

Pyric crisis and climate consciousness in Alan Gratz's *Two Degrees*

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Abstract: Fire historian Stephen J. Pyne employs the term “pyrocene” to refer to an era characterized by fire and aggravated by climate change and unsustainable human activities. Such activities are also best understood by Rob Nixon’s idea of slow violence. It symbolizes how environmental damage develops covertly until it explodes in a disaster. This research builds on these existing frameworks by introducing the term *pyric crisis* to refer to wildfire as a cultural metaphor as well as an ecological tragedy. The story of California in Alan Gratz’s *Two Degrees* (2022) illustrates this problem, as fire serves both a direct threat to survival and a symbol of the end of the world. The book portrays children as both agents of climate justice and victims of ecological collapse. It presents climate fiction as a space where destruction becomes pedagogical necessity. Thus, this paper shows how *Two Degrees* represents the pyric crisis and raises climate consciousness and intergenerational responsibility.

Keywords: *pyrocene; pyric crisis; wildfire narratives; climate justice; climate pedagogy; Alan Gratz; Two Degrees.*



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Introduction

One of the most prominent indicators of a global catastrophe in the early twenty-first century is wildfire. Seasonal occurrences or isolated wild areas are no longer the only places where fire occurs. Nowadays, it burns with higher intensity and wider scale across continents. These fires leave behind burned landscapes, displace communities, and disturb ecosystems. They signal the beginning of the Pyrocene, which Stephen J. Pyne has referred to as “a planetary fire age, the fire-informed equivalent of an ice age” (3). In this way, fire is a structural factor of the Anthropocene rather than just a natural element. The issues of deforestation, extractive industries, global warming, and irresponsible land management are all reflected in its spread. Wildfire now serves as a planetary front line, much like war uses violence to transform communities and futures. It reflects what Rob Nixon has defined as “a violence that occurs gradually and out of sight ... an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all” (2). This assault is intensified by human negligence and systemic failure. Building on Pyne’s idea of the Pyrocene and Nixon’s slow violence, this paper introduces the term *pyric crisis* to describe wildfire as both an ecological reality and a cultural metaphor. The concept shows how wildfire operates on many levels: as an environmental event, as a war-like force that threatens vulnerable communities, and as a symbolic resource for representing the insecurities of the Anthropocene. Unlike earlier views that treated fire as an unpredictable but essentially natural hazard, the pyric crisis emphasizes its links to colonial histories, petrocapiatist exploitation, and governance failures that turn climate disaster into a form of structural violence. Timothy Morton’s notion of “dark ecology” is worth mentioning here, since ecological awareness, as he argues, is “dark-depressing ... dark-uncanny ... and strangely ... dark-sweet” (*Dark Ecology* 5). In this sense, fire represents both destruction and revelation. It is at once a material force and a cultural figure that challenges human exceptionalism. Within this critical frame, literature becomes an important space for examining how societies imagine, respond to, and resist life in a “world on fire”. In *The Great Derangement* (2016), Amitav Ghosh argues that modern literary forms have often failed to engage with the scale of climate change. However, the growth of climate fiction, especially in its young adult forms, shows a new willingness to imagine the crisis in ways that emphasize agency, justice, and survival. Young adult literature, with its emotional immediacy and focus on vulnerable protagonists, provides distinctive opportunities to foster ecological awareness and a sense of intergenerational responsibility.

Alan Gratz’s *Two Degrees* (2022) illustrates the pyric crisis most vividly in its California storyline, where Akira and her mother struggle to survive a firestorm that destroys entire communities. Although the novel also includes plots about polar ice melt and hurricanes, the wildfire sequence most strongly conveys a “world on fire”. The story shows children both as victims and as potential agents of change. This reflects the precarity of youth in the Anthropocene, but also the hope for ethical renewal. The novel connects to global youth activism, from Greta Thunberg’s climate strikes (2019) to wider calls for climate justice. It encourages young readers to see themselves not as passive observers of catastrophe but as active participants in shaping the future. This paper, then, is structured by two key questions: How does *Two Degrees* represent wildfire as part of

the pyric crisis? And how does children's literature act as a cultural space for shaping climate consciousness? We argue that Gratz moves beyond showing wildfire as a destructive spectacle and instead presents it as both a cautionary tale and a pedagogical tool. Presenting fire as a form of environmental warfare, *Two Degrees* critiques governance failures while also showing how literature can build resilience, empathy, and intergenerational awareness of climate change. In this way, the novel demonstrates how YA cli-fi reimagines the burning landscapes of the Pyrocene not only as sites of destruction but also as spaces of cultural critique and ethical possibility.

