

The Arc of a Scythe series – Book Review

The first book in the Arc of a Scythe series by Neal Shusterman is called Scythe. It is a young adult dystopian fantasy, and it is great. Don't be put off by the young adult category if, like me, you're not a young adult. This is such a complex, original book, it will hold your attention no matter your age. I think I can say it is the best dystopian or fantasy novel I've read.

Pages: Scythe – 435; Thunderhead – 504; The Toll – 625

Published: Nov 22, 2016; Jan 9, 2018; Nov 5, 2019

Genre: Dystopian fantasy

Medium I consumed it in: Audiobook

The story follows Citra and Rowan, two teens who find themselves as apprentices to a scythe in a time when humanity has been able to remove hunger, disease, war and misery from the world. If someone is sick, they are healed. If they fall badly, they are quickly revived. The only problem? Earth, as you can imagine, would be overpopulated in this situation. The solution? Scythes. These people fill the only job of real consequence and benefit: they are the only ones who can, and must, end people's lives. Citra and Rowan must learn how to be scythes and deal with all that comes with this role.

Neal Shusterman has done a phenomenal job of building a world that is interesting and thought-provoking. The writing really pulled me in with a playfulness and humour despite the seemingly serious subject matter. The characters are superbly multi-layered and I felt genuine emotional reactions to both the good characters and the bad.

The story is mind-blowingly detailed. I truly don't know how Neal came up with it all! As an aspiring writer, I am so

impressed by the complexity of the plot. In the second book, Thunderhead, I did find there was a tad more info-dumping to explain and remind the reader of what happened in book one than was necessary though, which I did find a little frustrating. This did improve in book three, The Toll.

The concept behind the books really made me think about what it is to be human, how we can best live, and what the future we are currently striving for could be like.

I highly recommend this series. I couldn't wait for the last book to be released, and I'm sad there is not more to come!



I gave:

Scythe **5 out of 5 stars**

Thunderhead **4 out of 5 stars**

The Toll **5 out of 5 stars**