

The Lost Causes of Bleak Creek: A Novel

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NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER "Stranger Things meets the South. Chilling, hilarious, and suspenseful-I loved it!"-Felicia Day

From the authors of Rhett & Link's Book of Mythicality and creators of Good Mythical Morning . . .

It's 1992 in Bleak Creek, North Carolina—a sleepy little place with all the trappings of an ordinary Southern town: two Baptist churches, friendly smiles coupled with silent judgments, and an unquenchable appetite for pork products. Beneath the town's cheerful facade, however, Bleak Creek teens live in constant fear of being sent to the Whitewood School, a local reformatory with a history of putting unruly youths back on the straight and narrow—a record so impeccable that almost everyone is willing to ignore the suspicious deaths that have occurred there over the past decade.

At first, high school freshmen Rex McClendon and Leif Nelson believe what they've been told: that the students' strange demises were all just tragic accidents, the unfortunate consequence of succumbing to vices like Marlboro Lights and Nirvana. But when the shoot for their low-budget horror masterpiece, PolterDog, goes horribly awry—and their best friend, Alicia Boykins, is sent to Whitewood as punishment—Rex and Leif are forced to question everything they know about their unassuming hometown and its cherished school for delinquents.

Eager to rescue their friend, Rex and Leif pair up with recent NYU film school graduate Janine Blitstein to begin piecing together the unsettling truth of the school and its mysterious founder, Wayne Whitewood. What they find will leave them battling an evil beyond their wildest imaginations—one that will shake Bleak Creek to its core.

Praise for The Lost Causes of Bleak Creek

"The Lost Causes of Bleak Creek is like your best friend from high school—kind of weird and a little twisted, but no matter how much trouble they caused, they always made you laugh. You don't have to be a GMM fan to realize . . . The Lost Causes of Bleak Creek, Will It Awesome Book? F@*# yeah!"-Kurt Sutter, creator of Sons of Anarchy

"Most people don't read books, let alone write them. That puts Rhett and Link in the top 1% of smart people in the world. Read this book."-Rachel Bloom, co-creator of Crazy Ex-Girlfriend

"It's scary, it's fun, and it's one hell of a carnival ride."-Kirkus Reviews

Rhett McLaughlin and Link Neal, raised in North Carolina and best friends since the first grade, are a comedy duo known for creating the Internet's most-watched daily talk show, Good Mythical Morning; their award-winning weekly podcast Ear Biscuits; and the instant #1 New York Times bestseller Rhett & Link's Book of Mythicality. They share an office at Mythical Entertainment, the company they cofounded, but live separately with their respective wives, children, and dogs in Los Angeles. The boy raced through the woods, blood streaming from his hand.

He was growing faint.

Can't pass out. Just gotta make it to the fence.

He heard his pursuers yelling. They sounded as panicked as he felt.

He didn't know if the dizziness was due to blood loss or the shock of what had just happened.

They were gonna kill me.

He'd known this place was twisted from day one, when they'd stripped him of everything, including his own name. But even with all the bizarre, disturbing things he'd seen, he had still assumed that the brutal punishments were designed to intimidate. Not exterminate. That's why he'd been so calm, willingly letting them guide him along blindfolded and gagged, right up until the moment they'd sliced his palm.

What if this particular test was no different? Maybe he was doing exactly what they wanted him to, running through the trees like a trophy animal. They had only cut his hand. No arteries. Plus, he'd surprised himself, getting away from the two men holding him, one of them enormous, much bigger than any of the adults he'd seen there. Had they purposely let him go? No, he shouldn't sell himself short. He'd fought like hell.

The boy felt a flash of pride. All those hours of memorizing Jean-Claude Van Damme's moves had been worth it.

Can't wait to rewatch Kickboxer.

He couldn't move at a full clip, as branches, rocks, and logs snuck up on him in the meager moon light. He dodged the obstacles, hoping he was heading in a straight line.

Where's the damn fence?

He saw it just before he collided with it, the grass of the pasture on the other side of the chain links glowing a dull gray under the night sky. He started to climb without thinking, pain exploding as the metal wire slipped into his open wound. He stifled a scream, hoping to conceal his exact point of escape. While clenching his jaw to summon the resolve to hoist himself up the ten foot barrier, he saw it: a cut section of fence not five steps away.

Lucky.

As he pushed his way through the flap and stood up in the pasture, he heard the roar of an engine to his left. A pickup truck was hurtling across the pasture in his direction.

They were trying to head him off.

He broke into a sprint toward the cover of trees on the side of the pasture, seeing his own shadow in front of him as the headlights shone on his back. He was confident in his speed. Ninety-ninth percentile in the President's Challenge Shuttle Run. He'd timed himself.

But they were closing the distance fast.

Get to the treeline.

He knew there'd be a barbed wire cow fence at the edge of the field. He'd have to clear it in stride.

In only a matter of seconds, they were upon him.

He was steps from the trees.

The headlights lit up the short fence, helping him judge his distance. He stutter-stepped to setup his leap, then threw his lead leg in the air.

A clean jump.

He heard the truck skid to a stop on the wet grass behind him, the doors opening. Men screaming.

He knew this stretch of forest well; there was barely a patch of nature around town he

hadn't explored on his own. Another hundred feet or so and he'd make it to the clearing. He broke into the wide lane cut through the forest, a grassy corridor that followed the sewage line to the water treatment plant. He heard the men clumsily moving through the woods, crashing into branches and grumbling to themselves.

Morons.

Randomly choosing a direction, he dashed down the clearing, reaching a manhole in less than fifty steps. He grabbed a nearby stick and jammed it into the notch on the cover, just as he'd done a thousand times before, no longer thinking about his throbbing hand. The weighty metal disc lifted, at which point he grabbed the underside and raised the lid on its edge, releasing an acrid smell. He swiftly stepped down into the rank darkness below, skittering down the iron rungs as fast as he could.

The disheveled men popped out of the trees ten seconds after he'd dropped the manhole cover in place.

The boy listened as their cursing voices passed him.

He waited until he could no longer hear them, and then sat for another five minutes.

He hoisted the cover, emerging into the muggy night air.

The boy fled deeper into the woods.

Other Books

Rhett & Link's Book of Mythicality, "Internetainers" Rhett & Link met in first grade when their teacher made them miss recess for writing profanity on their desks, and they have been best friends ever since. Today, their daily YouTube talk show, Good Mythical Morning, is the most-watched daily talk show on the Internet, and nearly 12 million subscribers tune in to see the guys broadcast brainy trivia, wild experiments, and hilarious banter (not to mention the occasional cereal bath). Now the award-winning comedians are finally bringing their "Mythical" world to the printed page in their first book. A hilarious blend of autobiography, trivia, and advice, Rhett & Link's Book of Mythicality: A Field Guide to Curiosity, Creativity, and Tomfoolery will offer twenty ways to add "Mythicality" to your life, including: Eat Something That Scares You Make a Bold Hair Choice Invent Something Ridiculous Say "I Love You" Like It's Never Been Said Speak at Your Own Funeral The goal of these offbeat prompts? To learn new things, laugh more often, and earn a few grown-up merit badges along the way. Heartfelt and completely original, this book will be the perfect gift for anyone looking for a fresh dose of humor and fun.

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