In recent years, the study of fire within the humanities has gained significant attention, especially through Stephen J. Pyne's fire histories, which lead to his concept of the Pyrocene. Pyne argues that humanity has entered a new epoch where fire is not only a natural element but also a dominant force shaped by human activity, fossil fuel dependence, and climate change. He explains that the Pyrocene began when humans, as a "fire-wielding creature," met a "fire-receptive period" in Earth's history. This encounter made anthropogenic fire "an informing presence" and shows that "fire is what we as a species do" (Pyne 146–47). His historical and ecological analyses provide an important foundation for viewing fire as a planetary agent which reflects and intensifies the conditions of the Anthropocene. Building on this foundation, this paper introduces the term pyric crisis to describe not only the material destructiveness of wildfire but also its symbolic and cultural power as a metaphor for conflict and collapse. Climate fiction, or cli-fi, here becomes an important literary and cultural mode for addressing such crises. The term, first used by journalist Dan Bloom, refers to narratives that imagine climate change and its effects through both speculative and realist approaches (qtd. in Eller n. pg.). Gregers Andersen describes cli-fi as a form that links scientific knowledge with public imagination and makes ecological catastrophe easier to understand and emotionally powerful. He argues that climate fiction helps us imagine what it could feel like to live in the futures described by climate science. These are insights "we as contemporary humans cannot obtain anywhere else" (Anderson 2). Similarly, Matthew Schneider-Mayerson and Brent Ryan Bellamy describe *climate futurism* as offering "possibilities for the cultural maps of better futures," helping readers, especially younger generations, imagine life beyond ecological precarity (2). Within this context, Alan Gratz's *Two Degrees* can be read as part of a broader movement in young adult climate narratives. The novel depicts planetary emergencies not only as stories of disaster but also as resources for pedagogy, building empathy, and fostering ethical awareness.

The pedagogical role of children's and young adult (YA) literature is very important in this study. Ursula K. Heise shows that stories can build ecological awareness by making climate change feel personal and urgent through its impact on characters. She posits,

Many of the books, essays, and films tell personal and moving stories about how the writer or filmmaker became aware of the plight of threatened species ... From my perspective as a textual and cultural scholar, what is most interesting ... are the means they use to convince readers with quite different experiences to share the concern expressed in them. ... What kind of awareness, emotion, and action are such stories and images meant to generate? (*Imagining Extinction* 4-5)

This role is especially clear in youth fiction, where fast-moving plots and strong emotional ties to the main characters help readers develop climate awareness. Richard Kerridge also points out the importance of narrative ethics in ecocriticism. Literature not only shows ecological realities but also seeks to change “culture and behavior in response to the urgent environmental crisis” (Kerridge 363). Kerridge describes this change as “care” and combines awareness with responsibility and action.

Ecocritical approaches and theories of climate justice are important for understanding the pyric crisis. David Schlosberg argues that climate justice must include not only fair sharing of resources but also recognition of vulnerable groups and responsibility toward future generations. (112) Such ideas link closely with Rob Nixon’s (2011) concept of “slow violence,” which explains the gradual and long-term damage caused by climate change, especially to the poor and the young. These perspectives show that wildfire is more than an ecological event. It is also a war-like attack on communities and futures. The idea of the pyric crisis builds on these frameworks by showing wildfire as both an ecological disaster and a cultural metaphor. It is both a sign of the Pyrocene and a symbolic lens through which young adult fiction portrays a world on fire.

