

Book Review: Twice

By Mitch Albom

If you had a chance to go back and *do over* an event or time period in your life, would you take that chance? And if so, what event would you select?

I'm certain we've all pondered that initial question more than once in our lives. Of course, we can't go back and re-do anything. But that's the theme of Mitch Albom's latest novel, "Twice." And the book not only makes for excellent reading, but it also introduces that great philosophical question: Would you take the chance? Because if you change one event, everything that follows might fall like dominoes.

Alfred Logan (known to everyone as Alfie) learns at 8-years old that he can go back in time and undo any moment in his life and live it again. But there's one catch: he must accept the consequences of his *do over*, no matter what.

Over time, Alfie uses this gift to correct mistakes and save himself from adolescent embarrassments. But he also takes dangerous risks, putting himself in harm's way just to see what it's like to come close to death, before *twicing* himself back to safety. He also uses his gift to his advantage in his love life, and over time, falls deeply in love with Gianna, a woman he first met as a child when his family lived in Africa. He believes she is the one.

That's when his grandmother, who shares the same ability, imparts some additional caveats regarding love. If he undoes a love (such as having an affair), that person can *never* fall in love with him again.

Albom neatly weaves together a true storytelling experience. The book begins many years into the future when Alfie, who knows he is dying, is arrested for allegedly cheating and winning millions at a casino. When Detective LaPorta interrogates him, the entire story unfolds

from a notebook Alfie has kept over the decades. It's a fascinating story, with a very unlikely conclusion.

The narrative pacing is excellent. Light and flowing, but also thought-provoking. It's almost impossible not to put yourself in Alfie's shoes and wonder what you might have done in a similar situation. OR, within your own life. It will make you smile, laugh, and perhaps shed a tear or two.

I highly recommend "Twice" as not just an exceptional novel, but a great break from the anxieties of today's stressful environment. Five stars for Albom's latest novel.