



Three

Jay Posey

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The world has collapsed, and there are no heroes any more. But when a lone gunman reluctantly accepts the mantel of protector to a young boy and his dying mother against the forces that pursue them, a hero may yet arise.

Three Details

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From Reader Review Three for online ebook

Dan Schwent says

When he runs into a woman and child on the run, gun-toting bounty hunter Three finds himself escorting them across a post-apocalyptic wasteland and protecting them from genetically altered warriors, brain-hackers, and the Weir, glowing-eyed ghoul-like creatures that stalk the night. Can Three stop the people following Wren and his mother and get them to safety or will they join the ranks of the undead?

Official Business: I got this print ARC from Angry Robot in exchange for reviewing it. Thank you, Angry Robot!

When I first saw the cover of Three and read the description, I knew I had to read it and I was not disappointed. Three is a post-apocalyptic adventure tale in the vein of *The Road Warrior*, only with fewer vehicles and a higher tech level and body count. Actually, it feels more like a Western than anything else, despite cybernetics, mutants, and things of that nature.

Three, the hero of the tale, is cast from the Man with No Name mold, a deadly man hiding a secret. Cass, is a chemic, a drug-dependent fighter who is running on fumes. Wren, her son, is a six year old with some pretty amazing abilities. The men hunting them, Asher and his crew, are a power-hungry bunch of brainhackers and fairly colorful to boot. Dagon was by far the most interesting and well rounded of the antagonists. The lesser characters like jCharles, Mol, and Jackson were memorable enough for me to remember their names and mannerisms, long after there time in the story had passed.

The story goes from wasteland to wasteland, ruined city to ruined city, and the world is revealed gradually with not an infodump in sight. There are enough twists and secrets to keep things interesting, even when the good guys aren't hiding in the dark or getting into bloody battles. The world feels lived in, not like a collection of movie sets strung together.

The writing is a notch above what I expected when I picked up the book, a step beyond the workmanlike prose one normally gets in genre fiction like this. Posey knows how to pour on the tension, what with the Weir wandering the night and bad guys always on Three and gang's heels.

I may sound like an old softie but my favorite part of the book was Three's relationship with Wren, going from uncaring loner to a surrogate father figure to the boy over the course of the book. There were a few touching moments between the two.

4.5 stars. Now I'll twiddle my thumbs until the next *Legends of the Duskwalker* book comes out.

Nicholas Smith says

Probably the best post-apocalyptic novel I've read in the past two years. I really enjoyed the setting and Three. He was one of those guys you don't want to like, but end up liking because he's inherently good, no matter how much bad shi* he does.

The world Posey has developed is really cool, and the Weir are unlike anything I've read about. My only complaint is the lack of information on them. I suppose that was the point, but I really wanted to know more about their origin.

Luke Taylor says

Cinematic. Visceral. Dramatic. Creative. Poignant. I can't begin to articulate how good *Three* is without spoiling the immersive experience. Go pick it up for yourself and dive into the stark realism of Jay Posey's world. You'll laugh, you'll cry, and you'll set it down ready for the next one.

Bob Milne says

What would happen if *Mad Max* were to step into the world of *The Dark Tower*, aided and abetted on his journey by the likes of William Gibson and Richard Matheson? Well, you'd get something very much like Jay Posey's post-apocalyptic cyberpunk thriller, simply titled *Three*.

This is a book that demands a lot of the reader - a lot of patience, a lot of imagination, and a lot of faith that Posey knows where he's going with it all. He simply drops us into the middle of his world and expects us to catch up. Not only isn't there a lot of narrative exposition, there's not a lot of background or explanation provided. Terms and concepts are casually tossed around by characters who clearly know what they're talking about, but we're expected to read between the lines and pay attention to the snippets of information to figure out the larger picture. It's likely to be frustrating for some readers, especially since we never do get all the answers, but it really immerses you in Posey's world, with the mystery and the suspense a large part of the book's appeal.

In terms of characters, *Three*, Cass, and Wren make for a solid trio to guide us on our journey through this barren landscape. Equal parts *Mad Max* and *Roland Deschain*, *Three* is the mysterious loner who stands apart from everyone and everything around him. He's as coldly arrogant as he is fiercely independent, but he's also unshakably loyal, morally grounded, and altogether human beneath that harsh exterior. Cass is a complex character - damaged, addicted, and on the run. She sacrificed her own future long ago, but is desperate to preserve that of her son, while she still can. Wren is somewhat problematic, a little too perfect and precocious, but he has potential. Here is a young boy, on the cusp of something amazing, who holds a mysterious power that certain people would kill to understand.

As for the primary villains - Asher and his villainous gang of henchmen - they don't seem like much more than thugs originally, but as we learn more about who and what they are, they take on a life of their own. By the end of the story, they're not just a serviceable threat, but legitimate foils. More importantly, they're developed as characters with drives and motivations, as unsavory as those may be, and even deserving of some small dose of sympathy. Actually, they probably develop a bit better than the protagonists in that their changes are more gradual, and far less remarkable, than of *Three* in particular.

