



1

A RIP WHERE A  
**RIVER SHOULD BE**  
LINOLEUMVILLE

CREATED BY BEN DODD AND ALEX BLAKE

*A RIP WHERE A RIVER SHOULD BE*  
*Created by Ben Dodd and Alex Blake*

*Writing by Ben Dodd*  
*Illustration by Alex Blake*

fragment 6  
March 19th, 1952

they stood by the river for a long time. it just looked like a river. she looked at john gregory and then looked away and then looked back at him again. if he felt anything he didn't show it. she was wearing her sunday dress. her long black hair falling all about her shoulders and down her back. if it wasn't for all the flies it would look like they were on a picnic.

he didn't need to speak or convince her. she knew it was real the moment she got there. this kind of heaviness hung around it. temporal weight. the mugginess of confluence. he stood there with his hat low and stained white around the rim from old sweatsalt. his eyes set close and blue, not squinting in the bright sun. the sweat sort of just rolling slowly off him. not looking at her but not looking at anything else either. skin cracked and red, breaking apart. not impatient. just standing and knowing like he always did.

they stood there for an hour or more. not a word. they both knew she'd get in. and then she got in and she was gone and he watched and then he stood there for a minute and walked back towards town.

fragment 5  
March 20th, 1951

the evening was close and sticky, the kind mosquitos thank their little mosquito god for, and his damp shirt clung to his back like a wetsuit where the leather seats had pressed it against him. he shut the door, stretched, and walked into the little diner.

the waitress met him at the counter just inside the door. she looked about twenty-five and was pretty in that sad sort of way you always get in these towns. her pretty dark hair falling all about her shoulders and down her back. she smiled and asked his name and he smiled too and he said wallace and what's yours? and she said connie and i'm awful sorry but we're fresh out of steaks and he said that's no trouble, what else is good here? she said the chicken was good and he said sure and i'll take a beer too if you got any and she said well sure we do and went off to get it.

the chicken was pretty good and the beer was cold and the place felt fine. connie came over and asked would he like anything else and he said i'd sure take a coffee and when she brought it back she asked what's a young smart lookin fella like you doing here on your own and he spread his arms in a big shrug and said i'm just here. she smiled at that and said maybe you're here looking for a nice girl and he said sure maybe and he smiled and she smiled. he said well say what time do you get off here and she laughed warmly and looked down at him and refilled his coffee.



first few circles he'd talk about her to everyone. knew everyone, made it his business to. good old wallace. no two people ever this close, he would say. no one like her. multitudes in her pretty dark hair. she made for him and he for her. she seeing the good in everything. smoothing out his edges.

later circles none of that. just him and her. no one else ever knowing him, but he knowing them all, remembering. no point talking to the dullards again. didn't waste a second of their time together talking to another soul. knew every second. knew when it was drawing nearer. the fog setting in nearer the end, never could remember when she went with john gregory or from where. always a surprise.



### LINNEY PIE

The Original and Best

3 cups pared and sliced apples	1/2 teaspoon cinammon
2 cups whole linney berries	1 tablespoon lemon juice
3/4 to 1 cup sugar	2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons flour	1/4 teaspoon salt

Make pastry as directed on "Linneyville Golden Pie Crust" package. Fit bottom crust into a 9-inch pie dish. Add apples in closely packed layers, topping with cinammon, sugar, flour, lemon, and salt. Add linney berries on top and dot with butter. Add pastry top and press to seal. Cut slits in the pastry top for the steam to escape. Bake at 450 for 10 minutes, then at 375 for 40 minutes until golden brown.



fragment 8  
March 20th, 1951

the evening was close and sticky, the kind mosquitos thank their little mosquito god for, and his damp shirt clung to his back like a wetsuit where the sweat and riverwater had soaked it. he made the long walk from the riverbed into town, little insects harassing him all his way. he stopped just short of the little diner, stretched and went in.

the waitress met him at the little counter just inside the door. she looked about twenty-five and was pretty in that sad sort of way you always get in these towns. she smiled and asked his name and he said it's wallace. his eyes fixed heavily on her face. she said well welcome wallace, my name's connie and i'm awful sorry but we're fresh out of steaks. she met his gaze and tried to look friendly. he looked strange. he said well that's fine, i'm not too hungry just yet, but i'd sure take one of those beers. he smiled at her in a sad way she thought odd.

the beer was cold. he looked down at the table and there was this carving that he thought he recognised. like a pit with someone falling in. it looked like it was swirling. she came over and asked would he like anything else. it took him a second to break from his thoughts. he looked at her and blinked, their lives playing behind his eyes. don't go. when he tells you to go, don't go. you don't know me yet but i hope you will. she looked at him scared. don't go where? what are you saying? who are you? and he spread his arms in a big shrug and said i'm just here. and she said well what's that supposed to mean and he said i'll keep trying, i don't know what will stop it but i'll keep trying. just don't go with john gregory whatever he says.