



Dry

Neal Shusterman , Jarrod Shusterman

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The drought—or the Tap-Out, as everyone calls it—has been going on for a while now. Everyone’s lives have become an endless list of don’ts: don’t water the lawn, don’t fill up your pool, don’t take long showers.

Until the taps run dry.

Suddenly, Alyssa’s quiet suburban street spirals into a warzone of desperation; neighbours and families turned against each other on the hunt for water. And when her parents don’t return and her life—and the life of her brother—is threatened, Alyssa has to make impossible choices if she’s going to survive.

Dry Details

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From Reader Review Dry for online ebook

Khanh, first of her name, mother of bunnies says

This book is about Southern California running out of water. The situation is dire, but good fucking god, the main (female) character in this book is so mind-numbingly dumb that I don't want some water after drinking book, I want some fucking vodka, dammit. Yeah. I know the kids in this book are teenagers, but OH MY GOD THEY ARE SO STUPID. I am not exaggerating. I was literally gritting my teeth at the questionable decisions that were made in this book.

First off, the premise. I liked it. This near-future situation is pretty damn terrifying. I've lived in SoCal for almost all my life. First Orange County, now Los Angeles proper. For the past...10? years or so, we've had terrible droughts. People make fun of Southern Californians because we freak out at:

- 1) cold weather (read: less than 60 degrees)
- 2) rain

Here's my bunny in a raincoat. He has never actually needed it because, again, we don't get rain.

I'm not kidding. I love it here but it is absolutely hilarious how all the TV stations are like STORM WATCH every time a dark cloud rolls in. Every damn winter. But in any case, we freak out so much over rain because WE DON'T GET ANY OF IT. We've been under a water conservation order for so long now I can't even remember. Our lush green hills have been brown for the better part of a decade.

So yeah, the threat of NO WATER is very, very real, and very, very terrifying. I feel like the situation in the book could actually happen, down to the riots for water.

BUT THE CHARACTERS IN THE BOOK ARE SOOOOOOO STUPID. I absolutely abhorred the idiotic main character, who just so conveniently lived next to a dorky next door neighbor whose entire family are hardcore survivalists, who talk like this...

Then he meets my gaze, but rather than his typical bone-chilling glare, his eyes are different. Shimmering and glassy. Vulnerable. An honest display of emotion that I've never seen before. And in this single look I feel as if I've opened his personal .zip file; suddenly years of compressed emotional information comes bursting out, and I'm hit with an overwhelming truth.

OH MY GOD PERSONAL ZIP FILE!!!!!!!!!!!! REALLY?!

But he wasn't terrible. The main character is terrible. Her entire POV is a series of regrettable situations that put not only her, but her friends, and neighbors in danger. I wanted to strangle her. Yes, I have many feelings about this book. I cannot stand an annoying, stupid narrator. So as much as I liked the premise, this book is not for me.

Lisa Brennan says

Compelling and captivating. Profound and prophetic. DRY is a first-rate survival story perfect for fans of LIFE AS WE KNEW IT, THE RULE of THREE, and MONUMENT 14. Set in the not-too-distant future, a drought reaches cataclysmic proportions government-promised work-arounds lead to epic failures. While the story is grim, it is equally gripping.

Shusterman constructs characters who are affable, interesting, and relatable to unravel a portrayal of how various personalities cope and struggle with overwhelming conflict. Sidebar “Snapshots” give readers a glimpse of how the story is developing on a broader scale.

Chapters move swiftly, and intriguing connections between characters unfold. Fans of UNWIND will welcome similarities experienced by DRY’S band of teens who are “on the run” to survive.

An outstanding choice for thrill-seeking adventure fans; certain to be a top consideration for classroom teachers to highlight for novel studies as well.

~ Review of Netgalley ARC ~ Lisa Brennan @noveltalk

Tabea Vanessa says

So this was everything I wanted and more! Absolutely fantastic. Naturally I had high hopes after Scythe and Thunderhead and man did this book go above and beyond to fulfill those.

My favorite thing (other than the great writing) was: the plot starts on page one. No 350 page setup without any story happening (hello three dark crowns...), no getting to know the characters so deeply you think you’d recognize their colon in order to confuse the readers into not noticing that zero stuff is actually happening (hello Patrick Rothfuss) and no stupid 20 year old named Summer or Sage living in her car while going to college where meeting a bad guy which she then „fixes“ (hello every mind numbingly stupid new adult book ever and welcome Colleen Hoover). No! The book starts, the water turns off and everything just goes from there. You get to know the characters while everything is happening which was basically my favourite thing. Neal Shusterman knows how to write a story and characters. And he seems to have been a great teacher to his son.

