

MINE

When heroes and villains are one and the same.

Overview

An interactive graphic novel following a society divided by class, ruled by the upper class (the Caps) who use their money and power to fuel their hedonistic values by mining and stealing the emotions of the working class.

Genre: Dystopian Sci-Fi

Technology

Platform: PC and Mac.

Controls: Mouse + Keyboard, PlayStation/Xbox controller.

Demographic

Romero is a 16 year-old high school sophomore who prefers staying home to read and play video games rather than going out to parties. They particularly enjoy more casual, narrative driven games like *Life is Strange* and *Night in the Woods*, putting in the effort to explore every possible interaction and play through all possible endings.

Josephine is 24 years old and fighting to hold onto dear life as she tries to finish her second year of grad school. She spends way too much time on Tumblr, quietly reblogging posts about social issues and cats. She primarily plays games that offer a lot of save points so that she can immediately quit to work on a deadline that's due tomorrow that she "forgot" about for the past 2 weeks.

16 to 34 year olds.

Comparables



Papers, Please.

In-game workday mechanics and overall mood. Themes of morality and motivations.

Image By: [Common Sense Media](#)

Telltale Games' The Walking Dead.

Episodic. Episodes released separately. Player choices displayed at end.

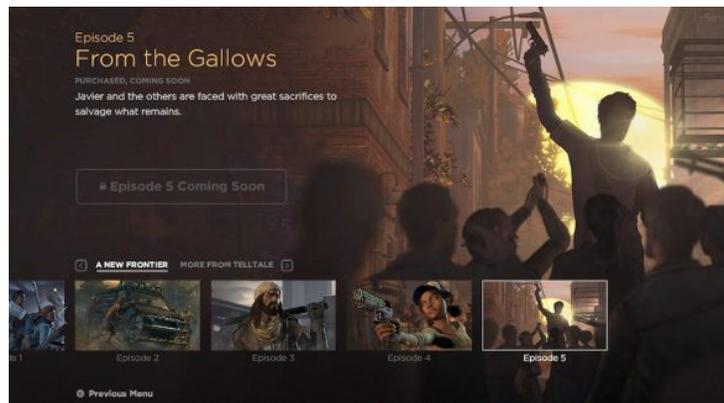


Image By: [Video Games Blogger](#)



Ink Spotters.

Interactive graphic novel mechanics.

Image By: YouTube
Saga.



Wonder Woman.



Visuals/graphics. Bold lines. High contrast. Vibrant colors.

The Wicked + The Divine.



Night in the Woods.



[Image By: Alex Poucher](#)

[Image By: Gamespresso](#)

[Image By: Now Loading](#)

Lettering for character distinction.

Synopsis

River has recently been hired as a miner for E-Corps, a job seen as an equivalent to prostitution, drug dealing, etc. The money is great, but the consequences may or may not be worth the risk.

Carrying the responsibility of being the sole provider for the family, River needs to walk the line between morality and survival. Magdalene's journey to how she founded E-Corps will be unveiled throughout the experience, revealing a similar dilemma to River's struggles.

River's mother, already having been struggling with a disease that's forced the family into debt from medical bills, gets a terminal diagnosis and mentions that she wants to volunteer to be mined.

Characters

(Note: All characters are ethnically ambiguous)



River (20) works as a miner for E-Corps, a major corporation profiting from emotion mining. She is part of the working class, forced into the position in order to survive (have enough money for food and rent for their family). She loves her family, especially Micah, and wants to make them proud and allow them to live comfortably, but also protect them from the dangers of potentially becoming targets of E-Corps.



Magdalene Duke (40s) is the CEO and Founder of E-Corps. She is quiet, reserved, resilient, and extremely intelligent, a child genius, finishing university at the age of 16. After witnessing The Reaping and the complete lack of mourning by the adults of the society, she dedicated her life to developing a way for people to experience true happiness--what is now known as emotion mining.



Micah (10) is River's younger brother. He is a bright, energetic boy who does well in school, but feels lonely and neglected since Mom is always sick in bed and River has to work to sustain the family. As a result, he has developed an obsession with Robo-Pal, a little robotic toy popular among kids whose families can afford to buy them one.

Setting



Image By: [HD Desktop Wallpaper](#)

Sample of visual aesthetic for upper class city from Remember Me.

It is set in the distant future in the year 2272. Over the centuries, members of the upper class have been experimenting with emotional engineering, reaching a breakthrough that essentially allowed them to feel nothing but happiness all the time. As the years passed, this genetically altered the people of this world.

