

Days Without Water

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I am Anna. My family lives on 64 acres in east Texas, in a small town called Reklaw. I am 10 years old, and my favorite color is blue, just like the flowers in the pasture. Or how they were at least. Now they are withered and brown, and last spring, we missed blue-bonnet pictures! Right now, we are in the middle of what mom calls a drought. I'm not sure what all of that is about, but I do know we don't have water. We are also on a burn ban, which means that tomorrow, on the fourth of July, we can't even have fireworks! And even worse, lately, the pond has dried up so much that Granny can't make her fried catfish anymore, since all the catfish are dead! It really isn't fair. I would love to live somewhere like Houston, where it rains every week, but from what we've heard it has been dryer than normal. But anyway, I have to go draw water from our well, although Mom says that will run out too.

Hey! Eliza here. I'm waiting in the water line for what seems like the millionth time. I open my mouth to complain, but every time I complain, that gets Maddy going, and whenever Maddy is upset, baby Makayah starts crying, so I close my mouth, and try to think about something else. My mind travels over the last few months in Flint, Michigan. After our water supply was spoiled with lead, we have to function completely off bottled water. We shower, wash our hands and teeth, we drink, and we cooked. All with bottled water. I. Am. Sick. Of. It. But I must be positive, like Mimi says. I think about 'more important' matters- otherwise known as Jamie. We had been talking for a couple weeks until he finally asked me out right before all the water stuff and blah blah blah. But anyway, we are at the front of the line now, after what feels like a lifetime of waiting, we collect our case of water, and drive on.

My name is Amarylis. I live in the ruins of what used to be Florida, before the Tyrants came. Officially, they are called the I.R.A. or the International Republic of Akuji. They overtook the United States and Canada in 2189, and life since then has been less than ideal. I walk out of my family's hut, and, keeping my head down so as not to be noticed by the Politseyskiy, or the street patrol. Sometimes people will be stopped for no reason and taken away. It is best to fly under the radar. I head to the line to see if there is any water left. Nope, today I'm not so lucky. We'll have to survive the day without water. Which means no bathrooms- we have to use the outhouses. Nothing to cook with- beef jerky again. Beef jerky is dry, yes, but it also makes you thirsty. Most days without water, I just don't eat. The evidence is in my bony figure, and once strong arms. I return to my cluster of huts and enter T-784. I go to my room and reach under my mattress for my most prized possession. My book, Water. Obviously, it is banned- why else would I hide it- not even my brother, Anthony knows about it. Only Ralemph, our cat. I curl up, and read about past struggles with droughts, and floods, and courage of Eliza, a girl like me, or Anna, in the dusty drought of 2011, and days without water.