

**Reviewer Username:** Anonymous

**School:** Valencia High School

**Grade:** Sophomore (10<sup>th</sup> Grade)

**Book Title:** Thunderhead

**Book Author:** Neal Shusterman

**Rate 1-5 (1-Lowest to 5-Highest) – 5**

Thunderhead is the second installation in the Arc of a Scythe trilogy by Neal Shusterman. It is set in a distant utopian future, where humanity has achieved immortality and mortal age institutions like governments have been abolished. Instead, the world is ruled by the Thunderhead, an evolved sentient form of the “cloud”. However, humankind still faces the problem of overpopulation; they decide to combat this by employing people to be scythes, and “glean” people (permanently kill them). In Scythe, the first book in the series, the two deuteragonists, Citra Terranova and Rowan Damisch are apprenticed to a scythe and find themselves in a world unlike anything they have seen before. Thunderhead follows the two junior scythes and their roles in the turmoil plaguing the scythedom.

Thunderhead was an incredible book. It expanded the world introduced by Scythe very well, and leaves you itching for more. Admittedly, the first book in the series left me unimpressed. I did not see any evident conflict that would make me interested in reading the following books. However, Thunderhead picks up where Scythe left off by smoothly introducing new, complex characters and weaving in stunning plot twists. The rules introduced in Scythe are quickly broken in Thunderhead, leaving a supposed utopia in confusion and disarray and the reader intrigued. The prominent characters, namely Rowan Damisch and Scythes Curie and Anastasia, are fully fleshed out in this installation. While reading, you experience the joys and heartbreaks of all three characters and rejoice in their character development. Several characters are pitted against each other in an age-old conflict between good and evil, and the outcome is not necessarily clear by the last chapter. The reader is left with feelings of despair, heartbreak and a small glimmer of hope for this utopian-turned-dystopian world.

I would highly recommend this book to anyone who has already read, or is planning to read, Scythe. Thunderhead is unlike any book I have ever read. It is based on and expands off of the idea that utopia is actually a form of dystopia and explores what man is like **without** the monster. If you like dystopian literature, this is a worthwhile read.