The Caps no longer need to undergo medical procedures for a life of eternal joy, but inherit the trait from their biological parents, with all the other emotions gradually fading away as they enter adulthood.

The upper class is rich. They will exploit the poor for their own gain without a moment of hesitation. Why be a decent human being when you can't feel guilt or remorse or sympathy?



[Image By: Alpha Coders](#)

Sample of visual aesthetic for working class city from Remember Me.

This world suffers greatly from class disparity. While universal healthcare and free education are available to all citizens, quality of these services vary significantly between regions populated by the upper class and those by working class.

Living in a Caps neighborhood is much too expensive for the average working class family, barring them from access to better healthcare and education. Access to better quality services outside of their region is possible, though, by paying fees (similar to out-of-pocket payments for medical services not covered by insurance and tuition for education), which is the case for River's mother.

Many members of the working class find themselves working at sealing factories. Sealing is a part of the emotion mining process. After an emotion is mined, sealers work to capture the aura to physically transfer it to customers. This is seen as a more blue-collared job, requiring less skill and providing significantly lower wages. Working class citizens also disapprove of this position, but it's one of the easiest jobs to get and they see it as a much lesser evil than mining itself.



[Image By: Lemerg](#)

Sample of visual aesthetic for world from Remember Me.

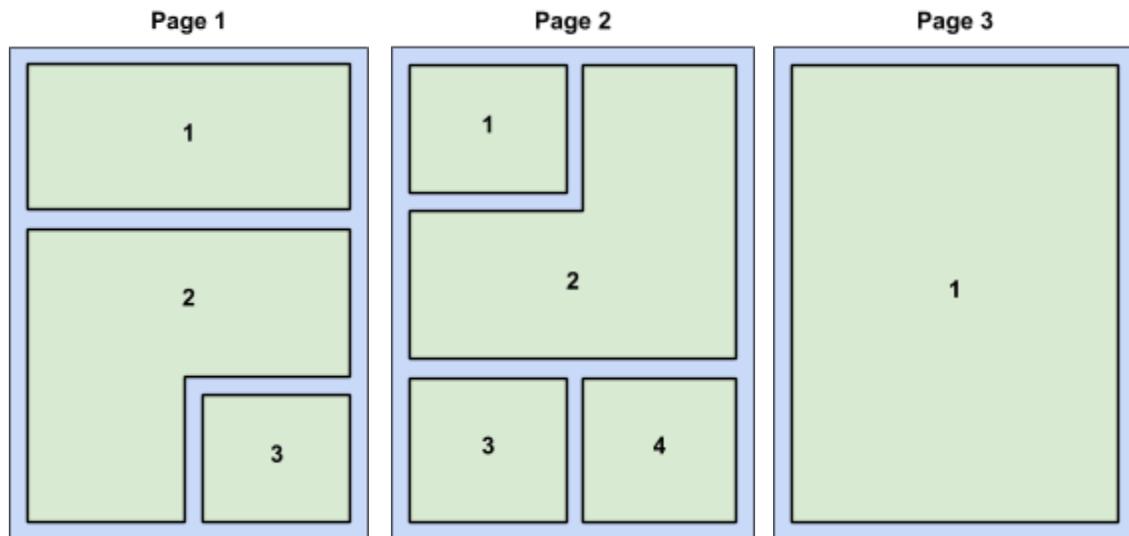
E-Corps is the all-powerful corporation behind emotion mining. Founded by Magdalene Duke along with her two friends Brenda Laurens (CFO) and Fredrick Jensen (COO), E-Corps has made, and continues to make, an obscene amount of money by mining the emotions of the poor and selling them to the rich.

Most of the subjects who are mined are selected as a “punishment,” deeming something that they’ve done as taxing to the economy or not contributing enough to the society as a whole. This is a method of enforcement used by the Caps to keep the working class in line.

An extremely small amount of subjects voluntarily request to be mined. Volunteers are usually those who have been diagnosed with terminal illness or reached a terribly dark place in their life. They are rewarded with a tiny percent of the profit, which seems grand to the volunteers but is barely pocket change in the eyes of E-Corps.

Subjects do not have any recollections of the mining process; even volunteers have trouble discerning whether or not it actually happened afterwards. They cannot feel the emotion that has been mined from them. Because emotions are not tangible, physical attributes, most people cannot recognize those who have been mined. Only close friends and/or family of the mined ever notice that they seem a bit off.

