

Story Summary

Along the River Road

By S. C. Ashby

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High school junior Cassie Nesler is a talented coder enjoying a seemingly idyllic life in San Diego, California, with her mother and step-father. Cassie is an introvert with a focused interest in coding. Her well-honed programming skills and problem solving abilities have opened doors for many math and coding awards as well as leading her high school's cyber security team in state competitions. This young adult novel follows Cassie as her life abruptly changes at the tragic death of her mother. Relocating to rural Doddville, Arkansas, to live with her Aunt Jackie, Cassie gets to know her rural roots and Arkansas family. Still grieving her mother's death, Cassie and her two new friends, Dylan and Sofia, are intrigued by the story of a car accident that claimed the life of two Doddville High School seniors some 20 years earlier. The accident placed Cassie's mother under a cloud of suspicion as the driver who caused the fatal accident. The case was never resolved, and Cassie's mother left Doddville after that at the age of 17 to seek out a different life in the music scenes of Tulsa and Las Vegas. The three friends seek to unravel the mystery along the River Road with the hope that the truth will exonerate her mother and unburden Cassie's family. Combing through newspaper articles, accident reports, and her mother's journals and song lyrics, Cassie comes to understand her mother and her mother's life choices while gaining more knowledge about her own father. Through their efforts, the truth is uncovered, but the price paid might be too high for Cassie.

