They are sleepers. Fillers. Fillers. Fillers. FLASHBACKS! That's so boring! The plot is.... streeeeeeeeched for so long on **nothing** random anecdotes (let's go fishing! Baking bread! Going in town! Selling fruits! Killing someone with a syringe! WOOT!)

? First but not least : except from the very beginning (which was surprisingly good) **the story is related in a all tell not show fashion** that as usual makes me cringe. Every freaking action seems **emotionless and disconnected because crafted like a mission report** - Not only it prevents me from caring for the characters, but it is so DULL. Even if I must admit that some parts are beautifully written, it's not free from purple prose and sentences that made me roll my eyes.

? **The MC is both flat and thoroughly unlikeable, which is far from a good mix in my opinion : to put it simply, I was either indifferent or angry at her during the 46 percents I read.**

✖ First we have the detached way the killings (of innocent people) are handled : I swear, she could have baked a cake for all I know.

✖ Then the fakeness of every relationship, if somehow explainable by her upbringing in the cottages, still annoyed me a great deal. I mean, I get it, they're all going to be killers but why not be *a little* nice to each other? For example, her hate toward her fellow sleepers in the cottage felt unnecessary and really didn't make



any sense to me.

✗ Moreover, the way Lira keeps repeating that she is a BAD person and that she doesn't love ANYONE grew old pretty fast : I get it, you're baaaad. **Stop shoving your inner thoughts down my throat, ugh.** This being said, I might have forgiven her if she wasn't so **one-dimensional** : trust me, I'm all for unlikeable characters, but you have to give me SOMETHING to work with for me to care. I didn't.

? WHAT WORLD-BUILDING? There's nearly nothing. You would think that a book dealing with parallel universes would contain at least a few fun additions, but nah. The only descriptions we get are so random and uninteresting because everything is every bit as normal as it would in a contemporary novel. Oh, and please tell me in which area of time we're in, because there are new technologies mixed with last century ways of life and I can't wrap my head around this O\_o.

? **Why choose to set a story in France if the world building is so generic that it could be everywhere?**

✗ First, except one or two exceptions, **the names aren't French** : Cecily, Philip, Imogen, GRAY (really?!)...

✗ Secondly, the **settings** : so we are 1 hour far from Paris by train. Where?

**The fuck if I know.** Maybe that's just me, but describing the city as 'the town' screams lazy writing to me. There are vines so I guess in Bourgogne maybe? Frankly, it's as if the author ticked little cases in a "How To Live In France" fantasy list :

French grow vines ✓

Paris must be mentioned at least once ✓

A character must be named *Madame* ✓

... Oh, okay. That was a short list. Frankly? Why fucking bother? It may come as a shock, but French towns, landscapes and vinegars aren't the same in the whole country : we need details please.

Now, as I said, I 'only' read 200 pages, so perhaps it gets better after... I just won't be there to see it, sadly.

*For more of my reviews, please visit:*

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## Mel (Daily Prophecy) says

Mweh. I was never sucked into the story and I didn't care for the characters, but I did like the idea and I was interested enough to finish it.

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## paula says

This one's for the weird ones, the teens whose brains sometimes tilt off-kilter, the people who occasionally wonder if we're not all characters in some sleeping giant's dream.

That's not what's happening in this book though. And I guess that's all I'll say, because for sure one of the creepy pleasures of this book is the gradual reveal of the truly unsettling reason Lirael, at the beginning of the book, lives in a barracks-like cottage with other teenagers, being trained to be ruthless, self-sufficient, and detached.

And you will hear that premise all the time - 'she's trained to be a killer, but she finds herself falling for some boy' bleah, no, and FALSE - but in this book, Lirael's personality is believably destroyed by her training and supervisors, and her responses to human contact therefore believably conflicted.

Dreadful, trippy, and magnificently sad. It's going to make a really cool movie.

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