Walkthrough



All pages have a black border as the outline. Visuals inside the panels start off as pencil sketches and become bold colored drawings after the scene inside has been played through.

While in page layout, clicking on a panel selects it for play. You can only select a panel for play if the previous one has already been played through (unless it is the first one). You may replay panels that are already done at any time, but doing so will grey out all of the ones after it (e.g. on page 2, if panels 1-3 have been played through and you click on panel 1, panels 2 and 3 will become pencil sketches again).

All italicized text is inner thoughts and all dialogue is displayed in speech bubbles. River's speech is black text in white bubbles.

Page 1 Panel 1

An empty locker room.

River is standing in front of her locker, center-frame with her back towards us.

[You click on Panel 1.](#)

The camera zooms into the panel and rests behind River, so that it resembles a third-person camera view in an adventure RPG.

The environment fades into color and the sketch lines become bolder.

The locker room is brightly lit from the lines of little circular white lights on the ceiling neatly corresponding to the rows of full-sized lockers. The place is immaculate.

There are three clouds of golden particles, one on the small shelf and two on hooks (on either side) inside her locker. You won't be able to move River and interact with things in the environment until after these interactions are completed.

[You click on the first hook.](#)

River reaches towards the left hook and brings it to her right hip, clipping the small jingly wad of metal to her belt loop with a sturdy black carabiner.

Let's see. I've got my keys.

[You click on the shelf.](#)

She grabs the wallet and feels the fabric of the wallet where the leathery surface has worn off before putting it into the pockets of her jeans.

Anddd my wallet.

[You click on the other hook.](#)

River grabs her trusty navy blue bomber jacket. A translucent graphic of her dad giving a younger River the same jacket appears on the left side of the panel. Moving the mouse creates an effect that gives the 2D graphic some depth. It fades away when you use WASD to walk.

River snaps out of her nostalgic daze and slams the locker shut. You can walk around and explore the locker room. Exiting the locker room takes you to the main floor of the E-Corps building, which is also rather empty, since it's the end of the workday.

The main door has golden particles glowing from it. Going through it advances to the next panel.

[You go through the door.](#)

The frame is enveloped in the golden particles and when visuals fade back in, you are no longer inside the world of the panel. You're back on page one, the originally sketchy lines now bold and colored in.

Page 1 Panel 2

Outside the E-Corps building. River has the jacket slung over her shoulder. There are figures in the distance.

[You click on Panel 2.](#)

The figures fill with intricate details, becoming people with tailored suits and leather briefcases. They're talking amongst themselves next to their newly detailed cars, gesturing wildly and making overly dramatic facial expressions at each other. Their suits change colors each time someone does so.

The quiet sound of the automatic doors closing can be heard behind River. Facing them, you can see her tattered reflection on the eerily spotless glass. You are free to explore the area.

Walking closer to the group of people causes them to stop talking and look at River. They will continue to stare at her in silence until she is at least five meters away.

The particles light one end of the sidewalk about 40 meters away from the building. Walking towards this point and then looking back, you can see the 50-story E-Corps building looming behind River.

[You walk to the particles.](#)

Depending on how long you stayed near the group of people, the graphic of the panel will be slightly different. Staying for at least five seconds reveals a graphic with the same group of people staring at River from a distance. Staying for less shows them talking, seeming to not notice River at all.

Page 1 Panel 3

Close-up of a hand reaching for a door knob.

[You click on Panel 3.](#)

The camera zooms into the panel again, then back out following the arm connected to the hand. An old, yellowed off-white coat of paint fills the door. Some of the wood has splintered off the surface.

Moving the mouse allows you to look around but you can't walk. The door is surrounded by golden particles.

[You click on the door.](#)

River turns the knob on the front door, but it doesn't budge.

River: Ugh. Not again..

With the knob still turned, River places her shoulder on the door. A prompt appears to repeatedly click on the door.

[You click \(8239489086x\) on the door.](#)

River gives it a light push. She does it again. And again, each time with a little more force than the previous, until finally on the fifth try, the door agrees to unstick itself from the frame.

[You walk towards the door.](#)

The original sketch transforms into a colored graphic of River's hand on the knob and the side of her body forcing the door open.

Page 2 Panel 1

Shot of inside the house from the perspective of the doorway. There's a small table on the left immediately inside. Further in is the kitchen where a woman is standing with her back towards River.

