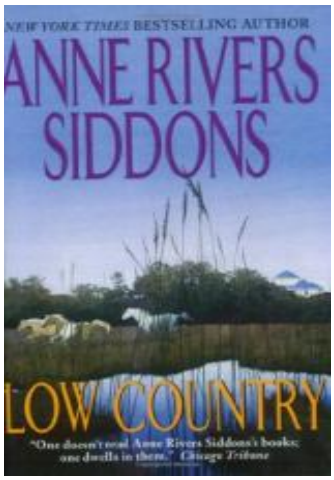
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Low Country

by Anne Rivers Siddons



About the Book

Caroline Venable has everything her Southern heritage promised: money, prestige, a powerful husband--and a predictable routine of country-club luncheons, cocktail parties, and dinners hosting her husband's wealthy friends, clients, and associates in his successful land-developing conglomerate.

To escape her stifling routine, Caro drinks a little too much. But her true solace is the Lowcountry island her beloved Granddaddy left her--an oasis of breathtaking beauty that is home to a band of wild ponies. When Caro learns that her husband must develop the island or lose the business, she is devastated. The Lowcountry is her heritage--and what will happen to the ponies whose spirit and freedom have captivated her since childhood?

Saving the island could cost Caroline more than she ever imagined. To succeed, she must confront the part of herself numbed by alcohol and careful avoidance--and shatter long-held ideals about her role in society, her marriage, and ultimately, herself.

Discussion Guide

1. What role does painting play in Caroline's life? What dictates her interest or ability to paint on a given day? How does her relationship to her painting change through the course of the novel?

2. Caroline's grandfather remarks to her, "No sense thinking we could keep this island to ourselves much longer, and I'd rather Clay looked after opening it up than anybody I know of. He's going to keep the spirit of it, and that's all I care about." Does Clay keep the spirit of the island intact? How has he betrayed his early vision? How do you think Caroline has managed not to notice for so many years?

3. What aspects of the Gullah culture and faith has Caroline adopted? How do the Gullah help Caro through her time of

trial? What role do the Gullah myths play in Caroline's life? What does it mean to "hear the panther?"

4. The Gullah are a dying culture in need of medicine and electricity. Do you think Clay's development plans answer any of the Gullahs' needs? Is it the best solution? How else might the Gullah be better served? How else might their culture be preserved?

5. What has brought Luis Cassells to Peacock Island? How would you characterize his initial opinion of Caroline? Is there an agenda behind his initial friendship toward her? How does that agenda change through the course of the novel? Luis describes himself as a coward. Do you agree with his assessment of himself? Why do you think his granddaughter, Lita, is so drawn towards Caro?

6. What role does Kylie's ghost play in the lives of Caroline and Clay? Why does Caro want to sever relations with Kylie's ghost? How is she able to do so?

7. Clay has deeply betrayed Caro by placing everything she holds dear in dire jeopardy. Do you think it is possible for them to salvage their marriage? How will Caroline's future differ from her early years of marriage? How has she grown?

Author Bio

THE GIRLS OF AUGUST is Anne Rivers Siddons's 19th novel. Her previous bestselling novels include BURNT MOUNTAIN, OFF SEASON, SWEETWATER CREEK, ISLANDS, NORA NORA, LOW COUNTRY, UP ISLAND, FAULT LINES, DOWNTOWN, HILL TOWNS, COLONY, OUTER BANKS, KING'S OAK, PEACHTREE ROAD, HOMEPLACE, FOX'S EARTH, THE HOUSE NEXT DOOR and HEARTBREAK HOTEL. She is also the author of a work of nonfiction, JOHN CHANCELLOR MAKES ME CRY. She and her husband, Heyward, split their time between their home in Charleston, SC and Brooklin, ME.

Critical Praise

"Delicate, compelling, full of real feeling and lush description. A treat. "

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