



Antsy Does Time

Neal Shusterman

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Fueled by friendship and sympathy, Antsy Bonano signs a month of his life over to his dying classmate Gunnar Umlaut. Soon everyone at school follows suit, giving new meaning to the idea of living on borrowed time. But does Gunnar really have six months to live, or is news of his imminent death greatly exaggerated? When a family member suffers a heart attack after donating two years to Gunnar, Antsy wonders if he has tempted fate by playing God. Fans of the Schwa will welcome favorite and new characters in this wholly fresh tale, which is as touchingly poignant as it is darkly comical.

Antsy Does Time Details

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From Reader Review Antsy Does Time for online ebook

Shoa Khan says

It's always a joy to discover a new favorite author, and one of my (relatively) recent finds is Neal Shusterman, whose *The Schwa Was Here* was my first read of this year, and a book I simply adored. This sequel too had pretty much all the ingredients that had made the first book so perfect. What it did not have was the novelty factor and of course, *The Schwa!* :)

I was going to give this 4 stars but I just happened to go through all the status updates I had posted for this book and they really cracked me up! So, just for the insanely comic writing that is so unique to Neal Shusterman, here goes another 5 stars! (^.^)

A special shout out to the Texas A&M University Libraries, for getting this for me upon request! Whoop!

Cinda says

I'd never read Schusterman before. This book was "assigned" as part of a writing retreat, and I enjoyed being introduced to this character. Schusterman deals with rather serious issues in a humorous, engaging way.

Anyana says

I chose the book *Antsy Does Time* because the title and the cover looked interesting. The plot of the story is basically about how a boy named Anthony tried to earn time for his friend Gunnar. Everyone believed that Gunnar had been diagnosed with cancer and they felt bad for him so they donated months of their life just to keep him happy. Is he really sick, or is it all a game? My favorite quote was "A family is a collection of strangers trapped in a web of DNA and forced to cope." I like this quote because it shows that even though there are fights, and even though things fall apart, everything becomes better again because family stays family. I thought the author's writing style was great. He wrote from everyones point of view and I enjoyed that. I would recommend this book to who ever that has trouble trusting a friend because this book reveals many dark secrets.

Sergei_kalinin says

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<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>). ?????? ?????? ?????? ? ???? ?????, ????????????? ??
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I had the pleasure of meeting Neal Shusterman in real life. He's obviously very passionate about what he does and really bonds with some of his characters. Antsy is one of those lucky characters.

Antsy first popped up as a side character in Shusterman's book *The Schwa Was Here*, but because Shusterman loved Antsy so much he decided to write him his own book. I can't blame him because Antsy is quite a character. Anthony "Antsy" Bonano is kind of loud, kind of funny, and always scheming. He has a good heart but of course has to act like a typical teenager and keep some level of bravado up at all times.

In this tale, Antsy gets wrapped up in one of his classmate's lives more than he could have anticipated. Gunnar Umlaut, a brooding 14-year-old who is originally from Sweden and has an icy coolness about him, begins complaining that he only has months to live because he has been diagnosed with a terminal disease. After witnessing a freak accident, Antsy looks at life in a different light and decides to do something to help Gunnar. He decides to give Gunnar six months of his life. Well, this plan snowballs way out of control. People start giving months from their own lives to help the cause, and because Antsy starts falling for Gunnar's older sister, he finds himself unable to break free from the out-of-control situation. People are giving time freely and begin using time like stocks to trade and barter with for other things, like doing each other's homework and getting free food. But one evening something happens that scares everyone who has given time, and people begin trying to get their time back, including a panicked Antsy.

I found myself enjoying Antsy in spite of myself. I don't know if it's a compliment or not, but to me, Antsy really feels like it was written by the main character. I believe 14-year-old Antsy is telling us this story. Is it bad that Shusterman writes like a 14-year-old? Hard to say. I can't say the plot or writing were top level, but in the end, does that even matter since I enjoyed the book and wanted to keep reading it to the end as fast as possible to see what happened? Maybe, maybe not. It depends on who you ask I suppose, but for me, it wasn't the worst thing in the world. The book was fun and even funny in spite of any shortcomings I found.

Shusterman said he has another Antsy book on the way called *Antsy Floats*. All I know is, Antsy will be on a boat somehow, and I'll probably end up reading that one, too.

Taken from my blog: libchickreads.wordpress.com

C.P. Cabaniss says

Antsy is a fun character to follow and all of his adventures are both entertaining and enlightening. This book had me laughing out loud a lot of the time, but also had some serious moments that left me with deep questions to consider. I appreciate when a story can give so much.