The world of *Three* is largely your typical post-apocalyptic landscape, a barren wasteland broken here and there by remnants of civilization. Much of what's left is literally underground (sewers, bunkers, tunnels, etc.),

and the only safe refuge from the Weir once the sun goes down. Despite all that's been lost or destroyed, however, there remains a complex cyberpunk-type element to the world, with characters 'wired' into some sort of network that allows them to do everything from check the time to map their GPS coordinates, and others mechanically augmented with varying degrees of technology. As for the Weir, some readers will definitely be left frustrated by the lack of information regarding their true nature, but Posey seems to understand that monsters are at their most frightening when left with a little mystery. Think fast zombies with a sort of collective cyberpunk consciousness, and you get enough of an idea to truly fear when darkness falls.

It's not a perfect book, but it's damn-near. Yes, we'd all like more information and more answers, but so long as Posey delves deeper into how and why the world works in subsequent volumes, I'm quite fine with that. There's definitely a little emotional manipulation going on here that may strike some readers as a cheap ploy, particularly with Cass and Wren, but it worked for me because their relationship seemed natural/normal, and served to ground the story. The pacing is excellent and the narrative sharp, and even if the conclusion leaves us a little frustrated, it also leaves us demanding more.

Originally reviewed at Beauty in Ruins

Brandi says

When the world of ARCs opened it's doors for me I realized something; I have a weakness for using quotes in my reviews, and really hate being without them.

The story is set in some kind of apocalyptic future, but other than that, I can't give any other background. Not because the publisher asked to keep it quiet, no, it's because there's none there. This bothered me until some 30% into it, and is a pretty big deal to me; *I need to know the why of things*. It was especially hard not knowing since the main characters had these abilities that made no sense, and weren't really explained (I use that loosely) until roughly 80% (give or take). They can do things like have images projected onto their corneas, and access satellite information with just a thought; they have various drugs for different things, and body modifications abound it seems. No food grows either apparently, but I have no idea why as there was nothing to suggest that the atmosphere itself was altered. This **still** annoys me that I know so little, but the heart of the story was able to push through the lack of basic information.

Moving on to said heart, this was a really good story. Very intense, and tugged at my heart strings a *lot*. Mainly because of Wren, but Three and Cass both hurt me a few times too. Cass and Wren are mother and son, and when Three first sees them she's desperate and seems hurt. Tightly controlled and nomadic, Three never helps people in that same situation, but something about these two won't let go of him, and somehow he ends up helping them escape. From what, he has no idea, and often mentions that the choice of taking them on might kill him. But does it?!

Wren and Cass were really, really great. Wren is a young boy who felt very authentic to his age (Three thought he was about five, but *much* later we learn he's almost seven), and as my own son just barely turned eight, I felt his scenes much more in my marrow than I wanted. He goes through a lot, and I mean, a **lot**, but

he's incredibly brave and strong, and just *good*. He's special and it's because of this that Cass ran with him trying to save him from Asher. I won't reveal the secret about Asher because I want you all to be as surprised as I was, but it's good. Back to Cass and Wren though, she was just incredible with her will to save him and make it through their terrifying nights, but if not for Three she would have failed. There's a bit of romance for them, but again, I use the term incredibly loose.

The bad guys are *really bad*, and the Weir freaked me out! Asher was spectacular in his role as scary asshole, and actually, all the bad guys were wonderfully scary. The good guys were also good, though I still have some questions about a few. Like jCharles and Mol. Mol especially since there seemed to be such depth of history with her and Three, but once again, we're not privy to what that was.

The action is never ending, and even at 99% I kept waiting for the relief to know that the good guys triumphed over the bad guys, and that maybe Three and Cass became a family, and, and, and...there *is* an epilogue.

The prose is both sparse and really lovely (at one point he likens a sound to that of shadows sliding over a roof), and I really enjoyed it. Jay Posey might have driven me **CRAZY** with the lack of information, but he wrote a really great story, and though it had flaws for me, I know I'm not going to forget anytime soon.

7/29/13 **Edited to add** Well I said I wouldn't forget the story, but I sort of have, except for the many things that worked on my nerves while I read. :/

Abigail says

The moment when you read a memory which is shared with the character and you realize you both just figured it out ... at the same time.

Wow was uttered so much throughout this book my husband wondered if I was reading erotica, which I don't read (that and the squealing).

Post-Apocalyptic Fan? Pick this book up. Like books with a bleak outlook and very little hope? Pick this book up. Like books with a touch of sci-fi and make you feel cool reading them? Pick this book up. Do I sound like a fan-girl? Well I am. Jay Posey created an amazing world for me to immerse myself in.

The protagonist is someone who, as you can see on another of Angry Robots commissioned covers, stays in the shadows, keeps to himself and survives. He comes into the light when he needs to. What drives him? Who knows! This book made me feel like I did when reading parts of R. McCammon's "Swan Song", Nevil Shute's "On the Beach" and even Stephen King's "The Stand". My heart would race, or stomach drop. I would think "How would I do this? Wait, you could use that for..."

Post-Apocalyptic books have always been an exploration for me into my own favorite playground of bleakness. I love the idea of it all, but I am also the girl who is obsessed with the black plague and the

zombie apocalypse, so go figure.

Oh wait, zombies? Did I mention zombies? OK I tease :) there are no zombies but there are monsters in this one, and they used to be people but they have been taken over by something and are called Weir. I won't go into it, not important but what is important is that they come out during times of darkness so there are a few things very important. One, post-apocalyptic, no cars.. (There is a train... but it is... oh dear, spoilers) If you are going to go on a walk about you have to be inside and behind a safe wall before dark which means you have to time your walks or you are dead.