[You click on Panel 1.](#)

The lights inside the house give off a yellowish tint. From River's position, you can see there is also a couch to the right a couple meters away from the small table, which has taken on a dark wooden finish. The woman in the kitchen looks small and frail. The house doesn't look like it'd be warm.

[You walk through the door.](#)

The door closes behind River. The sound of wind ceases. The wooden table to the left is glowing with golden particles.

[You click on the table.](#)

River puts her keys and wallet on the wobbly table and hangs her jacket up on a hook on the wall behind the door. After this animation has completed, you can move River again.

[You use WASD to move.](#)

As River is about to step forward, the woman swoops by in front of her, carrying a plate of bread to the dining table.

Mom: Oh good, you're home. I was worried we would have to start without you again.

Micah runs out from the bathroom, wiping his wet hands on his pants. When he sees River, his face glows with delight.

Micah: You're eating with us tonight!

He grabs a seat at the table and gestures for her to sit next to him. The chair is surrounded by golden particles.

You can explore the rest of the house before sitting down. Walking further away from the table causes Micah to sit quietly, running his fingers over the surface of the table tracing the patterns formed by the grainy wood. Going closer causes him to excitedly gesture towards the chair.

[You click on the chair.](#)

The original sketch is in color now.

Wide shot of River, Micah, and Mom eating dinner at the table. The kitchen is in the background.

[You click on Panel 2.](#)

The camera zooms into the panel and then behind River. Across the table is Mom. Micah is to her right. The bowl of broth and plate of bread have golden particles.

Conversation doesn't start until River either eats a bite of bread and takes a sip of the broth. After that, you can eat however much you want until the food is all gone.

[You click on the bread.](#)

River takes a bite of the stale toasted bread.

Micah: Did you have fun at work today?

River (*laughing*): I don't know if I would say "fun," but it was fine.

Mom: Have you found out if your new boss is going to let you have more regular hours?

River: She hasn't really told me anything yet. I think she's still letting me get settled in.

Mom: I see...

The conversation falls to a lull, with only the sound of sipping and struggled munching filling the room. Then, Mom looks up at River.

Mom: Oh! I almost forgot. I was able to pay off the hospital bills AND some of the rent we've missed with your last paycheck.

River: Oh good! I hope that'll keep the landlord happy for a while...

Mom: I'm sure it will...

Mom (*after a few moments of silence*): What do you do at your new job? I don't think you've told us.

Micah looks up from his almost empty bowl of soup, waiting to hear her answer.

Your options are: **Tell your family** or **Don't tell your family**. If you choose not to tell your family, you are prompted with two more options: **Lie** or **Don't tell**.

You click **Lie**.

A translucent graphic appears like the one in Page 1 Panel 1. This time it shows a first person view of River's hands signing a contract with a thick booklet on the side titled "E-Corps Employee Code of Conduct (Miner)."

River: I'm part of the quality control team of this corporation that provides products and services to better people's mental and physical health.

Mom: Oh wow. What kind of products and services?

River: I signed an NDA, so I'm not allowed to say.

Micah (*whispering*): You can tell me! I'm really good at keeping secrets. I swear.

River (*playfully*): Are you trying to get me fired??

Mom: An NDA? This sounds really... big. How'd you find this job?

Hearing that the conversation is steering back to a more serious note, Micah returns to finishing his meal.

River: Well, I knew you didn't like me working at the sealing* factory--

Mom (*with disgust*): Ugh, it's about time you left those capitalistic bastards.

River lets out a nervous laugh.

River: Right.. And they sent a recruiter there. I saw how well they paid and applied. I guess they liked me. So now, here I am.

Mom: Hmm. Why don't more people know about this job? I'm going to let Ben know that there's jobs like this. His daughter's been struggling, too.

Your options are: **Stop her** or **Let her tell Ben**.

You click **Stop her**.

River: It'd actually be better if you didn't...

Mom: Oh? Why not??

River: Well, the company's still gaining traction. The positions right now are super competitive. They said they're not looking to hire outside of who their recruitment team brings in. And... I just don't want Ben or his daughter to get their hopes up, you know?

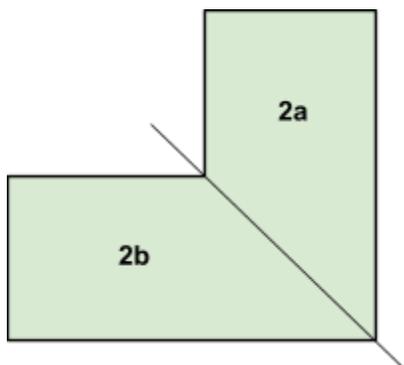
Mom: But it wouldn't hurt for them to just know about it, right?

