



The Flooded Earth

Mardi McConnochie

Pajama Press (Nov 16, 2018)

Hardcover \$17.95 (336pp)

978-1-77278-049-9

Mardi McConnochie's middle grade, cli-fi dystopia is a wild adventure across a wildly different Earth.

In the world before the flood, human beings tried to correct their own folly by adding to it, hoping to counteract a climate change-initiated global drought by engineering rain. It didn't work. Coastlines disappeared; Earth was reshaped.

Twins Annalie and Will grew up in the aftermath, in a new coastal shantytown mostly ignored by the ruling Admiralty. Their father, Spinner, never emphasized the Admiralty's flaws. But with Annalie away at an Admiralty school, he suddenly disappears, pursued by shady forces. Annalie flees her school, accompanied by Essie, a girl who also doesn't quite fit in there any longer. Essie and the twins, motivated partially by those out to catch them and partially by an overwhelming desire to discover the truth, take to the seas to join Spinner, wherever he may be.

They are joined by Spinner's sassy, grumpy parrot, Graham, and later by a castaway slave, Pod. They encounter cannibal islanders, intelligent talking monkeys, pirates, and cruise ships where the merriment conceals inhumane treatment. Time and again, they are forced to rely on their ingenuity and determination to survive.

The novel matches teenage wits against those of corrupt government officials, with the teens proving more formidable than anyone expects them to be. It somehow handles grand and troubling questions in a gentle, musing way. The magnificent capabilities of the book's determined young leads emerge as *The Flooded Earth's* dominant force. Readers of this first in the series will be eager to learn where the team's sailboat takes them next—and whether Graham will be patient through the adventure.

MICHELLE ANNE SCHINGLER (November/December 2018)

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