Now the interesting thing about this post-apocalyptic world is that tech is still around, even the monsters have tech or are part of it. People are part of the tech, they are born with it, and they sense it. Three is special, and I will let you figure that out for yourself.

I will say this is a book about the characters, about a man who lives a life for himself and who finds out how to let folks in and the costs of doing so, the good and the bad. It is about the people. This is, for me, what makes a post-apocalyptic book, the story about what happens to the people.

In the end... oh the end? The beginning of the end? Mysteries are left unanswered, lives are lost and people's lives changed forever, hopefully including yours. I held off reviewing this for a bit... and ended up reading it a second time finding even more joy again. I highly recommend those who like true dystopian post-apocalyptic looking through a pair of dirty cracked goggles at a bleak world with the sunrise trying to break across the horizon... maybe it will make it up maybe it won't.

Jay Posey made me want to shake a stick at him and occasionally smack him around and also lick his brain pan on more than one occasion during this read! I cannot wait to read more from this amazing author! He earned every star I give him and more! Oh and a lot of bacon delight (yes, there has to be bacon involving this guy, he rocks, I would give him my bacon)!

?Susan? says

This is a post apocalyptic, fast paced story that pulled me in from the start. Not my favorite genre but this is one of the few that I could stick with and enjoy. The characters were original and the world was believable, without being over the top, or violent every second.

A roughneck bounty hunter who keeps his secrets to himself is thrown into a position where he feels responsible for a mother and a child. They find themselves on the run from a group of miscreants that have special talents and a sinister agenda that not even they can imagine. As their journey together unfurls, the bounty hunter starts to realize that he is not the only one who has secrets. Inventive and interesting with moments of tenderness. Luke Daniels does a good job with all of the different voices.

Experiment BL626 says

The book was rude. It threw me into the mix with scant explanation. I waited and waited and when answers were finally given I didn't understand them because the book didn't explain what they meant. Characters would act shocked upon awareness and I would just go, "So what?". The writing spent too much time with scene setup and barely any time with world building. I craved exposition.

For example, Weir were roaming zombie-like monsters. A competent warrior can take one down relatively easily, but the true danger lies within their number and their tendency to ambush preys. Bites wouldn't necessarily turn a person into a Weir, but then again I'm not sure because the book never explained how one became a Weir. Neither did it explain how Wren came to rule the world when there were powerful humans who could take them on, in groups of course, and reclaim the world for humanity.

As far the book was concerned, the world was always apocalyptic, part of the population always had paranormal abilities, and etc. Unless you were paying close attention and noticed certain words, you wouldn't have known the fictional world was a futuristic Earth.

+ the characters

Characters were a complete cliché. Three was a strong warrior with a sense of honor. Cass was an ex-criminal who aspired for redemption. Wren, Cass's son, was a boy with peerless but unreliable power. I bristled how the latter two characters were used for emotional manipulation of the reader. When things needed to vomit sad, the book trotted out the desperate mother and her son who was around 5 year old and cried "Mama," lip quivering and all that shit. Aiy.

For the main villain, Asher was power crazy because, well, someone got to be evil. The funny thing was that he and the other important characters had more character development than the eponymous hero. I still didn't know who the fuck Three was by the end of the book. Equally frustrating was the absence of explanation of his secrets when they were revealed. What the fuck does "wired" mean? Ugh. I don't care anymore.

+ the plot

The plot was so simple that it was strongly more suited as a novella than a novel. I lost patience with it halfway through and heavily skimmed to the end. The only time I ever bothered to pay close attention again was in chapter 22 of 31 when Cass revealed her past and secrets, answers that put her and her son into their present predicament.

The ending was cliché and bittersweet, redolent of some tragic warrior myth. As a reader with a zealotry for happy endings, I would have been upset but I honestly couldn't give a shit. I never connected with any of the characters so I felt little sadness with the good guys' death and little joy with the bad ones'.

In Conclusion

I rate *Three* 1-star for I didn't like it. A post-apocalypse setting, a touch of cyberpunk, a galore of chase and battle scenes: all that glitters was not gold.

Mogsy (MMOGC) says

Thank you to NetGalley and Angry Robot for providing me with a pre-release copy of *Three* in exchange for an honest review. This futuristic, post-apocalyptic science fiction novel piqued my interest as soon as I saw it, and I knew even from reading its simple and brief description that I definitely had to check it out.

The story opens, introducing us to a world where society has crumbled and human activity only exists in pockets of safe zones across a devastated landscape. When the sun sets, creatures known as the Weir come

forth and the night is filled with their glowing blue eyes and sounds of their electrifying howls. The setting is unmistakably post-apocalyptic and even has the slight feel of a western, but at the same time it appears a significant portion of technology has survived. Throughout this novel you will encounter characters utilizing high-tech weapons, implants, chems, mechanical limbs and the like.

The book features our eponymous protagonist Three, a lone gunman who has turned to bounty hunting to make a living. One day, he emerges from the wasteland to collect on a successful job and encounters a distressed woman pleading for help with her young son in tow. Three has always worked alone and prefers it that way, so he is surprised to find himself accepting the mantle of protector to Cass and her boy Wren. To keep themselves alive, the trio must go on the run to escape the merciless adversaries who are after them.

