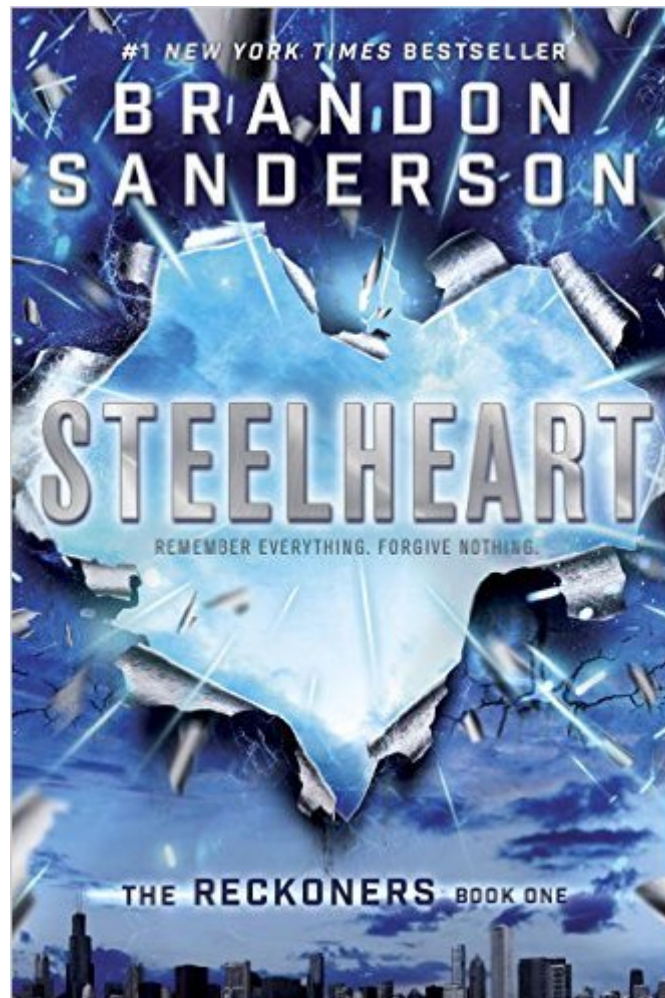


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Steelheart (The Reckoners)



Synopsis

The #1 New York Times bestseller that James Dashner called "fantastic" with "relentless" suspense and an "explosive" climax from Brandon Sanderson, the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Words of Radiance*, coauthor of Robert Jordan's *The Wheel of Time* series, and creator of the internationally bestselling *Mistborn* trilogy. And don't miss the rest of the *Reckoners* series: *Firefight* and *Calamity*. How far would you go for revenge if someone killed your father? If someone destroyed your city? If everything you ever loved was taken from you? David Charleston will go to any lengths to stop Steelheart. But to exact revenge in Steelheart's world, David will need the Reckoners—a shadowy group of rebels bent on maintaining justice. And it turns out that the Reckoners might just need David too. Look for book two in the *Reckoners* series, *Firefight*, available now.

Praise for the *Reckoners* series

#1 New York Times Bestselling Series "The suspense is relentless and the climax explosive." "James Dashner, #1 New York Times bestselling author of the *Maze Runner* series "Another win for Sanderson . . . he's simply a brilliant writer. Period." Patrick Rothfuss, author of the New York Times and USA Today bestseller *The Name of the Wind* "Action-packed." "EW.com "Compelling. . . . Sanderson uses plot twists that he teases enough for readers to pick up on to distract from the more dramatic reveals he has in store." "The A.V. Club

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 680L (What's this?)