In the first story, Antsy made friends with the Schwa. Now he has made friends with Gunnar and Kjersten Umlaut. But as Antsy gets closer to this brother and sister, he realizes that things aren't quite what they seem to be on the surface.

I love the Bonano family. They remind me a lot of my own family, just smaller. They are loud and obnoxious with each other, but they don't let their anger live for long because they care about each other too much for that.

Neal Shusterman's narration was just as good here as in the first installment. It's always fun to hear an author read their own story. It adds something to the experience, somehow, knowing that the person who wrote the

words is now sharing their voice as well.

Clare Cannon says

Antsy Bonano's intelligently humorous and yet thoughtful banter speaks what may be in the minds and hearts of many teens. His story is relatable and at the same time offers worthwhile topics for reflection. Part of the intelligence in the humour is that the jokes never seem to die, they bounce back at you from unexpected quarters, pages after the original event. This makes for very entertaining reading.

Antsy isn't perfect, but in the course of this book we see him learn from mistakes and gain a good deal of maturity. Here's a sample of some of his mistakes, and what he learns from them.

A well-intentioned gesture to donate a month of his life for his terminally ill friend turns into a time-machine circus with everyone, including the school principal, joining the game. Though it spirals a little out of control, it does get Antsy thinking about the value of time and the uselessness of wastes of time spent watching reruns on the couch or destroying simulated nations in computer games.

This leads Antsy to come up with the ingenious notion of "daymares", that time spent caught up imagining irritating arguments you never had but might have some day, or where you put yourself through worst-case scenarios. He is honest with himself when he realises his "daymare" about his friend's future funeral was all about himself and how much a girl he likes would respect him. Drawing attention to this self-centred form of daydreaming could be helpful for many teens.

On the topic of relationships, Antsy first notices the slightly older Kjersten for her appearance (including experiencing a 'brain-scramble' when he looks at her t-shirt). True to his character, however, he gradually learns more about who she is and the two become good friends. When they start to go out, Antsy realises that Kjersten appreciates his youthfulness because he reminds her of a time when she was happier, so he becomes a skate-board-riding, bad-joke-telling kid to help her forget the complications of her family life. Ultimately, he realises their friendship/relationship doesn't have much future, but he's helped her through a tough time and the two remain on good terms.

Antsy has an old-fashioned approach to friendships and relationships in general, and he wisely judges how technology has harmed people's ability to get to know each other. He says, "That's only because the lack of technology in those days forced people to have to know each other. Now, because of computers, we really don't gotta know anybody, really." (126)

He has a healthy approach to friendships, and even when one friend has conned him, Antsy is eventually forgiving and the friend is grateful.

Antsy has a good relationship with his family—something which is not too common in teen literature—and one sign of this is that they're aware of things they need to improve, like his father's preoccupation with work and lack of time for his children. His mother has a sense of humour (also refreshing in a teen novel) which effectively illustrates the mother-son ability to understand one another. Neither Antsy nor his family are very kind to Aunt Mona, but in the circumstances it's difficult to blame them... she's a complainer who tends to throw a wet blanket on everything. He learns from her that it's not good to tell people "*your* suffering is nowhere near as bad as *mine*".

His friend's family doesn't have such a happy outcome as Antsy's own, because their father can't give up his gambling habit, and ultimately the parents separate. There's still a glimmer of hope that he'll look for a job,

but his family move back to Sweden without him. This situation is presented realistically and is seen as very sad, and important lessons are learned by Antsy and his friends about the harm of gambling and the damage it can do to family relationships.

All in all it's a solid contemporary story for teens that just might get them thinking. Reviewed for www.GoodReadingGuide.com

Josiah says

Nowhere are Neal Shusterman's Brooklyn roots more apparent than in his Antsy Bonano books. Shusterman has said Antsy is his favorite character, and I can see why: the fourteen-year-old city kid is the embodiment of Brooklyn attitude and charm, toughness tempered by uncommon intelligence and sparkling wit. If Calvin Schwa felt like the main character of *The Schwa Was Here*, Antsy is definitely the guy in *Antsy Does Time*, a celebration of urban living, family, and relationships with the people you call friends, whether they're eccentric or relatively normal. Familial obligation and the determination not to be defeated by your demons isn't always a ticket to ride to a happy ending, but you've got to go as far as you can on it and never stop looking for another vehicle that might take you the rest of the way even when it feels like all is lost. Antsy learned much about life from Calvin Schwa, and another friend's experience is ready to teach him in this book. With Neal Shusterman guiding the action, you don't want to miss it.