I remember finishing the prologue and being a little unsure about what to make of it, which really isn't all that unusual given how it typically takes me at least a few chapters to get a feel for a book. But then I read the first chapter which introduces Three, and I was hooked. There's just something about him that makes the reader want to learn more, his character being a man of few words notwithstanding. While Three may play to the familiar dangerous-looking-but-honorable-tough-guy archetype with simple and straightforward motivations, the author definitely knows how to present his character as someone you want to root for right away.

I also liked the trust and respect that develops between Three and Cass over the course of their journey. To me it felt really natural and gradual, even with the many trying yet justifiable obstacles along the way. Cass loves her son Wren and guards him with the ferocity of a lioness protecting her cub, so it's such an engrossing process to see her views evolve as she begins to accept Three and make room for him in their lives.

I very much enjoyed the setting as well, which I talked a bit about at the beginning of this review. There are elements of it that will be familiar to readers of post-apocalyptic science fiction, but it also feels unique. My one regret is that the book didn't provide as much context as I'd have liked, such as how the world became this way, how some of this strange and awesome technology came about, what gave rise to the Weir and where they go during the daytime and how they turn others into one of them, etc. None of this information is necessary to understand and follow the story, of course, but my curiosity gets the better of me sometimes, and it sucks having these questions hang at the back of my mind as I'm reading, especially for such a fascinating world.

Needless to say, for a debut novel, I thought this was very impressive. Three may be a little light on plot, but I like that it makes up for this with its fast pacing and well-written action sequences, sometimes alternating between the viewpoints of the various characters like you see in movies, creating this atmosphere of danger and suspense.

If his goal was to leave me wanting to know more about these characters and this world, then Jay Posey definitely succeeded. I wasn't sure before if this was going to be a series and if there were going to be any more books, since the story's ending tied up rather nice and neatly (which was a nice plus). But then some digging around showed me that *Legends of the Duskwalker* is indeed going to be a series, so I'll be sure to be on the lookout for more by this author in the future. There's still so much I want to know about the history of some of these characters, how they got to where they were, and what else is in store for them.

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Gavin says

I'm not quite sure what to say about this book. The start was so dull and boring that I nearly quit around the 25% mark. I pushed on and was rewarded by this developing into an average read. It had some interesting aspects, but plenty of faults.

The World

This was set in a post-apocalyptic sci-fi future. Some unexplained event has decimated the human population. The survivors huddle in safe zones as the mysterious Weir prowl the night killing all they find. The remaining humans were all connected to some super version of the internet via some internal computer chip direct in their minds. Advancements in technology have also made it possible for the humans to enhance both their body and their minds abilities. That was all pretty cool and interesting. Unfortunately there was little explanation given for anything and Posey's description was so vague it was impossible to get a real picture of this world.

The Story

Bounty hunter and drifter Three decides, on a whim, to help a troubled women and her 5 year old kid who are on the run from some villainous characters. That is it really. From then it is just the three of them on the run from the thugs chasing the boy. Some of the action scenes were OK. I also enjoyed some of the character interactions.

The Characters

Three - Our mysterious bounty hunter and all out action man. As far as I could tell Three had almost no personality and his character had less depth than a sheet of paper. He felt like a wasted opportunity. The guy really should have been a total bad-ass.

Cass - The troubled women. Cass was as unlikable a character as I've had the misfortune to encounter in a while. Over the course of the story the vile junkie managed to kill some poor doctor to acquire a fix of her chosen drug, attack Three for not doing a good enough job of protecting her, and even slapped her own 5 year old son when he became to scared to concentrate on rescuing her! I fail to see why every guy in the book, including her own elder son, thought she was the mortal incarnation of Aphrodite.

Wren - The kid with the special abilities. He was a likable enough character.

The Villains - These enhanced goons were as generic a bunch of thugs as you will ever find. The one potentially interesting villain in the story only lasted a short time. Even the Weir's were just faceless bores.

Rating: 3 stars. That is me being generous considering the vague world building, the characters lack of depth, and a storytelling style that was fairly plodding.

Audio Note: This book was not helped by Luke Daniels narration. It took me nearly 5 hours to get used to some of his awful voice choices for the characters. Cass sounded constantly breathless and whiny while Three sounded like he was modeled on Clint Eastwood, if Eastwood had his jaw wired shut! Definitely not his best performance.

David says

I still visit the world of Three from time to time. I feel the dry, arid landscape. I hear the rusted scrap metal banging in the cold wind as the sun begins to set. I see the glowing blue lights in the distant darkness.

I still wonder what happened. How the world ended up this way. What went wrong.

I think about Three, about Cass, and about Wren. I can picture each of them. Their demeanor. Their struggles.

I can visit this world, much like I can take a quick trip to "The Book of Eli", "I Am Legend", or "The Walking Dead". I don't remember all the details, but I know the place. I've been there before.

That's what makes Jay Posey's "Three" such a great read. It's vivid. Almost real. No, it **is** real. Not because of the world he paints. In fact, it's practically the opposite. It's his ability to *not* define it. To simply outline this place, this future, and let you fill it in. The time. The scenery. The history.

It's precisely this unique writing style that emphasizes the characters. The story. The relationships. The tension and the turmoil.