Wildfire as ecological reality

Alan Gratz’s *Two Degrees* presents the California wildfire narrative as both a literal survival story and a symbolic dramatization of what may be termed as *pyric crisis*. Akira Kristiansen and her family’s escape from the Morris Fire condenses the experience of wildfire as ecological devastation, cultural metaphor, and systemic failure. Through the immediacy of Akira’s perspective, Gratz transforms fire from background hazard into a war-like adversary whose unpredictability and destructiveness embody the Anthropocene’s escalating emergencies. The narrative presents Akira’s ordeal as a microcosm of planetary collapse. What begins as a wisp of smoke quickly escalates into a raging firestorm: “The little trickle of smoke... had turned into a huge, raging wildfire. The fire was growing fast, eating up the forest with impossible speed” (Gratz 11). The novel repeatedly depicts the fire as advancing with “impossible speed” and encircling its victims like a besieging force, transforming natural disaster into a kind of environmental warfare. Akira reflects that “there aren’t any ‘little fires’ anymore... almost every fire was a megafire that burned up half the state. And it was all thanks to human-caused climate change” (Gratz 3). Such framing situates the California sequence within the *Pyrocene* in which humanity’s dependence on fossil fuels and unsustainable land use has created a new fire regime (Pyne 3; 85).

The Morris Fire dramatizes the speed, unpredictability, and uncontrollability of climate-driven conflagrations. Within half an hour of Akira first noticing smoke, the fire tracker app shows an expanding red mass engulfing entire regions: “She zoomed out, but the red blob kept going, and going, and going” (Gratz 12). This uncontrollable spread echoes Timothy Morton’s notion of climate crisis as a “hyperobject”. It is a phenomenon so temporally and spatially vast that it destabilizes human categories of perception (*Hyperobjects* 58). For Akira, the wildfire collapses ordinary experience into apocalypse: “Even though it was still morning, the world looked black as night” (Gratz 18). The book

also functions as systemic critique. Akira's father embodies climate denial and misplaced confidence in local resilience, insisting that "nature can take care of itself" (Gratz 36). His refusal to acknowledge climate change dramatizes cultural denial and the broader political inertia that aggravates vulnerability. Rob Nixon's concept of "slow violence" is instructive here, naming the attritional harm of climate change that erupts into spectacular disaster only when it is too late to prevent catastrophe. (2) Gratz shows how governance and institutional failures compound disaster: firefighters are overwhelmed, emergency communication breaks down, and firebreaks prove insufficient. Such conditions illustrate David Schlosberg's claim that climate injustice entails not only inequitable distribution of risk but systemic neglect of those most exposed to environmental crises (Schlosberg 75).

The novel also explores human-nature interdependence. Akira's horse, Dodger, senses danger before she does, embodying the entangled agency of human and nonhuman beings within fire ecologies. Her anguish when forced to release Dodger into the flames: "He was her everything... How could she have let Dodger go?" (Gratz 19). This personalizes the rupture of ecological bonds in the Anthropocene. Donna Haraway's insistence on "staying with the trouble" describes this moment. She explains: "we become-with each other or not at all," since humans and nonhumans exist only in "entangled and worldly" relations (Haraway 4-5). Akira's grief signals recognition of interspecies vulnerability. Similarly, the near-destruction of the ancient sequoias dramatizes the collapse of evolutionary adaptations. Though fire-adapted, the monarch trees are no longer safe in a world of climate-amplified megafires: "These trees even needed wildfires to reproduce – their seed cones only opened up when exposed to extreme heat" (Gratz 6). In the Pyrocene, however, the balance between renewal and destruction collapses into catastrophe. Akira articulates the intergenerational imperative of climate justice: "Nature wasn't just going to fix itself. Human beings had broken it, and it was up to human beings to fix it" (*Two Degrees* 238). This epiphany reflects that climate change imposes obligations across generations and borders. Through Akira's story, Gratz dramatizes the inequities of intergenerational injustice, where children inherit the compounded risks of adult denial. The wildfire thus emerges as more than an ecological event, it becomes a war-like cultural metaphor for systemic violence against communities and futures. In doing so, *Two Degrees* presents young adult cli-fi as a critical site where literature both reflects and resists the pyric crisis.

Pyric crisis: a cultural metaphor

Wildfire is depicted in *Two Degrees* as a real environmental feature with palpable consequences. The concept of a "world on fire" becomes more tangible and a widely used metaphor for a worldwide calamity as a result of Akira's experience with the Morris Fire. The idea of the pyric crisis is explained in part by the book's descriptions of encirclement, siege, and annihilation. It refers to the expanding issue of fire, which is both a genuine natural hazard and a sign of a larger environmental breakdown. Fire is a metaphor for social failure, cultural worry, and climatic change in addition to being an ecological fact. As Akira witnesses a bright morning fall to darkness, the narrative combines ecological order and natural time into a post-apocalyptic landscape. The fire is