I had to take many, many breaks between reading because it felt so real, and the threat is so real, specifically in Southern California that is was hard to just continue. I cried a lot. The devastation of you being home, no illness, no Zombie Apocalypse happening, everything being fine and you still dying of thirst and dehydration was so much more frightening than anything else I have read before.

My family lives in San Diego and I visit them every few years. In the last years you could see so much damage from the drought, so many lakes dried up. The utterly terrible damages from the wildfires.... this is not Scy-fi or fantasy. This is a very real threat!

I highly recommend you read this book and while we’re here: vote!! Vote every single time you can and put the people in power who care about the environment and people and not their own personal wealth.

Yusra ? says

release day TOMORROW i'm so ready for thisssss

?Eryn says

I really want to read this. I can just tell it's going to be *phenomenal*.

Danielle (Life of a Literary Nerd) says

4.5 Stars

"It's so quiet now," I say. "It almost makes you forget what's out there." "Nothing out there but people," Henry points out. "People can be monsters. Whether it's just their actions, or whether it's who they really are, it doesn't matter. The result is the same." ... "Sometimes you have to be the monster to survive."

Southern California is desperate for water, but there's nothing left and the tap has officially run dry. Neighbors begin to turn on each other and chaos is rising across the state. Alyssa's desperate to keep herself and her brother safe after her parents don't return from a mission to get water. She pairs with unlikely allies in hopes of surviving. **Dry** is a gripping story of the lengths you'll go to survive, and if it's possible to life with yourself in the aftermath.

Things I Liked

I really loved that we got so many **different POVs** throughout the story, not only with the main characters, but also the snapshot chapters that showed what was happening around other parts of Southern California. The writing felt so personal, like a journal. It made it easy to feel like you were in the story.

The whole book is really a warning for **global warming**, climate change, and the inaction that doomed an entire state. And I loved that they addressed how the media decides what's newsworthy and important enough to get coverage.

I don't know if I've ever been so **anxious** while reading a book. It was so eerie and thrilling it felt like a horror movie, waiting for other shoe to drop. And the overwhelming relief when you get some semblance of safety was this high that made this book a true rollercoaster.

Things I Didn't Like

I didn't really love or connect with any of the **characters**. And it's a testament to the incredible writing that I was still so emotionally invested in the story. I thought Jacqui was kinda just mean and abrasive - I get it's literally an end-of-the-world situation, but I didn't necessarily want to root for her. Kelton had his moments, but he definitely did some sketchy things. Henry was a bit of a know-it-all and a try-hard. Overall, I didn't really latch onto anyone. I appreciate their selfishness and self preservation, but it just didn't really connect to the characters.

I had so many intense emotions while reading this that I actually had to pause a few times to collect myself. Neal and Jarrod Shusterman infuse drama and intensity into this collapsing world in a way that puts your heart in an aching state of desperation. **Dry** is really like no other book I've ever read, and it a truly unique experience.

I received a copy of the book from Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers in exchange for an honest review.

Robin (Bridge Four) says

This review was originally posted on Books of My Heart

3.5 Stars

Dry is a dystopian ecological disaster story based a little in fact and a lot in *what if*. It loosely reminds me of one of those blockbuster movies like 2012 and San Andreas where some things are just a smidge too over the top but you let it go because that is the movie you knew you came to see.

As usual, Shusterman's writing is really great. The pacing is good and I was engaged the entire book. It was hard to put down and I finished it in record time. I did have to suspend some disbelief for the initial situation of the story but the parts about human nature in a crisis situation seemed spot on.

The 'Tap Out' has come to California. Water rationing and fines for overuse haven't worked and after water negotiations with Arizona break down the water is just turned off with no warning, leaving the residents in multiple counties in California with no water to their homes. Society starts to break down almost immediately.

The reader follows a group of people via shifting PoVs through this crisis. Alyssa is the typical girl next door who is like most people. She has the normal family life with parents, a little brother and dog. Kelton is the neighbor whose dad has been planning for catastrophe forever so this crisis is like Christmas to them. It might even be the chance to get the girl.

