Something Short

by Kevin Hunter

It went like this: We were at the river. It had been a long day. The sun set over the hill tops, now. Me and Danny sat by the edge with buckets of water full of small fish and some dead crab that we'd got from the market, earlier and looked out over the small waves the breeze made. You could hear the quail over the bank squawking and see the brush split, and you knew it was Betsy out there having some fun. A little while after that Danny would have already drowned in the rock water at the bottom of the river. He'd lost his footing by the hard, slippery edge while looking out for Betsy. But for now, though, it was only a bright, cool evening with my best friend and his pet dog out playing in the calm silence, with the breeze in your hair and the feeling of crab meat melting in the mouth and down into your stomach, and without that sick feeling you got because you couldn't do a thing about it when it happened but watch--you were so afraid.

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