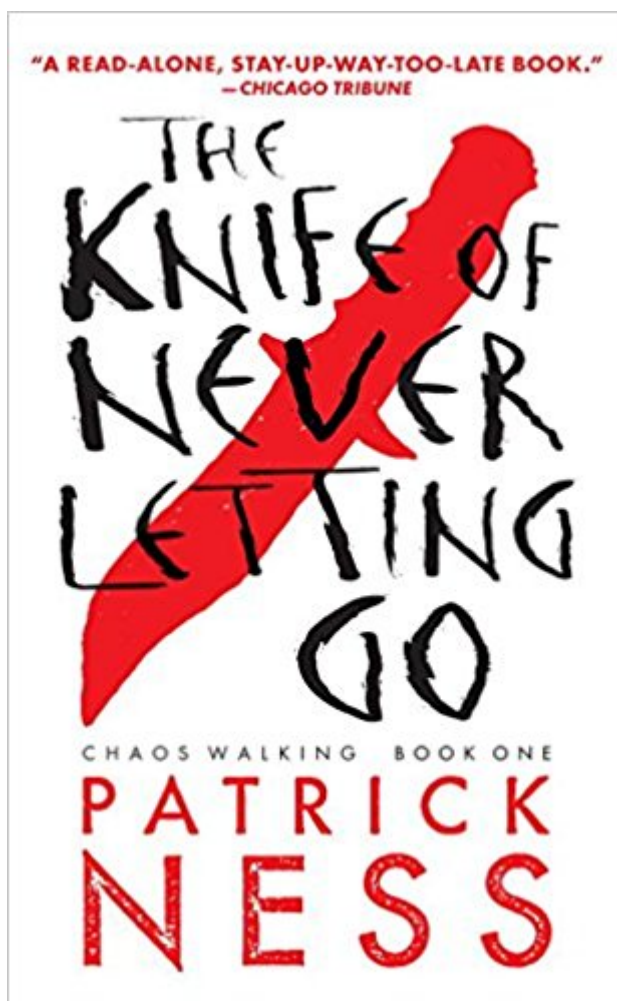


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# The Knife Of Never Letting Go (Reissue With Bonus Short Story): Chaos Walking: Book One



## Synopsis

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.

## Book Information

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Action & Adventure > Science Fiction

## Customer Reviews

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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**\*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 --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

If I could give more than 5 stars to this book, I would. It is, hands down, the smartest sci-fi I've read in ages. It does exactly what good sci-fi should — it takes something from our world and examines it through a different lens. This book takes a hard look at masculinity and manhood, and the value of violence. It is done thoughtfully and with extreme care — and the book manages to do this while having a near-breakneck pace, which is amazing. Patrick Ness has this way of describing feelings and expressions so clearly and in the simplest language — and it's somehow always perfect and

gut-wrenching. I cannot recommend these books highly enough.

I really enjoyed this book. I read it non-stop for two days. It is very well written and if you can deal with character's having dialects then there's nothing about the writing that I predict could turn somebody off. The unique premise was entertaining (a virus led to all men being able to hear each other's thoughts) and honestly a bit thought-provoking. What if you couldn't hide your thoughts from anyone? Your secrets? All in all, I liked this book. I loved the main characters dog and all the other characters aren't too shabby either. There were some spots that felt a little slow but not many and I was able to guess a main twist early on but I'm pretty good at doing that. My rating: 4/5 stars.

I seem to be in the minority here, as I found it really tiresome to get through this trilogy. I started reading these books with the promise that I would breeze through them as they are unputdownable and absolutely amazing. I was already in a bit of a reading slump, but this trilogy put me behind big time on my reading and deepened my slump. You might have noticed though that I've given the book 4 stars and that is because despite the fact that the overall trilogy was tiresome, I actually enjoyed the first book in the series. And no matter how I feel about the books in general, there is no denying the brilliance and genius of Patrick Ness, who is quickly becoming one of my favourite authors, both YA and Adult. He is incredible, his writing is remarkable and his mind is a thing of wonder. The Knife of Never Letting Go was a very exciting and thrilling read with everything happening very quickly taking us on an eventful ride. It starts out with Todd Hewitt, who is twelve years old and on the brink of manhood (which is when he turns thirteen as is the law in Prentissstown - where he's from), and lives in a town of only men. In fact, as far as he knows, there are no more women existing in his world and there is no world outside of his town. His world is full of "noise", which basically means that every man and animal's thoughts are heard by one and all. We first meet Todd when he stumbles upon an area in which the noise suddenly disappears and he hears something he's never heard before - silence. Todd's parents are dead, and he lives with Cillian and Ben, brothers who raised him since he was a child. When Todd tells Ben of his discovery, he is suddenly thrown into a whirlwind of mystery, confusion and danger. Ben tells him he needs to leave immediately, never to return. He gives him his mother's journal, and a map, and asks him to get as far away from Prentissstown as possible, using the map as guidance. Todd, who cannot read or write, is unable to read his mother's diary which explains the history of Prentissstown and how the women had all disappeared. Unable to hide his thoughts and his noise, the people of Prentissstown and the mayor, all realize what Todd has discovered and hurry to silence him before he