not only an event but a hyperobjectual manifestation of climate change itself. It is diffuse, planetary, and incomprehensible, yet Akira experiences it as a choking immediacy. The wildfire sequence also represents contemporary climate discourse, where fire has become the dominant metaphor for ecological catastrophe. Greta Thunberg's rallying cry, "Our house is on fire", and headlines describing the Amazon's 2019 fires as "apocalyptic" exemplify how fire structures public imagination of the crisis (*No One Is Too Small* 96). Gratz's imagery channels this rhetoric directly: "The fire was growing fast, eating up the forest with impossible speed" (Gratz 11). Here fire is not only elemental but militarized, acting like an invading force. Climate change typically unfolds invisibly and incrementally (Nixon 2), but wildfire renders it spectacular, compressing decades of negligence into minutes of devastation.

Although *Two Degrees* juxtaposes three distinct storylines – Akira's wildfire, Natalie's hurricane, and Owen and George's polar ice melt – wildfire emerges as the most visceral metaphor for climate change. Hurricanes, though destructive, are cyclical and familiar; ice melt is gradual and often mediated through scientific models. Wildfire, by contrast, erupts into lived space with immediacy, forcing instant confrontation. Akira experiences it as a wall of flames that leaves no room for delay or abstraction. The novel's ecological imagination is anchored by the California plotline. The lengthy timeline of climate change is reduced to a single, depressing emblem of collapse by fire. Wildfire functions as what Amitav Ghosh refers to as unthinkable in this context. Contemporary realist literature has found it difficult to depict such type of implausible disaster, but climate fiction has started to present the same (Ghosh 32). The cultural and mythic images of wildfire further amplify its symbolic capacity. According to Mircea Eliade, fire is a dualistic divine power that represents both birth and death, purification and destruction (31). In a similar vein, Gaston Bachelard calls fire "intimate and ... universal". It is a force that "lives in our heart" and "in the sky," carrying "the opposing values of good and evil. It is gentleness and torture. It is cookery and it is apocalypse" (*The Psychoanalysis of Fire* 7). Gratz mobilizes this ambivalence in the sequoia grove episode, where Akira recalls that "these trees even needed wildfires to reproduce" (Gratz 6). Yet the same evolutionary adaptation proves inadequate against the megafire, signaling how the regenerative logic of fire has been broken by anthropogenic excess. In this light, the wildfire sequence dramatizes the collapse of fire's cultural ambivalence into a one-sided force of destruction—an emblem of the pyric crisis in which renewal gives way to annihilation.

However, the symbolic force of wildfire operates pedagogically. *Two Degrees* presents fire as both an ecological event and a cultural metaphor. In doing so, it helps young readers grasp climate change not as abstract data but as immediate catastrophe. Donna Haraway's call to "stay with the trouble" is reflected here. (*Staying with the Trouble* 76) The narrative refuses escapist solutions, instead forcing its audience to confront destruction, grief, and responsibility. The wildfire becomes a metaphorical rehearsal space where children, as both readers and protagonists, imagine what it means to inherit a burning world. In this way, the California narrative exceeds its function as plot device, transforming into an allegorical framework through which the novel as a whole articulates the crisis of the Anthropocene. Thus, in *Two Degrees*, wildfire functions

as more than natural disaster; it becomes the central metaphor of the Anthropocene, and indicates the immediacy of climate collapse, the failure of ecological resilience, and the cultural imagination of a “world on fire”. Situated alongside hurricanes and ice melt, wildfire emerges as the most visceral, pedagogically charged, and symbolically powerful expression of the pyric crisis.

Vulnerable youth and climate consciousness

Children are placed at the core of the climate crisis in Alan Gratz’s *Two Degrees*, and this narrative is integral to its ecological and pedagogical force. The novel dramatizes the precarity of youth in the Anthropocene and personalizes planetary-scale collapse by depicting the climatic crisis through the eyes of adolescent protagonists, Akira in California, Natalie in Florida, and Owen and George in Canada. These characters’ experiences crystallize the paradox of intergenerational injustice. Children are the least responsible for climate change yet among the most vulnerable to its effects, even as they are increasingly called upon to act as agents of resistance and change. The California wildfire sequence exemplifies this dynamic. Akira is thrust into life-threatening danger with little agency over the forces that imperil her. Smoke blinds her vision, ash chokes her lungs, and flames consume her environment with tremendous speed (Gratz 11). This physical vulnerability dramatizes the violence of climate change. Years of systemic neglect and fossil-fuel dependency erupt suddenly into spectacular destruction (Nixon 69). Gratz does not shield young readers from this precarity; rather, he presents the reality of a generation born into the Pyrocene.