"The difference between you and me...is that when I look at the world, I see opportunity. When you look at the world, you're just trying to find a place to urinate."

—Old Man Crawley, *Antsy Does Time*, P. 155

A semi-close brush with death on Thanksgiving unsettles Antsy, but not as badly as hearing that his friend, Gunnar Ümlaut, has been diagnosed with a terminal disease. Pulmonary Monoxic Systemia will take his life in six months, Gunnar says. Antsy is saddened, but bewildered by Gunnar's reaction to his own imminent demise. Most kids would be depressed, but Gunnar treats his illness matter-of-factly, candidly bringing up the topic of death all the time. Hoping to shift Gunnar's focus in a more positive direction, Antsy writes up a contract bequeathing him one month of his own life to extend the half year Gunnar has left, and Gunnar takes the offer seriously. When other kids at school hear about Antsy's idea, they sign over months of their own to lengthen Gunnar's prognosis, and the symbolic act of charity becomes a fad. The kindheartedness of Antsy's original gesture isn't lost on Gunnar's sister, Kjersten (pronounced "Kirsten"), a popular, wickedly smart girl who doesn't let the two years she is older than Antsy stop her from thanking him with a public kiss on the lips. Antsy is stunned by the liplock, but like every guy at school, he's into Kjersten, and it feels like a dream when she shows interest in him as a boyfriend. As Antsy continues collecting signatures pledging Gunnar months of other kids' lives, he begins to wonder if his dedication to the project is about cheering Gunnar up or impressing Kjersten.

"Truth can only be served from a scalding kettle; whether you blister or make tea is up to you."

—*Antsy Does Time*, P. 104

Antsy's father now manages a restaurant owned by Old Man Crawley, putting in more work hours than ever, and Antsy is called on to donate a lot of free labor. He doesn't mind busing tables—he's one of Brooklyn's

premier water-pourers—but hates that his father never has time off. Antsy sees that the situation with Gunnar's father is worse, though, when he starts hanging out with Gunnar and Kjersten at their house. Things are tense when Mr. Ümlaut isn't around and more so on the rare occasions he is, a lawyer who's lost his job and turned to vice for an escape from reality. But something else suspicious is going on around the Ümlaut residence; Antsy just can't quite pinpoint what it is. The time-donation project at school grows by the day, kids giving larger chunks of time and complicating the contract with customized requests that have to be written in, and what began as a silly way to divert Gunnar's fixation on death turns into a behemoth that Antsy can't handle. It falls apart on the night of a school assembly in Gunnar's honor, the night Antsy is supposed to present a speech rallying the student body around their dying classmate. Crisis has a way of striking without warning, a rattlesnake delivering its mortal bite in the middle of a desert. Is death closer than Antsy or Gunnar could have guessed? The Bonano and Ümlaut families will be permanently altered by what happens next, though with opposite end results. If you're lucky, you survive your unexpected encounter with the grim reaper, but you have to make your second chance count or it's useless. As Antsy and Gunnar learn, not everyone can cope with that pressure.

"There are some things I don't understand, and don't think I ever will. I don't understand how a person can give up so totally and completely that they dive right into the heart of a black hole...And I don't understand how pride can be more important than love."

—*Antsy Does Time*, P. 222

The realization of a personal dream usually dismantles the illusion that everything would be right in our world if we caught our big break. Antsy's father wanted to run a restaurant for years, but the day-to-day of it is wearing him down. He's a slave to his own eatery. "For my father, the restaurant was like the crabgrass in Gunnar's backyard. It had taken over everything." We build up our fantasy future into a utopia we're convinced we'd take full advantage of if it fell into our lap, but rarely is success as unencumbered as we hope. For many, the idea of "Life would be great if only..." is their religion, and talking people out of religious conviction is next to impossible. Antsy has his own flaws to work through, adeptly highlighted by Mr. Bonano's critique of Mrs. Bonano's cooking. She constantly tweaks her recipes even after getting them right, aiming to somehow upgrade the dish. Antsy's father calls it "Restless Recipe syndrome", and that's Antsy's problem as he expands his time-donation program beyond sustainability, not satisfied with how it has already improved his social life. "I'm like my father in lots of ways, I guess, but in this respect I'm like my mother. Even when the recipe's working perfectly, I can never leave well enough alone." Most of us can relate. If we're winning at life but can't keep ourselves from messing with the formula until we ruin what we had, then we need to examine ourselves and ask if we understand our own desires. Hoping for something with all your heart and then sabotaging it when you finally get it is a devastating way to go from riches to rags. It can leave you feeling worse than before you attained what you sought.