Series: The Reckoners

Paperback: 416 pages

Publisher: Ember; Reprint edition (September 23, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0385743572

ISBN-13: 978-0385743570

Product Dimensions: 5.6 x 0.8 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars See all reviews (1,918 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #11,300 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #42 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Boys & Men #75 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Boys & Men #144 in Books > Teens > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction > Dystopian

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Steelheart will be my second Sanderson book based in his younger teen fiction category, The Rithmatist being my first. Whereas I felt that The Rithmatist was a bit too corny and "cutesy," I think Steelheart will be a great "gateway" book for younger fans to discover Sanderson's other, more mature, fiction series. Steelheart is set in a world shaped by "The Calamity," a meteor in the sky which has granted comic-book superhero-style powers to random humans, now called Epics. One of the defining themes in the book being that absolute power corrupts absolutely, there are no superheroes. No X-Men, Spidermans, or Supermans. Normal humans in this world are regarded as little more than slaves. The book follows the main character David, in his quest for revenge against the ruthless, cold-hearted, ruler of Newcago (formerly Chicago) - Steelheart. While the plot and character development are pretty basic, and while David does suffer a little bit from "The Chosen One" Syndrome, the story is well-paced and makes for a very engaging read. This will probably be one of those books that you end up reading until it's way past bedtime. Fans of Sanderson will immediately recognize some of his quirks - protagonists tending to use their brains rather than brawn, numerous plot-twists, and of course, gratuitous magic system explanations. Steelheart is no exception to this formula. For the teens - Steelheart is basically a comic book in written form. There's fights, superpowers, puppy-love crushes, and explosions. In fact I could almost hear a Hans Zimmer soundtrack in my head during several of the battles.

I'm going to separate this into the good and the bad to make it easier to gather my thoughts on the book. It really had some major ups and downs. Some minor spoilers may be ahead. Let's start with the bad:

1. This book really beat you over the head with some of the characters, the humor, and the love story. For instance, the character of Cody and his relentless made up storytelling that no one bought, and everyone got tired of. Every chance he got, there was another story he was telling that was exaggerated or just complete nonsense.
2. The humor. How many times do I have to hear about how bad the David (the main character) is at coming up with metaphors. It's really like every 5 minutes he goes into another one, only to explain, yet again, how bad he is at them. Maybe it would have been funny if you weren't beat over the head with it over and over. Same goes for Cody and his outlandish stories, we get it.
3. The love story. It really felt as if it was told through the perspective of a 12 year old. And was another thing that was beat over your head over and over. David finds

Megan extremely beautiful, we got it, I don't need to be reminded every time they were involved in the same scene.⁴ A lot of the book revolved around the mystery of what Steelheart's weakness was. Now obviously not everyone is going to have this problem, but I felt like I knew pretty early on, and it was a bit frustrating knowing I'd have to get to the end to find out, and I was right, which added to the frustration. The good:¹. All of that said, the plot, the epics, the city and the structure of the society were all very cool and well done. The name Newcago wasn't very creative to me, but just a minor detail.².

Brandon Sanderson is an very fast writer that consistently produces good book after good book. I've been a fan of him since Elantris and I always rush out to buy whatever new book he has. His work, although formulaic, is enjoyable to read and always feels high in quality. Steelheart is set in a futuristic, post-apocalyptic Chicago. The denizens of the book call this new Chicago 'Newcago' (yeah I wondered about that as well). The story follows David, a young man entranced with the world's new Epics. Epics are superhumans that used to be mortals until a meteor named Calamity appeared in the sky. David is obsessed with bringing vengeance on one particular epic, Steelheart. Now that we have the basic plot down we can go into a bit of review. I won't try to spoil anything but be warned that most reviews will have a bit of spoilers in them. Steelheart is a book with excellent pacing in the drama and action departments, but I can't help but feel it was a bit too formulaic. Its almost as if Brandon was writing this as a school project rather than trying to publish it. The main character is again a bit of a know-it-all who falls for a cute girl. There is an older, mysterious character that always saves the day. There is a mysterious magic source that no one really understands. This is all textbook Sanderson, and if you've read his previous books you will feel right at home here. Besides the obvious use of a worn formula I found this book enjoyable. The action scenes were consistent and well-paced. His New Chicago felt like an actual city and most of his characters exhibited varying personalities. The main characters were (mostly) given detailed back stories that were entertaining to read about and sometimes crucial to the plot.

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