

CAROLINA MOONSET

Reading Group Guide

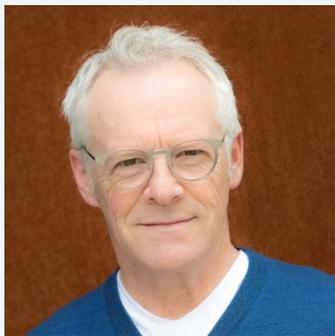
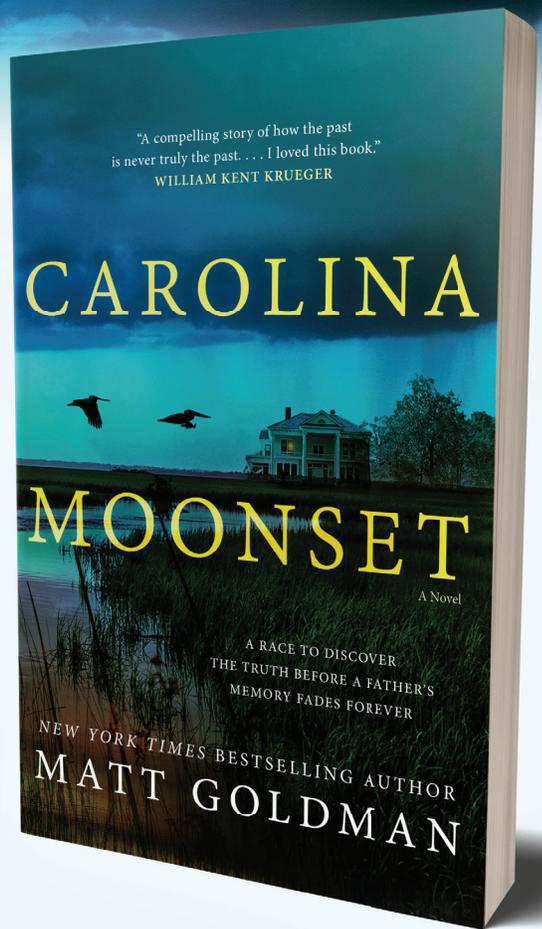


PHOTO BY LESLIE PARKER

New York Times bestselling author MATT GOLDMAN is a playwright and Emmy Award-winning television writer for *Seinfeld*, *Ellen*, and other shows. Goldman has been nominated for the Shamus and Nero Awards and was a Lariat Adult Fiction Reading List selection. He lives

in Minnesota with his wife, two dogs, two cats, and whichever children happen to be around.

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. At the center of *Carolina Moonset* are multiple murder mysteries. Who did you originally think the perpetrators were, and what did you think their motives were?
2. What makes Joey and Leela so compatible? What enables them to bring out the best in each other? What distinctions did you notice in their personalities and family histories?
3. What is the effect of seeing the storyline through Joey's eyes? How might the perceptions have been different if Leela or Ruby had narrated this tale?



4. How did your perceptions of Thomas and Gail Hammond shift when more of their past was revealed? Is money the root of their power, or is power the root of their wealth? How does Trip Patterson's fate illustrate the class divisions within their community?
5. How did Ruby and Lawrence endure the tragedies that were inflicted upon them? What kept them connected to their hometown, instead of seeking a new life outside the South, despite the systemic racism they faced?
6. Discuss the special qualities of Delphi, whom we see through the recollections of others. What might her life have been like if she had survived into the twenty-first century?
7. If you had been Joey, what would you have done with the antique pistol?
8. What does Roy Hammond's story show us about the nature of evil? Is he a product of his upbringing, or driven by his innate temperament, or both?
9. Though Joey's father, Marshall, has limited short-term memory because of Lewy Body Dementia, the memories of his youth stay sharply in focus. What does Joey learn about his father's lifelong traits and early experiences? How does this information shape their father-son relationship?
10. How does David respond to the anti-Semitism he encountered throughout his life? Does his role as an attorney offer him more protection against discrimination compared to other members of his family?
11. What does the novel reveal about the full spectrum of love and friendship? How does Virginia's perspective illuminate the diversity of human experience?
12. In the end, how does Marshall's legacy as a healer extend beyond his work as a physician?
13. In what ways does the town of Beaufort itself become a character in the novel? How do the beautiful yet dangerous waters there, along with the turbulent cultural history, shape the lives of the town's inhabitants? How is this reflected in the painting titled "Carolina Moonset" that Joey feared as a child? How is he ultimately transformed by that landscape after a lifetime in Chicago?
14. Matt Goldman is a master of suspense, creating the character of Nils Shapiro in an acclaimed detective series. How does *Carolina Moonset* enhance your experience of Goldman's previous work that you have read?

GUIDE WRITTEN BY AMY ROOT CLEMENTS

