



The Knife of Never Letting Go (Reissue with bonus short story): Chaos Walking: Book One

By Patrick Ness

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The riveting Chaos Walking trilogy by two-time Carnegie Medalist Patrick Ness, reissued with compelling new covers — and a bonus short story in each book.

Todd Hewitt is the only boy in a town of men. Ever since the settlers were infected with the Noise germ, Todd can hear everything the men think, and they hear everything he thinks. Todd is just a month away from becoming a man, but in the midst of the cacophony, he knows that the town is hiding something from him -- something so awful Todd is forced to flee with only his dog, whose simple, loyal voice he hears too. With hostile men from the town in pursuit, the two stumble upon a strange and eerily silent creature: a girl. Who is she? Why wasn't she killed by the germ like all the females on New World? Propelled by Todd's gritty narration, readers are in for a white-knuckle journey in which a boy on the cusp of manhood must unlearn everything he knows in order to figure out who he truly is.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up—Todd Hewitt lives in a world in which all women are dead, and the thoughts of men and animals are constantly audible as Noise. Graphically represented by a set of scratchy fonts and sentence fragments that run into and over each other, Noise is an oppressive chaos of words, images, and sounds that makes human company exhausting and no thought truly private. The history of these peculiar circumstances unfolds over the course of the novel, but Ness's basic world-building is so immediately successful that readers, too, will be shocked when Todd and his dog, Manchee, first notice a silence in the Noise. Realizing that he must keep the silence secret from the town leaders, he runs away, and his terrified flight with an army in pursuit makes up the backbone of the plot. The emotional, physical, and intellectual drama is well crafted and relentless. Todd, who narrates in a vulnerable and stylized voice, is a sympathetic character who nevertheless makes a few wrenching mistakes. Manchee and Aaron, a zealot preacher, function both as characters and as symbols. Tension, suspense, and the regular bombardment of Noise are palpable throughout, mitigated by occasional moments of welcome humor. The cliff-hanger ending is unexpected and unsatisfying, but the book is still a pleasure for sophisticated readers comfortable with the length and the bleak, literary tone.—*Megan Honig, New York Public Library*

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From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review Chased by a madman preacher and possibly the rest of his townsfolk as well, young Todd Hewitt flees his settlement on a planet where war with the natives has killed all the women and infected the men with a germ that broadcasts their thoughts aloud for all to hear. This cacophonous thought-cloud is known as Noise and is rendered with startling effectiveness on the page. The first of many secrets is revealed when Todd discovers an unsettling hole in the Noise, and quickly realizes that he lives in a much different world than the one he thought he did. Some of the central conceits of the drama can be hard to swallow, but the pure inventiveness and excitement of the telling more than make up for it. Narrated in a sort of pidgin English with crack dramatic and comic timing by Todd and featuring one of the finest talking-dog characters anywhere, this troubling, unforgettable opener to the Chaos Walking trilogy is a penetrating look at the ways in which we reveal ourselves to one another, and what it takes to be a man in a society gone horribly wrong. The cliffhanger ending is as effective as a shot to the gut. Grades 8-12. --Ian Chipman

Review

"Sets a high standard in an already crowded fantasy fiction genre."

-- THE INDEPENDENT (U.K.) -- Independent, The (UK)

"From the Hardcover edition."

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Stephanie Knowles:

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