And it's this tension and turmoil that grab you. That pull you in. That keep you from putting the book down.

Trust me. I'm not even a fan of scifi. Perhaps on the big screen, but not on paper. I don't read scifi. I read non-fiction. Books about business, marketing, and entrepreneurship.

Honestly, when Jay, who I should mention is a friend of mine, asked me to read a draft of his first novel, "Three", I agreed, but with a caveat. I reminded him that I don't read scifi (I hardly read fiction). So I told him not to take it personally if it took me a few weeks, or even months. to get through it.

He emailed me a draft... 72 hours later I was done. I, *literally*, could not put it down.

"Three" is a great story. Not just for die-hard scifi, post-apocalyptic, zombie-loving, dystopia enthusiasts. It's a great story for anyone who loves to read.

But don't take my word for it...

Faye, la Patata says

An ARC was provided in exchange for an honest review. This did not alter my thoughts in any way. The following text is my opinion only.

I really, really need to stop falling for covers. I mean, look at that baby right there - isn't it just mad cool? It

gives me that Assassin's Creed vibe, something that I don't really play (I gave up on the first mission...) but think is awesome nonetheless. I know, I know, there's a bit of bias, but even without my identifying it with AC, it still looks pretty sweet. It has zombies. And it's post-apocalyptic! POST-APOCALYPTIC! That means *something* happened that made the world this way. Something scary, to have all these zombies with blue eyes coming at our throats, right?! **Right?!**

But... *le sigh...*

If there's one thing that this book made me feel, it's disappointment. I expected so, so much, given that sci-fi and post-apocalyptic fiction are two of my favorite genres, but unfortunately everything felt so... I don't know, lacking? For the first 90%, I was so frustrated with how things were going, and my mind was full of "WTF WTF WTF?!?!" and **not** in a good way.

First, there was very little world-building. I was just thrown into a world where there were fields and fields of empty lands, void of people and of life, save for a few walled cities and underground refuges. It's post-apocalyptic but there were some technologies that still worked (like satellites orbiting the planet...). There were these zombie-like creatures popping at night, creatures who used to roam the world as humans. AND apparently, there were also some people with special powers... These were really interesting, but I couldn't really picture it in my head because nothing was ever explained in depth. **How am I supposed to consider this book as post-apocalyptic when no explanation has been given on how everything came to be?** Was there a war? Was there a nuclear fallout? Where did these Weirs come from? Were they a result of some sort of mutation, or a failed bio experiment, or what? How the hell did certain people get to have superhuman abilities?

I really, really wanted everything to make sense, but it was one big WTFuckery throughout. There were times some terms were introduced, but like the world-building, I never got a clear picture of them. Apparently, you get "shipped" when you die, and it was thrown in several times, and each time I was like, "*WHAT THE FUCK DOES SHIPPING OR BEING SHIPPED MEANS??!! DUDE*". As in, seriously. Then early in the novel, Cass showed this ability that kind of sends signals to satellites and can even take a sneak peek into some sort of internet technology that allows her to pinpoint where they are in a map... she used this twice in the beginning, but until the end, there were no explanation on how she can do that or on how that ability works exactly. **AND IT WAS NEVER USED AGAIN.** Just like that. Forgotten. Buried in the early pages. Never to be seen once more. Ugh...

And like I said, I couldn't really imagine the place. The prose and narration was more telling of what the characters were doing every fricking second (verb here, verb again, then verb verb verb), that details on the environment were almost non-existent. I wanted more exposition regarding these things, because it's with the environment and world-building where the post-apocalyptic element of this really shines. Of course, that's just my opinion; it could be different for other people. But for me, post-apocalyptic depends on the scenery, on the setting, and on how this setting affects other people, how it becomes an important factor in their every day life. And I really didn't see that here. Even the walled cities didn't really make any sense. There was this city where apparently color was everywhere and people had a particular fashion sense, and I was like HUH?! Errrr...

As for the characters, I couldn't really connect to them. At first, I totally liked Three as he was portrayed as this bad ass mofo who could kick your ass without batting an eyelid. He was shown as this way for the first 40 percent - cold, calculating, meticulous, kickass... and then later on, his personality did a 180° change. He suddenly traced his finger over Cass' cheekbone *gently*, nudged her on the elbow after an inside joke, he *winked*, suddenly "stopped breathing" when Cass smiled at him, suddenly felt warm in his chest when he saw

her... like WHOA. I know I sound really nitpicky right now, but why the heck would this book portray him so much like THIS, and then next chapter he's like an all-new person? I don't know, a lot of people may see that as character development, but it was just weird to me. It wouldn't have been if there were more build-up between the two of them, but I didn't really find any that justified this sudden change. Sorry, Three, you're badass, but your lovesick puppy moments didn't work out for me.

And, of course, there's Cass... sigh. I really didn't like this heroine. I thought she was so selfish and useless. She tried to get Three to help them run away from some bad guys due to her kid's speshul power, leading him to a bigger trouble than what's its worth without him knowing. I didn't like how she involved him without having even the gall to tell him what he was up against. And apparently, she was part of this strong crew, the *best* crew ever that has killed a lot of people, and yet when she was traveling with Three, she was useless as hell! **All she did was whine and cry and wait for things to happen or wait for Three to make things happen for her.** She depended on him so much, that how she was a part of RushRuin's crew was beyond me. Truly, truly baffling. There was this scene where she was so helpless on what to do, so she asked Three about it. He said he'll find a way. And she was like, "Ok! He'll find a way! Three always does! I'll just sit here and relax!" Of course, that's not really how it happened, but you know what I mean, right?

