



## In the beginning: A short story prequel to the novel Rivers

*Michael Farris Smith*

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### **In the beginning: A short story prequel to the novel Rivers** Michael Farris Smith

In this short story prequel to Michael Farris Smith's widely acclaimed novel Rivers (a Best Book of 2013 in BookRiot, Daily Candy, and Hudson Booksellers), a series of catastrophic hurricanes along the Gulf Coast prompts the government to institute "The Line," a boundary between the coastal region and the rest of the country, effectively creating a lawless no-man's land without electricity, resources, or basic services.

Those left behind include Aggie, a snake-handling preacher with a questionable past; Bub and Ava, who live in a FEMA trailer held down by cinderblocks; and Cohen, who refuses to evacuate and leave behind the graves of his late wife and child. As all four struggle to survive below The Line, their stories intersect with violent and unexpected consequences.

### **In the beginning: A short story prequel to the novel Rivers Details**

Date : Published November 4th 2014 by Simon & Schuster/Simon451

ISBN :

Author : Michael Farris Smith

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Genre : Fiction

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## From Reader Review In the beginning: A short story prequel to the novel Rivers for online ebook

### Cathie says

Introduction to the characters, the story, the storm, the dividing line in Mississippi where anyone who still lives there is left to fend for themselves.

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### Cheri says

*“The first sign that the Line was coming was the evacuation of the casinos. When the big trucks pulled in and began to salvage whatever they could from the tumbled and topped casinos, it became apparent that abandonment was no joke. And as the rumors swirled, it didn’t take long for residents and vagabonds and criminals and card dealers and preachers and teachers and all those determined to make a life in the region to realize one very important thing – if the Line comes to fruition and you decide to remain, you most certainly fall into one of two categories.*

*Predator or prey.”*

Among those who haven’t evacuated yet: Aggie, a snake-handling preacher whose followers have mostly fled, and Cohen, whose wife and child will forever remain below the Line. Both men hell-bent on maintaining a hold on their lives before, the lives they lived here before there was a Line. There is no choice, really, but to remain below the Line. Surviving in this apocalyptic version only vaguely reminiscent of the lives there that they had cherished.

*“In the Beginning”* is the 62-page short story prequel to Michael Farris Smith’s *“Rivers”* which I had already planned to read soon. When I saw this I decided I needed / wanted to read it before I started *“Rivers”*

As far as I can tell, this is only available for Nook and Kindle: 99cents.

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### Lisa Jo says

This is a short prequel. And short it is. And that is disappointing, because I just wanted to keep reading and reading and reading. I cannot wait to jump into Rivers, pardon the pun. I LOVED Desperation Road by the same author. One of my new favorite modern authors.

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### Carol says

**Just three weeks to go before THE LINE.....**a cluster of deadly tropical storms.....in a *nearly* abandoned land.....and the beginning of a fight for survival.

**IN THE BEGINNING** is the prequel to Michael Farris Smith's novel **RIVERS** that I can't wait to begin reading to find out more about the **creepy** snake handling preacher Aggie, and Cohen, a man hesitant to

leave his Mississippi home and memories of a past life there.

Yikes! Who **will** be the predator or prey?

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### **Lynn says**

A brief look at Cohen and Aggie right before The Line was declared. I wanted much more, but I loved Rivers so much I bought this to keep reading.

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### **Carmen Sisson says**

I had a hard time writing a fitting review for "Rivers" and I'm having an equally hard time writing one for this prequel.

I feel safe in saying that Michael Farris Smith is probably one of the best kept secrets in Mississippi right now. It's hard for an author to stand out in a state that has almost as many legendary writers as it has Baptist churches, pawn shops, and liquor stores. Spit in Mississippi and you'll either be spitting on a preacher, a writer, or a politician -- sometimes all three at the same time, but I digress.

This prequel only gives you a taste of what you can expect from "Rivers," but if you've already read the latter, the former may tide you over until his next book drops. If you haven't, I don't know if this will be enough to snag you. Really, just go read "Rivers."

This isn't Grisham or Bragg or Conroy; Smith is more like the unholy love child of William Faulkner, Cormac McCarthy, and Larry Brown.

He is a writer's writer, creating lush, evocative prose without the florid romanticism of Conroy (who I also like but for other reasons).

If you've ever lived on the Gulf Coast or lived through a hurricane, this will be a familiar -- perhaps uncomfortably so -- look at life afterward. If you've ever seen desperate people fighting over ice, paying \$10 for a bottle of water, trudging through when there's nothing left because there's nothing else you can do, then both the prequel and its successor will resonate.

These are not bright, cheery beach reads. If you're looking for that, you'll be happier picking up Mark Childress, Fannie Flagg, or someone else. If you're looking for a deep, immersive experience, if you're ready to be sucked down into the depths, thrown out and left for dead, you'll like this.

My biggest gripe with the prequel is it's very short. The majority of the pages are the first chapter of "Rivers." Still, I was glad to have it, and as long as you understand what you'll be getting, you might be, too.

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### **Ross Cumming says**

If you've read or are about to read Michael Smith's Farris's novel 'Rivers' then this is a must read as it gives a

brief description of events leading up to the events in the novel. It also introduces us to main protagonist Cohen and also to snake handling 'preacher' Aggie. The story only takes up about half the book and the rest is taken up with the opening chapter(s) of 'Rivers'.

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### **Dawn says**

I am a fan of prequels . Some folks are not and would rather leave pre- plotting as I call it to some imagination . Many authors are questioned so often about the beginnings of his ideas for his characters and situations that he decides he or she will write a prequel of some length. This beginning just a brief 8 chapter introduction to the setting and situation with the weather conditions, introducing the main characters to the readers. Included in the introductions are Aggie finding his connection to Eva ! Then you also are given an advanced look at just part of the major conflict in this apocalyptic drama and tragedy! This is just a week before the States are closing " The Line " . Which make this a significant event to include as far as character introductions . Most property that has been in families for years and years is not something families give up or leave without much deep thought and a big fight. Everyone still feels this way about the bond they have with most generationally owned property . Having read this prequel , I can relate more to reasons why the main protagonist, Cohen is deciding to remain in his home , but there still seems to be a darker side that keeps Cohen attached to the land that he just may die with instead of leave. I am happy I read this and I think the author wanted us to read the prequel or he would not have had it published as an afterthought. Many did not know it existed . I will know from now on whenever this author has a new book ! Wait until you read the full text ! I could not put it down and almost read it in one sitting . A girl has to sleep a bit sometimes!

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### **SusanS says**

Very short but sets the stage well!

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