*For example, winning the affection of a girl is a lot like shooting a deer. It's pretty important that you approach slowly and with caution—and preferably from a posterior angle, where they have little to no vision. **Women, like deer, can be scared away by a strong musk, which is why it's important to always wear deodorant.** Dressing in camouflage doesn't hurt either, because in my experience, girl find camouflage really cool. **But all of that aside, I think the most important aspect of obtaining a girl of the opposite sex is knowing when to pull the trigger. Metaphorically, that is. You gotta make your move when it feels right, or else you'll come off as creepy. This I know from experience, too.***

Most of the story is set around these two characters but we pick up more stragglers along the way including street wise Jacqui and future fortune 500 company CEO Henry.

The secret to a successful group collaboration is a dynamic, responsive leader, and the key to being a good leader is acute observation and subtle manipulation—so subtle that no one knows they're being manipulated. Come to think of it, that's also the key to a successful government.

This cast of characters compliment each other well in that they are all pretty different but in this new crisis each brings something into the survival game. On a general day, they would pass each other by with no interaction, but desperate times makes for strange bedfellows.

The struggle was intense and I felt desperate for the characters as one thing after another goes wrong for them and they are driven farther down the rabbit hole of humanity to see what they would do to save the people they are with. Hard choices will be made and there is a reason survival of the fittest is a saying.

I debated on how to rate this because the writing is really great overall but there are plot holes. Or things just glossed over. Like the initial set up and premise of the Tap Out was really unbelievable to me. I could take a global catastrophe but to have it completely isolated to just this area for the reasons given was a little bit of a stretch.

Don't get me wrong, this made me want to make sure I have a month's supply of water at my house and a disaster readiness plan ready to go. It was a bit scary when reading because while I didn't buy into the reasons for the Tap Out that didn't mean I questioned society's response. I'm just not sure some of the other survival tactics were explored. So many canned goods would have had water in them, fruits also are a good source of the water you need for a day. There are some great out of the box thinking things going on but I thought some true opportunities were missed.

Still like all of Neal Shusterman's (I haven't read Jarrod Shusterman before) books it makes me think about people and what I would do in the same situation. I like the social interactions that are created with this writing and the exploration of various situations through the Tap Out. It is a book that makes me think and want to plan ahead a little in case of an emergency.

Overall: Engaging un-put-down-able writing with some room for growth on a few things I just couldn't buy into.

Review copy was received from Publisher. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.

April says

I can definitely see this becoming a movie.

Deborah Embury says

"Dry" has solid writing and a very timely premise, dealing with current environmental issues pertaining to water use. There are some good family aspects I enjoyed; it's nice to see a YA novel where the families feel thought-out and realistic. I read this book in just a couple of days, and I think that is a true testament to both Shusterman's ability to keep a reader interested in the overall outcome.

That being said, "Dry" is...well...a little bit dry. The book plays out exactly how the synopsis promises- drought happens, population goes crazy, parents go missing, kids embark on journey to find water. It's very predictable; I wasn't surprised at any of the plot points. Additionally, despite the fact that the characters were well-written ones, I just felt fairly detached from all the main characters except for Garrett. I think there were

just far too many POVs spread too thinly for me to truly get attached to anyone.

I also think the environmental aspects could have been pushed a little more. There are some pretty good arguments about it at the very beginning and end of the novel but other than that I think the core issues got a bit glossed over.

All in all, a solid read but nothing outstanding. If you liked "Life as We Knew It" by Susan Beth Pfeffer or similar titles then I would recommend "Dry".

Kate Olson says

? my biggest fear ?

Shusterman earned my heart with his Arc of a Scythe series, so I have had my eye on this one since the moment it was announced. The premise of a near-future YA dystopian tale of a water shortage in Southern California is EVERYTHING I want from him.....and DRY did not disappoint.

Anyone who knows me knows that I have water with me always. I carry a case of bottled water in my car, I have a water bottle in my purse at all times and I never leave the house without my other full 24 oz bottle. I seem to have a case of water insecurity even in dripping-wet-with-fresh-water Wisconsin. However, my mom lives in Buena Vista, CO and shares often the constant issue of water rights and water shortages that plague the western US. And that horrifies me. When our water pump broke a few years ago, we were without running water for only 3 days , and had access to multiple locations to shower and do laundry and unlimited drinking water, but I still have nightmares about it. Shusterman feeds off those fears of mine and brings them to life in Dry, making me swear to start stockpiling bottled water in my basement. For real.