I think this book's saving grace was Wren. He's the kid the bad guys are after, and I think he was portrayed nicely. There are some books out there where there are kids below the age of ten, but act mature for their age, or too childish. I think the author shown his confusion, his innocence, and his fears really... accurately? If that's the right word? Like you can really tell he's a six year old and a half kid. Well done on that part.

90% of the plot didn't really engage me. It was confusing as hell, frustrating, and sometimes boring. I had to skim a lot of pages. **The last 10% was pretty fast-paced and cool, so that makes an extra star.** I'm not sure if I'll read the sequels, though... time will tell.

Final Verdict: 2 / 5 stars

Angela says

DNF at 21%.

I just can't anymore.

Some reasons I quit:

1. I have no idea what's going on. What kind of world this is, how it got this way; what kind of people these are, how *they* got this way. Where it is, when it is, how it is....I've got nothing. This is best as I can figure it.

We're in some vague science-fiction world; maybe earth, maybe some place else. Weirs populate the outside (and it took until 18%ish to get a name/idea of what they were). FYI: They're zombie like creatures with glowing blue eyes that track based on a multitude of things, including characters 'linking' (I'll get to that). I have no idea how they came about though. Because of the weirs, humanity has closed themselves up in cities that are locked up tight after dark - apparently the weirs only come out at night? And it's got to be *full* dark, none of this partial-dusk, mostly dark crap. Also, they apparently communicate with screams and/or screeches.

The characters have some sort of 'link to a central 'net? They can link and find out their global positioning, have access to internal time, get information, and track based on use of this. I don't know why, or how this came about.

There are weird drugs (chems) that people can take to become super strong/fast/smart - but they become addictive to the point where you need them to function later.

2. Characters act in ways that are inconsistent with the world-building.

Enter Three. He's a mercenary? I guess. That was what I imagined him to be considering he was claiming a bounty on someone when we first meet him (unless that's him in the prologue - but I don't really know who that was to be honest). Then he randomly decides to save this woman and child. Next, he continues to help them for a really long time, protecting them despite the woman being an ungrateful person who berates and yells at him for not doing enough (apparently). Also, I have no idea why the mother was in the bar with her son when she first meets Three, and asks him for help. Obvious authorial hand here.

Additionally, Three can kick weird ass. Yet, the rest of humanity can't band together to find the weird and fight them or eliminate them. They're all weak cowards, I guess.

3. Characters that piss me off.

Enter Cass. Previously mentioned mother. She's a quint (the previously mentioned chem) addict with a special son (you know the type - the *ONE*). She alternates between helpless, bitchy, ungrateful and downright mean. Not to mention that she apparently can't really do anything for herself, and allowed herself AND HER SON to get into a very shady dealing. Though now she is on the run, so at least I can give her that for getting her kid out of it - though he is SEVEN so it took her long enough.

About the time she slapped her son because he wasn't able to find the way out to save them, (view spoiler), I lost all interest in her as a character and pretty much came to hate her.

And that pretty much ended my ability to read this. I was going to keep trying to go, but when my whole weekend went by without me picking up my Kindle because I just couldn't make myself. Time to just stop.

I do think this has potential, and that it's probably going to work great for others. It just isn't working for me.

Perhaps I'll come back to it at some point. Right now I doubt it, though.

Also - if anyone does/did finish this (view spoiler), I would LOVE to know what the hell these people are and/or how the world got this way, etc.

Scott says

What an intense ride this was. Never really let up from the first page to the last.

Not much world building or character development, but man was it exciting. The world does seem pretty

interesting, from the little we're given, and I wonder if the following books delve deeper into it.

If you're looking for a fast-paced, futuristic thriller you could do a lot worse than this one

Jim says

I was pleasantly surprised by this novel & it wrapped up more completely than I expected for the first of a series. As weird as the post apocalyptic world is, we slowly figure out much over the course of the novel. There were no data dumps. LOVE IT, although if you like tidy answers & everything explained, this book isn't for you. You need to read between the lines & remember the few facts that are so casually dropped. Even so, you still won't know all the answers, although I think I made some good guesses. That's why it is first in a series. This is an action packed introduction to the world & there is much more to be revealed.

The main characters are all remarkable, may be a bit too much so at times, but pretty good overall. A hardbitten man, a beautiful mother & her son are the main heroes. They're facing a main set of villains plus a world that is out to eat its own, but nothing is quite as it seems on the surface. Stereotypes mutate suddenly to add depth & deliver a kick in an understated, often bleak tone. Posey isn't afraid to use his characters hard to make his points, either. Excellent. I'm looking forward to reading the next which is due out next year, I believe.

Write faster!

Navessa says

Buddy read with JennyJen, Faye and Angela. Needless to say, I am Steve Carell.

Welp. I can't finish this. Not because I don't want to (Jenny). Or because I quit (Angela). But because I'm a moron. My stupid digital edition of this never verified itself and so my ARC has expired and it's now lost in the aether somewhere. I blame myself for not paying better attention. So three stars it is as I liked what I read in the hundred pages I was able to manage.