"I guess once you start parting with all the things you think hold your life together, it's hard to stop—and then you find out your life holds together all by itself."

—*Antsy Does Time*, P. 231

Antsy Does Time isn't as good as *The Schwa Was Here*, but Neal Shusterman's inimitable qualities are still evident. The scenes between Antsy and Kjersten are nice, especially at the end, and I considered rounding my two-and-a-half star rating up instead of down. Antsy is entertaining, and so is Gunnar in a way that's nothing like Calvin Schwa. *Antsy Does Time* has important thoughts to impart, as any Neal Shusterman novel does, and I have great expectations for the third Antsy Bonano book, *Ship Out of Luck*. If Neal Shusterman tells a story, I should make time to read it; that presumption hasn't failed me yet. And with Antsy

as the main character, I can't go wrong.

Patrick says

The sequel to Schwa was good but not quite as good as the first story. It was fun to read more about Antsy, but I did miss having the Schwa in this story. Antsy is such a great and strong character. Both books are must read!

Neil (or bleed) says

I like how mature this book was. Life realizations are my jam.

K.A. Wiggins says

Wasn't able to track down the first book in this sequence, but it's pretty seamless to jump in on this second one. Worldbuilding is smooth and convincing, to the point that you almost might miss the fact that a lot of the stuff referenced actually happened in a second book, and isn't just stage dressing.

Antsy's inscrutably cool Swedish classmate shares that he's going to die in six months. Antsy offers him a month of his own life out of sympathy. Then everyone else wants to get in on the good deed. Things spiral. Life, (the fear of) death, and comedy about Lot of heavy themes explored with a light, funny touch. The mid-teens boy perspective is solid, by turns insightful and hilarious, and helps make the content feel approachable instead of heavy. Faith/prayer/religion, parents' career and relationship conflict, and illness and death covered.

Mild dating content (kissing) but I'd say this is an accessible read for male and female readers from about mid-Elementary school age on up. Main cast are in the 15-16yo range, but tonally it feels more MG.

Janni says

Great fun, with lots of laugh out loud moments. Plus, "Do you want your gum back, or should I keep it?" has to be the best fictional response to an adolescent kiss *ever*.

Eric Boot says

This one was even better than 'The Schwa Was Here'!

Louize says

From The Page Walker

Antsy, The Family Guy

Looking at the story from a vantage point, it is a series of tragedy with slices of sweet meat in between. Like I said in my previous post, this book is all heart. Once more, Shusterman managed to punch in real life situations, and readers may find some that hits closer to home.

The story started with a tragic accident, when it was supposed to be a day of parade and fun. Among the onlookers were Antsy Bonano and his friends. They were teenagers out there for curiosity's sake, but not Gunnar Ümlaut, one of Antsy's classmates. Gunnar was out there to watch death.

Gunnar confides to Antsy that he has only six months to live, due to Pulmonary Monoxic Systemia (PMS). Antsy doesn't know how to handle this kind of information. The good in him wants to do something for Gunnar. It just seemed unfair that death would come after someone so young. It was Monday, at the Ümlaut's backyard, that Antsy tore a page of his notebook, signing up a month of his life for Gunnar. Yes, that's how noble our hero is.

The following days, the news travelled like a wildfire in school; it seems everyone wants to sign up months of their lives for Gunnar too. From here on, some things will get better, and some things will get worse. Antsy and Gunnar realized that things are not exactly how they're supposed to be, and mistakes have their consequences.

"I always hear people talk about 'dysfunctional families.' It annoys me, because it makes you think that somewhere there's this magical family where everyone gets along, and no one ever screams things they don't mean, and there's never a time when sharp objects should be hidden."

As much as Shusterman made great efforts to make this book really light and fun to read, I can't help but feel sad due to the tragedies that may strike families. Situations were so life-like; I came close to crying at times.

"The best you can really hope for is a family where everyone's problems, big and small, work together. Kind of like an orchestra where every instrument is out of tune, in exactly the same way, so you don't really notice."

Again, my love for Antsy went deeper as I get to know him better. I hope to find his next book soon. I hope you find copies of his books too, I do recommend them strongly.

"-that's when I realized that prayer isn't for God. After all, He doesn't need it. He's out there, or in there, or sitting up there in His firmament, whatever that is, all-knowing and all-powerful, right? He doesn't need us repeating words week after week in His face. If He's there, sure, I'll bet He's listening, but it doesn't *change* Him. one way or the other.

Instead, *we're* the ones who are changed by it.

I don't know whether I was just delirious from lack of sleep...but if it *is* true, what an amazing gift it is!"