River: Mmm, maybe later. Not now. I just started working here. And it pays well. I don't want to do anything that might get me fired, Mom.

Mom: Okay, okay. I'll bother you about it another time.
She smiles and pets River's hair. Her hand lingers on her face.

Mom: Your brother and I are very proud of you.

Micah: Ooh can you buy me a Robo-Pal? The newest one knows how to play tag!



After Micah's line, you are returned to the page layout. Panel 2 has been divided in half.

2a in this playthrough shows River at the dinner table telling Mom that she is part of the QC team for the company.

2b in this playthrough shows a concerned River telling Mom not to tell Ben.

Page 2 Panel 3

Aerial shot of River sprawled on the couch with a blanket covering most of her body.

[You click on Panel 3.](#)

Top left corner of the panel reads: The next morning...

The faded deep reddish brown of the couch seeps onto the page, along with the grey knit blanket that's slightly coming apart in one corner.

We stay in this aerial view of River, now a little tighter, seeing her from the waist up. She wakes up, hungover from the anxiety of last night's brief interrogation from Mom.

The camera moves and assumes its position just behind her head. Moving the mouse allows you to look around, peering at the closed bathroom door and the slightly cracked door leading Mom and Micah's bedroom. River lays there contemplating about whether or not she deserves a day off to celebrate the small victory.

Your options are: **Stay home** or **Go to work**.

[You click Go to work.](#)

She forces herself out of bed.

This is probably only the beginning of a war.

I should save my sick days for when I'll really need it.

The front door glows with golden particles. You can stay and look through the house. Staying for at least ten seconds causes Micah to come out from the bathroom, allowing River to have a short conversation with him and say goodbye.

[You click on the door.](#)

The panel of the aerial shot in full color fades into view.

Page 2 Panel 4

Empty locker room. Similar to Page 1 Panel 1, but tighter shot.

[You click on Panel 4.](#)

The locker room fades into color. River's locker is open. She's changed into her work uniform, an all-white ensemble of a polo shirt, dress pants, sneakers, and Wwatch.

The holographic screen on the locker door notifies her that her manager has requested to meet with her before she starts.

The exit glows with golden particles. You can look around the locker room before leaving.

[You exit the locker room.](#)

Color graphic fades in.

Page 3 Panel 1

River peering into a clear glass door. A figure sits behind a desk inside the room.

[You click on Panel 1.](#)

After the graphics settle in, the door glows with particles.

[You click on the door.](#)

River knocks on the door and hears a muffled "Come in!" from the woman on the other side, so she enters the room.

The spacious office is decorated in a minimalistic fashion, with no sign of clutter or mess anywhere. Her manager greets her with a smile from behind the desk and indicates that River should take a seat in one of the chairs in front.

[You click on the chair that's glowing.](#)

Manager: Hey, just wanted to check in with you. I hope you've gotten a good sense of the process by now?

River: Yeah! I think I've got the hang of it. Definitely took some getting used to.

Manager: Good! That's totally normal.

Her cheery demeanor suddenly shifts to a more serious tone.

Manager: Now, I understand that your family's been asking questions...

River (*nervously*): Yes but I followed the script!

Manager (*reassuring*): Don't worry, we know. And we've given you a small bonus for your cooperation.

She pauses, encouraging River to check her Wwatch. A prompt to hold Tab appears.

You hold Tab to look at the Wwatch.

A hologram projection appears from the watch. River sees that an additional week's worth of salary has been added to her account.

Maybe I can get Micah that Robo-Pal after all...

You let go of Tab.

The hologram disappears.

Manager: Keep up the good work.

You can now use WASD to move. The door is glowing again.

You go towards the door.

The final graphic differs based on previous choices made. In this playthrough, a graphic of River sitting across from her manager fades in. She is looking at the holographic display, eyes wide, jaw slightly open. Her manager looks pleased.

Final Summation

MINE is a story all about perspective, a topic painfully relevant in today's day and age. Views become distorted. Messages are lost in translation. In a time when polarizing beliefs are dividing us, this story seeks to root us in understanding each other, so that we can empathize even if we might not agree.

MINE combines the forms of graphic novel and video game, focusing not only on highly stylized visuals and compelling narrative arc in which comics tend to excel but also interactivity and replayability that the medium might lack.