

POE LAKES GAZETTE

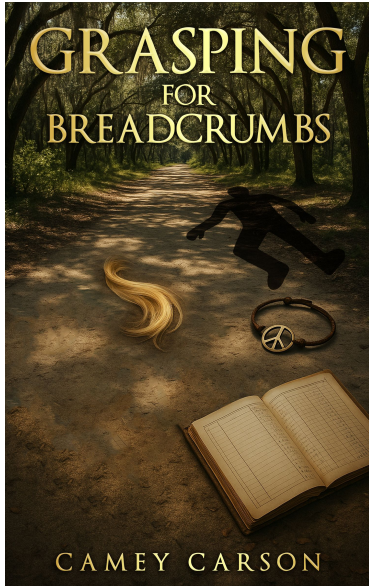
WEEKLY NEWS SINCE JANUARY 1870

Welcome to Poe Lakes Florida

By Camey Carson

Poe Lakes is a fictional, small-town set in north central Florida where Southern Hospitality reigns supreme, gossip spreads faster than a charging gator, and recipes are a Southern lady's favorite currency bartered for favors, traded for stories, and treasured like the family's sterling.

Pull up a rocking chair on the porch at the inn and join the fun, knowing that in this town, everyone will pass by you on Main Street at some point, and every secret—like a good casserole—bubbles up, eventually.



About Grasping for Breadcrumbs - Prequel One

A missing sister. A past that won't let go. A crossroads leading to salvation or lost humanity. [Grasping for Breadcrumbs](#) is a prequel to the upcoming modern-day Poe Lakes Mystery Series launching early in 2026.

About Prequel Two - A Very Merry Murder

It's December 1976, and John Adler, owner of First Lakes Bank, is a man who seems to have everything: a beautiful family, plenty of money, and more enemies than you can shake a stick at. When the banker is murdered at the Jingle and Jubilee Christmas Gala, local P.I. Jason Jenson works to solve the only murder in Poe Lakes since 1927. He and Sheriff Sonny Martin must trust each other to solve a case in which the sheriff has the authority to get things done, and Jason can track clues using inside information that others don't share with Sonny.

About The Upcoming Series

The series takes place in the present day and follows the story of Summer Lewis, who at 39 inherits everything from an aunt she never knew existed.

When the will is contested and the man who contests it is murdered on the steps of the laundromat she inherited, she must solve the mystery to make sure she isn't the one charged with the crime.

You'll find many of the characters from [Grasping for Breadcrumbs](#) in the modern-day stories, so keep reading to learn more about how their lives progress between 1976 and 2026.

The Secret in the Old Quilt - An Excerpt

By Camey Carson

Mrs. Henderson caught us on the walking trail with Apollo, Annalise's cat, trotting between us.

"Girls! Perfect timing. I need help sorting through Dorothy Marsh's things for the church sale, and that attic is hotter than sidewalks in July. Could you two help me bring some boxes down and go through what's in the furniture up there?"

Miss Dorothy had passed last winter, quiet and peaceful in her sleep at eighty-nine. She had no children, and her nephew in Tallahassee had signed everything over to the church.

"Yes, ma'am," we said together.

The Marsh house sat three streets over from the lake, a small concrete block home painted yellow with white shutters. Inside, it still smelled like it always had—lavender sachets and lemon furniture polish.

Mrs. Henderson pointed upstairs. "There's a wardrobe up there that's full. Could the two of you sort it and bring the items down? The men will take care of the furniture."

The attic stairs were narrow and steep. Apollo shot up ahead of us, his grey tabby tail disappearing into the dimness.

The Secret in the Old Quilt - Continued

The heat hit us like a wall. The attic ran the length of the house, crowded with boxes, an old dressmaker's dummy, a few chests of drawers, and a massive oak wardrobe. Even in the dim light from the attic bulb and the sun trying to filter through the one dirty window, you could see it was a beautifully crafted piece. Its wood grain, deepened over time, made it seem more majestic.

"The wardrobe doors opened smoothly, revealing beautifully hand-knitted sweaters and fabric in a variety of colors. We pulled these out, stacking them in a box, knowing they would bring good money for the church sale. As we worked, Apollo found something interesting—he pawed at the wardrobe's base, meowing insistently.

"What'd you find, boy?" Annalise crouched down.

A thread. Deep red, almost burgundy, caught under the bottom edge of the wardrobe. I pinched it between my fingers and pulled. Something clicked inside the wardrobe.

We both jumped back.

"What was that?" Annalise whispered.

I pulled the thread again, harder this time. Another click, and the bottom of the wardrobe shifted—just slightly, but enough to see it wasn't solid.

"It's got a false bottom," I breathed.

The base revealed a hidden drawer that dropped down slightly, allowing us to pull it open.

Inside lay a folded quilt.

It was smaller than a bedspread, more like something for a lap or to fold over the back of a chair. Even in the dim attic light, the colors were bright, not faded by time or the sunlight.

We carried the quilt and two of the smaller boxes downstairs, where the light was better.

Mrs. Henderson looked up from a box of costume jewelry. "What did you find?"

"Hidden compartment in the wardrobe," I said, spreading the quilt across the old kitchen table.

The three of us stared.

The top third showed pale blue fabric like the sky, along with pieces of brown and green cut and stitched to look like trees. The middle section was darker blue, which looked like water.

Under the blue section was more green cloth. Brown thread wound across it in a meandering line, and three small pink stars were stitched at intervals along that line.

Near the very bottom, the background was still green, with a quilted picnic shelter in the center—a peaked roof supported by six white pillars, three on each side. Inside the shelter, tiny brown rectangles suggested picnic tables.

"That's the lake," Annalise said slowly. "The middle part—that's Lake Lenore."

I traced the brown stitching with one finger. "This stitching doesn't look right, and yet, its winding pattern looks familiar."

"It's the trail," we said in unison.

"What about those stars?" Mrs. Henderson leaned closer, her reading glasses sliding down her nose.

The stars seemed carefully placed—one towards the Inn and Ferry, one in the middle near the picnic shelter, and one closer to the meeting hall at the other end of town.

"What if the stars signify something special?" Annalise asked. "You know, on the street maps, they sometimes designate highlighted locations?"

I looked up at Mrs. Henderson, asking, "Could we please take this to see what we can find in those parts of the trail? I promise we'll bring it back before the church sale."

She paused, and Annalise jumped in. "What if it points to something important? I'd like to see if we can find out what those stars might be."

Mrs. Henderson nodded slowly. "Okay, but you girls be careful with it and make sure I have it back by next Friday before the sale."

**Ready to Learn More about the Quilt's Secrets?
Grab the Complete The Secret in the Old Quilt Free - No Email Required**

Visit

CameyCarson.com/FreeShortStory

About The Author Camey Carson

Camey Carson writes cozy mysteries set among the lakes, springs, and pine forests of north central Florida.

She invites you to step into what seems like simpler times in small towns where everyone knows everyone's business, and they are willing to lend a hand.

In Poe Lakes, mysteries surround everything from casserole competitions to barbecues, football fandom, and fishing, so curl up with a cozy and see what happens in the next adventure.

For more information about Camey Carson, visit CameyCarson.com and join the mailing list to get bonus Poe Lakes lore and never miss a new release.