I've seen some other reviews for this and I feel like it's my duty to say a few words of advice here. If you can't swim, don't approach *Three*, as it will pick you up and lob you into the deep end without your floaties. But if you've had your literary swimming lessons via numerous fantasy or post apocalyptic books (NOT THE YA KIND), you should be fine with the method of world building within it. If not, you'll likely be both lost and angry that it's not more informative.

You see, this book is a shower, not a teller. It doesn't feed you page upon page of intricately woven alternate history. It doesn't detail the downfall of mankind, the world's current political systems or try to shove a moral down your throat about human greed. It dumps you bodily into a bleak yet technologically advanced future and expects you to take it as it is.

Continuing along this vein, the descriptions of settings might be too subtle for some tastes as well. For me, they were perfect. Posey would mention heavy rust on the hinges of a thick metal door, the concrete shells of buildings, broken out windows and layers of grit and grime on sidewalks and my mind immediately began to paint the rest of this desolate world. With a few simple turns of phrase he had me seeing entire city blocks and subterranean complexes.

Did I have a lot of unanswered questions? Yes. Was I still confused at times? Also, yes. My advice is to take notes.

Rachel the Book Harlot says

4.5 Stars

I'm trying not to get a temper tantrum over certain events. But frakk, man. Even though I knew where certain aspects of the story were headed, certain things sucked all of my emotional investment and desire to continue with the series. Why, Jay Posey?! Why?!

But, despite my disappointment over certain events, the truth is that this book is really, really freaking good. *Three* is truly one helluva post-apocalyptic sci-fi novel. It's filled with suspense, well-drawn characters, great world-building, and some great fight sequences.

Both the characters and the futuristic post-apocalyptic world are extremely vivid and well thought-out. I read that the author is a narrative writer for video games, and that background definitely shows.

I loved the way the story unfolded: with bits of information about the world and characters, motivations and background stories, revealing themselves slowly as the story progressed. I read a review in which the reviewer made note of the lack of (or not enough) exposition, but I actually preferred that. The way information was revealed kept me intrigued, engaged, and invested. Frankly, I thought it added to the suspense. But I can understand wanting to know more about the world. By the end, the reader still does not know what caused the collapse of civilization. But it's clear that it will be revealed in later books.

As to the narrative pacing, if I had to describe it in two words, it would be: meticulous and unrelenting.

I loved the characters -- particularly the character Three. He is my idea of a perfect hero: tough, noble, and not afraid to be vulnerable. And he made mistakes which humanized him quite a bit.

The final 10% or so felt rushed, especially after so much time taken throughout the story to detail all events.

An epilogue was included which gives some finality to Book 1 so that if you do not wish to continue with the series, this would be a good stopping point.

So, will I continue with the series? Yes, darn it all, I will because I'm a glutton for punishment. And because I loved the storytelling, the writing, and the world too much to not continue.

Final rating: 4.5 stars

Nikki says

Received this to review from Netgalley. I enjoy most Angry Robot books, but this one was a cut above. They normally have new and intriguing ideas, but this was a whole world that felt organic, revealed slowly, with no unnecessary detail. The whole idea of the Weir was perfect -- enough information that they were frightening, but not so much that the mystery went out of it and left them ridiculous. They're sort of zombies. High tech zombies. They're not invulnerable, and their danger isn't hyped up unbearably -- danger comes from all around: the Weir, basic survival, and the gang on Three's heels.

I didn't expect some of the twists this book took; some were obvious after another previous turning point had been passed, and yet at the same time it wasn't obvious that that would *have* to be the outcome. And I loved the way the characters developed: the way relationships slowly grew between them, and the way that very little could be seen as black and white.

Ultimately, I don't know how to talk about this book without spoiling the experience. It's a little bit of a Western, a little bit sci-fi, a little bit horror survival story. It's absorbing and well-written, and surprised me on many fronts, and I'll rec it to everyone once it's published. If you have a Netgalley account, this is one not to be missed; if you're an Angry Robot fan, part of the Robot Army, likewise; if you're not, may I suggest that this is a most excellent place to start?

Tabitha says

Prepare to be unplugged! This powerhouse of an apocalyptic read cannot and will not be denied!

Visit Not Yet Read for an article from Jay Posey on Post-Apocalyptic Bounty Hunting.

Three is the kind of book you pick up that refuses to be put down until finished. Tension runs high as it rushes you from action scene to action scene with just the right amount of downtime to catch your breath in between.

In this post-apocalyptic future, you must fear the Weir, monstrous once humans that roam the night with their sickly pale dead skin, glowing blue orb eyes and electrical screams. They were human...once. I imagined their screeching to sound like a high speed train quickly throwing an emergency brake. The cities are abandoned and it is much the wasteland. What little is left of humanity are locked behind walled towns or small underground fortresses so they can carry on with some semblance of life.

In fact, most of the Vault stretched down underground, below the city, like some kind of human hive bored out of a cement iceberg. – pg 8

Three is a man apart, but when a woman and her child walk into his life one day in need of help which he originally refuses to give, all of his ways of life start to slowly change...against his better judgement. Now I'm a sucker for a cute kid's face, so of course this stalwart loner was going to crack, that's what this is all

about right? Wren is an adorable kid with some very unique gifts, his mother Cass, well she took some time for me to warm up to. She's the most "together" junkie I've ever read. Though Three is a man of few words he definitely served me up a few chuckles regardless.