What I appreciate about this story beyond the premise and the shock value and the fast-paced nature, is its accessibility for the YA audience all the way down through middle school. Mind you, it could have been written for an adult audience and been a much more cerebral novel, but that wasn't the intent. I fully admit that the Scythe books are higher level and require more than many early teens are able to give - when my daughter and I discuss them it's like we're talking about two completely different books. Dry speaks to its intended audience while also horrifying this adult, in the best literary sense. I loved the constantly changing narrators because they brought a much broader perspective of the crisis than a single narrative could have.

Highly recommended for all YA libraries, classrooms and for adult readers who care about our environment and conservation.

Now I'm off to buy water. Lots of it. And when the water zombies show up, I can't honestly say whether I'll share or not.....

Iryna (Book and Sword) says

3.5/5 stars

Well I started this book in the late morning and now it's late afternoon and I have finished. The fastest I've ever read 390 pages.

So I resolved to dedicate the rest of 2018 to reading only fantasy books (adult mostly, with one or two YA thrown in). But for **Dry** I made an exception because when Shusterman writes a new dystopian I must read it!

?This was an impossible to put down read, definitely, but it wasn't as good as I thought it would be, unfortunately. Which kind of doesn't make sense said together like that, but hear me out. The writing, the pace and the subject were gripping, but the character development together with some plot holes definitely put a damp into it.

The beautiful and also scary thing about Shusterman's books, is that they feel so real. So freaking real. This might as well have been a news report on TV - it was so believable. And that is the scary part of it. Sure, *Dry* is just a book, today. But tomorrow, or 2 years from now it might as well be a reality.

California draught is a real thing that has been happening, and as far as I can tell will only get worse. But will it come to the events that this fiction book portrayed? I think it will. And I also think that it will come to even worse of an outcome.

?Environmental tendencies and using is the real reason why I love Neil Shusterman so much. *Scythe* was full of them, and *Dry* has even more. And I truly think that it's just way we need. We need to read about what might happen to us if we keep living the way we live now. We need to see the ugly side of humanity, if only so we can prevent it in the future. Hopefully. The sad part is, the natural disaster wasn't a true problem in this book. The true problem were the people who created the disaster in the first place. And who handled it so terribly wrong. I don't think that the planet will eventually kill us. I think that we will kill each other first.

The writing was superb. The pace made this book read like a movie - which I loved. The characters Ehh. They were good, or they had good potentials but I don't think any of them reached it. They just weren't flushed out enough. It may have to do with too many POV's throughout the book. The reader never got a chance to fully attach to a specific character, really.

?The plot also had quite a few holes and things that weren't explained well enough (why was a 13 year old home alone for weeks? Were there two helicopters at the end? and many more...). I honestly kept wishing for more water shortage related facts - how they got there, how other states near the lake managed to be okay, but only California crashed and burned. I just wanted more science behind the disaster. But *nook* instead focused largely on the characters and how they were navigating it, which is fine, but I wanted more of a background.

Also, I thought it was quite comical that when we finally get a sensible YA main character it feels very weird at first. I couldn't understand why this girl was so mature and why wasn't she boy crazy and drowning in puberty? Which is embarrassing to admit, but it is what I've come to expect from YA books. But I seemed to forget that this is Shusterman we are talking about. And his girl characters rock hard (looking at you *Citra*!).

?In the end, while I do think that the book could use a bit more flushing out and a bit more plot development I still absolutely recommend it to everyone. If only for the topic that it covers. It's so important. And we need more books like this. Real life dystopian books (is that a genre? Can it be one?)

?Big thanks to the **Simon TEEN publishing and Simon and Schuster books for young readers** for sending me an advanced copy for the review. All opinions are my own, honest and come from the heart.

Emily May says

Only now do I see how dry his lips are. Not just dry but parched and chapped to the point of bleeding. None of these kids look right. Their skin is thin and almost leprous gray. The corners of their mouths are white with dried spit. And the look in their eyes is almost rabid.

It's unsettling how **utterly convincing this book is**. Maybe it works so well because the concept is so relevant and believable - a severe drought in Southern California is hardly fantastical - but it also has a lot to do with the way the Shusterman duo writes.

In a style somewhat reminiscent of storytellers like Stephen King, the authors paint this dystopian picture slowly, gradually, introducing a fairly large cast of characters along the way. The horrors creep quietly into a world that very closely resembles our own, making them easy to believe in. What is first a subdued desire for water becomes a pressing need, which in turn becomes an obsessive frenzy.

