

Children of the Revolution review

Set in a future Illinois now called Illiana, which has been absolutely destroyed by drought, *Children of the Revolution* tells the story of 16-year-old Merit. Her father Eben is a medic working for the Galt Corporation, otherwise known as the Hive. The Hive controls every aspect of life in Illiana, including access to water. When there's a major water shortage in their region, Merit and Eben share what water they have saved up with their neighbors. But they soon realize there is a bigger plan in motion, and they need to do what they can to leave separately and meet up later, further north. Merit has to contend with navigating in an unknown landscape, while staying one step ahead of the enforcers for the Hive that want nothing more than her destruction.

This is one of the finalists of the Soon to be Famous Illinois Author Project and it is not an easy read, but it was definitely worth sticking with to the end. This dystopian novel is the first in a new series by Joanne E. Zienty. While a comparison can be made to Panem from the *Hunger Games* novels by Suzanne Collins, Zienty has built her own very bleak and violent world here. The book starts 80 years after an event that ended the U.S. as we know it, and Merit learns a little about what this country was like beforehand through oral histories that have been secretly passed down. Merit starts out fairly meek, but because of the horrendous circumstances she becomes a force to be reckoned with by the end. Her journey through the wilderness and the ruins of once-thriving cities to Chicago is a page-turner. This book is not for the faint of heart, with some disturbing descriptions of death and other violence. It was a difficult book to read, right now especially, but after giving myself some time to reflect on it, I find myself looking forward to the next book in the series to find out how Merit's story plays out.

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