escapes. Todd, along with his loyal dog Manchee, escape into the forest where they are stopped by an insane preacher, Aaron, who holds particular hatred towards Todd and beats him to a pulp. This is when Todd meets the first female in his life, Viola, and their journey towards self-discovery and a safer world begins. Viola has just lost her parents in a crash, and has no one left in the world, until she meets Todd, who is the strangest boy she's ever met. One whose thoughts she can hear as clearly as her own voice. It was very entertaining watching the back and forth between Todd and Viola, and witnessing their friendship blossom. I loved how they both had each others' backs and their protectiveness towards one another was admirable. There were many ideas presented in this book that were quite thought provoking, such as the idea of "lying". Todd doesn't even know what the word means, because of the fact that no one can keep any secrets where he's from due to the "noise". Yet when Viola demonstrates her uncanny ability to imitate anyone's accent and voice, he is taken back and feels like he almost cannot trust her. I found that idea fascinating, in the way that Ness presented it in the context of the book. That being said, I don't know that this book can be considered Young Adult since it discusses many serious themes and is actually very violent and brutal. I went into this not knowing much about its contents, but was really surprised at the violence and deaths. I quickly learned not to get attached to any of the characters, similarly to how I feel about Game of Thrones. The idea behind this story is outstanding and very impressive, the execution however was tedious. A very well written, fantastic book. Deserving of 4 stars as a stand alone. Not my favourite series as a whole, however.

There are plot holes and the underlying story is just the same as any teen triplet set...why are stories written in threes these days? So annoying...and I'm sure if you dig deep you will find many issues with the story. Like, "Oh good gracious like \*that\* would ever work! Seriously? Keeping all that hidden for so many years? And \*no-one\* let it slip in their Noise? Really?" Totally wouldn't happen. But the story! So fast. So fast paced from beginning to end. So fast I'm galloping through it, breathless. Racing through eye strain and lack of sleep...just got to read faster and faster. And I'm in love. I'm in love with the stupid story. I'm in love with Todd and Viola and Manchee oh my gosh Manchee. I'm in love with Ben and Cillian and the terrible, difficult choice they made, choosing the best of two evils to try to bring something good out of it. And they did, didn't they? Because Todd. I'm so deeply in love with the Spackle. I hope we find out more about them in later books. A story of making mistakes and learning from them. A story of falling and growing and redemption. A story of men taking God's words and twisting them, making them evil, using them for their own warped craziness, and of people rejecting that version of what they're told God is, and becoming what God

really is - kind and loving and thoughtful and forgiving and helping. A story of hope and the danger of hope and the pain of hope but still hoping and moving forward. I liked it so much I may possibly purchase and read the sequels. But I'm waiting for a bit, because I hate cliffhangers so much. Have I mentioned how much I hate them? This story is so riveting though, I may overcome my hatred of them and read more. Possibly. After I read another book or two if I find this story still swirling around in my head I'll continue the series. Or maybe I'll just look online for a synopsis. Given time to think I'm sure I'll find many more gaping holes. This is not the great American story. It's a teen book. Pretty dang well written teen book, actually. Even though it does have a cliffhanger at the end. Can I tell you how much I hate cliffhangers? Really Really really hate them. To all authors out there. Cliffhangers make your stories weak. Skilled writers don't need such cheap tricks. They leave the reader satisfied at the end of the story, but with a lingering desire to know more. Cliffhangers turn your book from something really good into something trite. \*Ahem\* Sorry about that rant. Cliffhangers really irritate me. Oh Manchee. I love you. What a good dog.

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