He chuckled aloud at the thought of his fellow patrons out there drinking his recycled urine. –
pg 23

True to post-apocalyptic fashion, people are scavengers, travel is hard, resources are scarce, and there are no easy modes of transportation. If you are going somewhere...you're walking.

"My feet are sad."

"Mine too baby. Mine too." – pg 119

But the interesting balancing point to all of that, is that technology is still present, and in an advanced state. Everyone is wired in a sense I can't really explain other than all the data and information you could ever want to know about the past is available for you to access from within yourself because you are wired into all of that data from the time you're born. It might even be genetically engineered into people such that you are born with it – I was a bit sketchy on the particulars there. It's a fascinating concept. There are genetically enhanced people, chemical stimulants like you wouldn't believe, kick ass weapons that give it an almost western feel, and so many other aspects that are at odds with the post-apocalyptic setting and yet fit perfectly.

In *Three* the details are sparse just like the landscape. If you're a reader that needs to know everything then be warned going in that this story is awesome but it is about the characters in it not about the world, land, it's history or how it got to the point it is. Being a completely character driven story, it is so well fleshed out I didn't feel that it was lacking in any way. I certainly hope that more details are revealed in the next installment. Because I of course want to know all of the nitty gritty details! Ultimately, for many readers, I believe the sheer power of Posey's prose and storytelling will overwhelm that tiny pick point.

It was as if some great ocean of destruction had rolled its unyielding tide through the city and then, upon its terrible recession, left behind only a shoreline of concrete sand and crushed humanity. – pg 283

With every page I was sucked in ever deeper such that I am content if I never find out the answers to all my curious little questions. **String me along Posey, like a starving wretch after some breadcrumbs, I'll take every morsel I can get!**

Milo (BOK) says

The Review: <http://thefoundingfields.com/2013/07/....>

"A fun, action packed read that serves as a solid debut – I'm on board for Book Two for certain." ~The Founding Fields

All too often, I find myself either reading or requesting a book to review purely based on its cover, and Jay Posey's Three is certainly no exception. I mean – just look at it. Sure, it may fill the bill of a hooded-man clichéd cover, but its design really drew me in, and I was eagerly awaiting the chance to read this book. And when I started it, at first – I was somewhat let down. It wasn't as enthralling as I thought it would be, and it wasn't as gripping early on. Until I got to a certain moment in the book, when the pace really got going and the book itself really got interesting. From then onwards – I couldn't put it down. Three took me on a whirlwind ride through the Dystopian, Post Apocalyptic setting and builds to a fantastic conclusion, with an awesome climax. There are several things that I enjoyed about this novel once I got into it – but I just wish that it had been able to hook me in right from the start.

But that's pretty much one of the few flaws that I had with Three. The rest of the book is really awesome, and very engaging – and I'm glad that this is the first part of the Legends of the Duskwalker series.

"The world has collapsed, and there are no heroes any more.

But when a lone gunman reluctantly accepts the mantel of protector to a young boy and his dying mother against the forces that pursue them, a hero may yet arise."

Three's blurb is sharp and to the point, and the same could be said about its dramatis personae. Three as a name works two ways – not only is it the name of the titular character, but also the book follows a cast of three main heroes, Wren a six year old boy with some rather unique abilities, and his mother – Cass, a fighter who depends on drugs to operate – aka a chemic. The lesser cast are mainly antagonists, such as Asher, Dagon and more – most of them being well rounded and interesting. The smaller cast really allows for more time to be spent on establishing the dominant characters, and because we're not introduced to a new one every other chapter, we don't get ourselves detracted from the adventures of Wren, Cass and Three.

ThreeThe book itself, despite being set in the future, feels more like a Western at times – despite the clear elements of science fiction terminology and mechanics. Pretty much every place that the characters visit is desecrated and destroyed, really ramming home its post apocalyptic setting. Expect lots of wastelands and ruined cities here – with Three being a book that successfully avoids falling into the trap of info-dumping, allowing for the pace to move along pretty quickly once it grabs you in.

Just don't expect the book to grab you in almost instantly though – I wasn't enthralled in from the get go. It took a while for everything to fall into place for me, but the book certainly got more interesting later on, and as a result – I was glad that I stuck with it – for the ending certainly pays off. Another flaw that some people might have with Three is that there's also a lack of world building – the world isn't really fleshed out. Whilst this may bother some, I didn't find it as that much of an issue. We don't really know how the world came to be a post apocalyptic setting and neither do we know why there are certain people with special powers. Some people may find this more of an issue than me, however.

Jay Posey's debut is pretty solid despite the aformentioned issues. If you're a fan of gritty, dark, fast paced and action packed books - you'll love Three. It moves along at a breakneck pace and doesn't let up. Three is a badass lead character with loads of promise and undergoes interesting development over the course of the novel – and if you're a fan of this sort of setting and concept, I think you'll enjoy it. It's not perfect, but it's pretty impressive, so I can offer my recommendation behind it. Count me in for Book Two, though – particularly if the cover's as awesome as this one.

VERDICT: 3.5/5