Despite their exposure, Gratz’s child protagonists embody emergent agency. Akira’s desperate decision to release Dodger, her beloved horse, illustrates the premature ethical choices children must make in catastrophe. (*Two Degrees* 19) These moments reflect the voices of real-world youth activists such as Greta Thunberg, who insists, “[w]e children shouldn’t have to do this. But since almost no one is doing anything, and our very future is at risk, we feel like we have to continue” (*No One Is Too Small* 31). The juxtaposition of Akira’s fictional heroism with Thunberg’s activist urgency shows the cultural function of children as both symbols of vulnerability and leaders in climate resistance. In both literature and activism, youth assume roles vacated by adults’ failure to act, a dynamic that dramatizes intergenerational conflict as a war not between nations but between present negligence and future survival. Children’s literature has historically carried pedagogical weight, transmitting cultural values and moral lessons. In the case of cli-fi, this pedagogical role expands into environmental education. Maria Nikolajeva emphasizes that children’s narratives are uniquely powerful in shaping ethical imagination because they are formative texts encountered at early developmental stages. (Nikolajeva 56) Alan Gratz *Two Degrees* presents suspense-driven storytelling to cultivate what Richard Kerridge calls “care” where plot and emotional engagement become a medium for ecological consciousness. Kerridge argues:

Each of these writers speaks from a different ecocritical position, but their common hope is to reach beyond their specialist academic audiences and contribute to a

transformation of culture and behavior in response to the urgent environmental crisis. They want to do whatever can be done in the literary sphere to assist the emergence of a sustainable culture ... The word I use for the change they are seeking is “*care*,” because the word must encompass feeling and action as well as awareness. (“Ecocritical Approaches” 363)

This pedagogical dimension is especially clear in Akira’s realization that nature will not recover on its own; since humans have damaged it, humans must also take responsibility for repairing it (Gratz 238). The didactic tone of the book is highlighted at this point. It demonstrates that environmental collapse is a human-caused issue that calls for human responsibility rather than a natural process. Adeline Johns-Putra says that climate fiction works like moral education. It helps readers imagine the results of doing nothing and think about the ethical need for climate justice. (*Climate Change* 54)

Gratz promotes an intergenerational discussion that is essential to the conversation on climate justice. The injustices of the Anthropocene are exposed by young characters. Although adults are held responsible for the crisis, children nevertheless have to deal with its effects and defend their futures. *Two Degrees* turns the climate issue into a generational war that is as much cultural as it is ecological. Moreover, Gratz’s novel participates in a growing corpus of young adult climate fiction, along with Tochi Onyebuchi’s *War Girls* (2019) and Eoin Colfer and Andrew Donkin’s *Global* (2023). Such literature reimagines the Anthropocene from the viewpoints of youth. These works reinforce the idea that children are cultural agents with the ability to reimagine futures in addition to being the inheritors of crises. *Two Degrees* shows children’s weakness, strength, and growing sense of right and wrong. It places them at the moral center of the climate story. With suspenseful storytelling and a didactic purpose, Gratz turns children’s literature into a source of climate consciousness. In the face of the pyric crisis, he assists young readers in imagining fortitude, responsibility, and cooperation.

Young adult climate fiction strikes a balance between using calamity as a spectacle and using it as a teaching tool, as demonstrated in Alan Gratz’s *Two Degrees*. The segments on the wildfire in California are written with a sense of cinematic intensity. It depicts how fires spread, houses fall, cars explode, and Akira’s horse perishes in the flames (Gratz 11, 19). These scenes exhibit an aesthetic of immediacy, as readers are drawn in by the narrative and ecological crises are experienced directly rather than imagined. Gratz, however, does not allow the fire to remain merely a show. He supplements it with social criticism and ethical contemplation. This enables readers to view the wildfire as a critique of institutional unpreparedness and climate denial in addition to an exciting survival story. He demonstrates how literature can transform the allure of disaster into an opportunity for moral instruction in this way. According to Richard Kerridge, ecological narratives need to combine aesthetic appeal with social duty because both are essential to a work’s worth (“Ecocritical Approaches” 372). *Two Degrees* does this by tying the excitement of survival to the understanding of human accountability. Fear, suspense, and grief become pedagogical instruments, enabling young readers to connect personal vulnerability to systemic responsibility. Gratz’s book demonstrates how cli-fi might transform spectacle into a moral pedagogical tool in this

way.

