

A long walk to water book analysis

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Linda Sue Park's novel, *A Long Walk to Water* tells the story of a kid named Salva and a girl named Nya. Park's main character, Salva, is based on a real person who survived a terrible journey. Even though he faced the challenges of the war, the loss of his family, and the hostile environment of Southern Sudan, he still remained brave.

Salva didn't really understand what the war was about until a normal school day was ruined by a random war outbreak in his village and he was forced to flee from his family and house, at the sound of gunfire, his schoolteacher ordered the boys to "Go quickly, into the bush, not home. The teacher was telling them to stay away from where the soldiers were attacking people.

He didn't know what happened to his family, He only knew that he couldn't go back home where "a huge black cloud of smoke rose" as a plane flew overhead. (8) That war caused him, an eleven-year-old boy, to become more independent and all alone not knowing what had happened to his family or what will end up happening to him. The war has challenged him by making him a refugee.

Once Salva ran from his village and joined a group of others, he faced another huge challenge. He was alone without his family. He was not really old enough to take care of himself so he had to rely on adults in the group of refugees. He looked for people from his village, hoping to find some family members, but none of them were there. When soldiers surrounded the refugees, they took the men and older boys but left Salva with the women and children.

As he traveled with them, he worried and wondered, " Where are we going? Where is my family? When will I see them again?" (12) Because he had no family and was still a child, he was considered a burden to the others and they soon left him alone to fend for himself. He eventually did find his uncle in one of the groups, but his uncle was soon shot by soldiers, leaving Salva alone, without any family once again. To be so alone with no one to help him was a very tough challenge for Salva.

In A Long Walk to Water both Nya and Salva show tenacity in challenging environments. In Salvas long journeys, first to Ethiopia and then to Kenya, Salva faced another daunting challenge such as the landscape of Southern Sudan. This part of Africa is made up of swampland, plains where lions live, dangerous rivers full of crocodiles, and deserts.

Walking across this land, the refugees never had enough food or water. At one point, Salva's group came upon men who were dying of thirst. Some women in his group offered water to these men, but most people did not because they were told, " If you give them your water, you will not have enough for yourself! It is useless—they will die, and you will die with them!" (56) Nya's story starts with her having to walk eight hours every day to the pond and back to gather water for her and her family.

" There it was, a big thorn that had broken off right in the middle of her heel. Nya pushed at the skin around the thorn... She pressed her lips together against the pain."

In this quote Nya is exhibited as a hard working girl that will finish any challenge that is thrown at her no matter how hard or impossible it may seem. Salva had to leave his village due to a random war outbreak. After being left alone and not knowing where to go, He now must walk all day, every day to find safety. The environmental challenges thrown at him during his journey was dehydration and a lot of physical and mental pain. " Uncle cautioned him to make the water in his gourd last as long as possible.

It was the hardest thing Salva had ever done, taking only tiny sips when his body cried out for huge gulps of thirst-quenching, life-giving water. The worst moment of the day happened near the end. Salva stubbed his bare toe on a rock, and his whole toenail came off. The pain was terrible." In this quote Salva put the pain he was feeling aside and just focused on succeeding his goal and doing the best he could to make a future for himself.

Despite the challenges of war, losing his family, and having to walk across Southern Sudan, Salva did survive. He was eventually adopted by an America family in Rochester, New York As a grown man, he returned to Sudan, found his father and was reunited with his original family. He also started an organization to build wells to make life less of a struggle for other children in Sudan. His story is a remarkable one because of all that he had to overcome. His life can be an inspiration to all of us because it shows that we can overcome many things that would try to discourage and defeat us