You can tell a lot of thought has gone into how people would behave when their lives (or worse-- the lives of their families) become threatened by a lack of water. When the people in Dry become desperate, it's amazing and terrible what can be seen as a source of water. And let me tell you: the authors and the characters in this book get VERY creative on that front.

Could we be so desperate for drinkable water that we're willing to destroy the very machines that could create it, just to get that first sip?

The way the characters are used to tell the story here might not suit everyone. The Shustermans bring in many different perspectives in order to capture all angles of the water craze rather than focusing on one or a few individuals. I can pinpoint the main characters as Alyssa, Kelton, Garrett and Jacqui (who is freaking awesome, by the way) but I would still say this is more a book about the bigger picture, which includes many people's perspectives across the course of the novel. The characters are left racially ambiguous, some described as "olive-skinned" but of indeterminate race.

It's a **standalone** and so a whole lot is covered in these 350 pages. We see how a survivalist family first thrives but then becomes a target; we see how kind neighbours become enemies; we see an entrepreneurial few try to capitalize on the new hot commodity; we see the ugliness that can quickly rear its head when people are desperate.

I thought it worked really well at creating a sense of desperation and paranoia. It made ME want to go stock up on emergency supplies (I swear I'm not even joking. I found myself on this page after reading it.) Very convincing and discomfiting.

Korrina (OwlCrate) says

My favourite thing about Neal Shusterman's books is that they really make me think and see the world differently. This was such an intense survival story!

Amber (The Book Bratz) says

In all honesty Dry freaked me out. It is so scary real and if you look at climate change this book can one day be a scary reality for many parts of the world. I got a copy of this book at BookExpo and I quite honestly knew nothing about it but I saw the cover and was really intrigued. Though I didn't love this book I am still glad that I read it, it was extremely thought provoking and really got into my head.

Alexandria Ang says

A book about the harrowing effects of climate change? Fuck yeah. Finally, even modern Young Adult literature is calling attention to the most important environmental issue of our decade that won't just affect one certain group of people. Oh no, climate change is coming for us all. Neal Shusterman and Jarrod Shusterman's all-too-real portrayal of the amplified effects of climate change is horrifying and upsetting. You will feel mad. You will feel sad. But most importantly you will feel so helpless while reading this book because you realize how much we as humans have no control of a situation that we are responsible for causing. You will also come to realize how some forces, such as water, have power over humans.

While reading this book, I realized how small I was in this whole wide world. You want to believe that when things go downhill, the government will be looking out for you. But yet, how can they help you when they can't even help themselves. The authors expose this startling fact in the most brutal way possible- by following the POV of a group of teens who must fend for themselves in a world without water.

I went into this book with the knowledge of Neal Shusterman's world-building mastery. He can create worlds with such a complex and well-developed foundation, and it feels like the world actually exists. In this case, he didn't really create a new world but it's like he created a new reality in our world. A reality in which our environment has been devastated by climate change and the resources that we thought would be around forever have been completely exhausted. It is a world in which we cannot comprehend right now, but one that is in our near future if we continue on this path. He has essentially predicted the near future in such great detail and precision, thinking of every single thing. If I were you, the world-building alone is a reason to pick up this book.

What I loved most about this book was how it was written. It is written in multiple points of views, however, these characters' perspectives are often interrupted with what the authors call 'snapshots'. These snapshots, ranging from about a page to two pages in length, were glimpses into the lives of other people who were also being affected by the Tap-Out. I think this was an ingenious idea on the authors' part because when you're writing a story like this that has such an incredible impact and call to action, it's important to illustrate the stories and testimonies of as many people as you can.

Reading this book was like living through the apocalypse, which is something I hope and pray I'll never have to experience in this lifetime. Dry has to be one of the most terrifying books I've ever read. None of the

horror books I've read compare to the amount of dread you'll feel while reading this book (and I've read multiple Stephen King books .-.). For me personally, the idea of living without water, a basic necessity, scares me more than any zombie apocalypse.

This title is very relevant to what's been happening around the world. Because of the subject matter and the authors' ability to tell this story, *Dry* will be one of the most memorable books you read this year. I implore you to read this not because I am an environmentalist, and I strongly want to share my fear of climate change with you but because I think that this is what the world needs right now in order to make a change. Sometimes people need a scare to push them in the right direction. If you've read *Scythe* and enjoyed it, I am positive you will enjoy this one too. Please check out my page on Instagram (@thebooksbuzz) because I will be giving away a copy of this wonderful book!