When viewed through the lens of the pyric crisis, the significance of Gratz's book becomes more apparent. It explains how a wildfire turns into a warlike force that obliterates ecosystems, communities, and futures. In *Two Degrees*, the wildfire serves as a metaphor for the greater global dilemma, a critique of governance, and a true ecological catastrophe. The most straightforward and potent metaphor is provided by wildfire, as opposed to more gradual phenomena like hurricanes or melting ice, which can be explained by science. Its urgency demonstrates the entire impact of the climate disaster. Using the concept of pyric crisis to analyze the California sequence demonstrates how wildfire is portrayed in contemporary climate fiction as a cultural and moral conflict as well as a natural occurrence. The idea illustrates how, in the Anthropocene, fire has evolved from a regenerative to a destructive agent. However, by fusing spectacle with education and critique with awareness across generations, *Two Degrees* demonstrates how young adult cli-fi may influence climate conversations. The story transforms ecological damage into a call for moral action by using fire as a metaphor, a lesson, and a critique. In order to demonstrate how fire stories expose the shortcomings of Anthropocene governance, this paper frames wildfire as a pyric crisis. It also demonstrates how these tales inspire new kinds of accountability in future generations. Gratz's novel thus contributes to a broader cultural endeavour to transform tales of disaster into tales of criticism, compassion, and climate consciousness.

Conclusion

Wildfire is both an ecological catastrophe and a metaphor for the Anthropocene's difficulties, as Alan Gratz's *Two Degrees* makes abundantly evident. The severity of the pyric situation is demonstrated by the wildfire in California. Communities and woodlands are destroyed as the fire spreads like a battle. It also represents the broader breakdown of planetary systems. The book transforms tragedy into a lesson, shifting young adult fiction into a place where empathy, vulnerability, and anxiety are transformed into climate consciousness. Wildfire is depicted in *Two Degrees* as a social metaphor as well as an actual trauma. It illustrates how, in the absence of conventional politics, children's literature may foster intergenerational ethics and ecological awareness.

The implications of this reading go beyond a single novel. Climate humanities scholars increasingly recognize the importance of narrative in making climate change understandable (Nixon 3; Heise 5), but children's literature is still often overlooked in this field. Alan Gratz, along with Tochi Onyebuchi, Eoin Colfer, and Andrew Donkin, shows that youth-oriented stories are essential for understanding how ecological futures are imagined and challenged. Such writers present climate injustice as deeply intergenerational: adults fail to act, and children are left to face the consequences. In this way, young adult cli-fi not only reflects ecological crisis but also critiques the failures of Anthropocene governance while fostering a consciousness that may endure beyond those failures. For this reason, including children's literature in the climate humanities is not optional but necessary, since these stories help shape the political, ethical, and imaginative horizons of future generations.

But limiting the discussion to ecology alone leaves out the cultural and symbolic meanings of fire. This gap is intended to be filled by the concept of pyric crisis. It describes wildfire as a cultural symbol as well as an ecological calamity. In addition, it stands for intergenerational injustice, systematic negligence, and ecological catastrophe.

This dual role is demonstrated in *Two Degrees*, which uses wildfire as a metaphor of global collapse, a critique of societal failure, and a survival spectacle. Pyric crisis extends the field of fire studies into cultural study. It demonstrates how literature addresses fire in the Anthropocene from both a literal and symbolic perspective. *Two Degrees* demonstrates how fiction may reframe the Pyrocene's flaming landscapes as both sites of devastation and opportunities for moral analysis and education. Literature serves two purposes in this context: to observe disaster and to promote accountability. The novel indicates how children's literature is a good fit for this mission since it centers the ecological catastrophe on young people while fusing moral messages with fast-paced narratives. Devastation gives rise to awareness. Wildfire serves as a metaphor for both ecological destruction and a catalyst for intergenerational awakening and cultural critique in *Two Degrees*. Young adult cli-fi thus demonstrates how writing in a burning world can transform tragedy into a demand for justice, accountability, and creativity through the concept of the pyric crisis.

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