

## ABOUT EDWARD FALCO

**EDWARD FALCO** is the author of the novel *Winter in Florida* as well as two collections of short stories: *Plato at Scratch Daniel's & Other Stories* and *Acid*. His stories have been published widely, including in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Playboy*, and *TriQuarterly*, and collected in the *Best American Short Stories* and the *Pushcart Prize*. *Sabbath Night in the Church of the Piranha: New & Selected Stories*, recently published by Unbridled Books, was selected as a June 2005 Book Sense Pick. Falco's literary and experimental hypertexts are taught in universities internationally, and his plays have been produced in Virginia and New York. He teaches at Virginia Tech University.

## MEET THE AUTHOR

Once, while hitchhiking somewhere upstate New York, I was given a ride by a guy with a collection of swords. The peripheral details are all gone: I have no idea where I was coming from or where I was going. I couldn't tell you when it happened, though it must have been around 1970, since those were the days I hitchhiked a good bit, in my late teens and early twenties. I remember that it was late and that there weren't many cars on the road, and that the ride started off pleasantly enough, though the driver was a little manic and talky, as if he'd been driving a long time and was jittery—but after we were on the road awhile, the swords came out. He had a collection of them in the back seat, and he'd twist around, practically climbing out of the driver's seat, to grab one, unsheathe it, and then explain how it was designed to kill or maim, while waving it in front of my face. Almost everything else about the memory is fuzzy now, except for those swords slicing through the air while I pushed myself as far back in the passenger's seat as possible. I don't remember how the ride ended, or what happened next. But those swords made a deep impression. Hitchhiking is dangerous; anything can happen. And that's where *Wolf Point* starts.

## ABOUT THE BOOK

In one of the fall's most suspenseful books, written by an author who critics and colleagues have long praised, Edward Falco tells the captivating story of Tom "T" Walker, a 57-year-old businessman whose life has been derailed by his poor judgment and the influence of his bitter ex-wife.

Feeling lost and quietly desperate, T decides to get away to a place he loved in his youth, a place of happy memories, and hope. He knows better than to pick up a beautiful young hitchhiker and her dangerous-looking boyfriend along the way, but he stops for them anyway. He's been living alone, in such utter isolation from everyone he has ever loved, that he welcomes the company and the excitement. But as T is pulled into the chaos of their world, he comes to see his own life in an altered and very troubling light. He'd like to make amends, figure out a way back into the fold. Forgive and be forgiven.

But first, he has to survive.

In this taut, dramatic literary thriller, and with his razor sharp prose, Edward Falco delivers the powerful tale of a man who realizes, perhaps too late, that he actually has something to live for.

“When I opened this book I didn’t know that I would be reading one of the best thrillers that I’d read in quite some time. . . . I plan to recommend this book to my favorite bibliophiles.”—**Andra Tracy, Out Word Bound Bookstore, Indianapolis**

“[A] taut, finely tuned story that will suck you in like a great film. . . .” —**Colin Rea, University of Oregon Bookstore**

“Beautiful, bold, heartbreaking and wise. It calls to mind the work of several contemporary masters--people like Richard Yates, Andre Dubus, Richard Bausch and Theodore Weesner--writers who never get in the way of their own stories, truth-tellers for whom the lives of their characters are the most important element of all. This is a major work by a writer who deserves legions of loving readers.”—**Steve Yarbrough**

## DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Shortly after T picks them up, Jenny proposes the "tell the truth" game. But it's impossible, since they know so little of each other, to ascertain who is being truthful in the game. As the novel unfolds, the reader faces the same problem as the characters reveal bits and pieces of their histories. How does this fuel the drama of the tale? Who *is* telling the truth? Or, is anyone? Does Jenny truly care about "T"?
2. Jenny tells T, "I come from trash, I don't meet people like you. Ever. Or if I do, all they've got for me is a sneer." [87] What's your sense of the way class shapes the story? Would the dynamic change if Jenny and Lester were middle-class kids who'd made a mess of things?
3. *Wolf Point* is full of parallels that let Falco explore themes from different angles. How does T's youthful affair with Carolyn Wald mirror his relationship with Jenny?
4. In another of the novel's many parallels, Jenny's uncle took sexually explicit photographs of her as a girl. Does the fact that Jenny has been victimized in this way shed any light on her relationship with T? How does T's recent devastating experience affect how he handles his relationship with Jenny?
6. How do you see Lester's position in the triangle?
7. If you were asked to write an alternative ending, what direction would it take?
8. What does the author seem to suggest are the roots to redemption?

## **SUGGESTED READING**

*Sabbath Night in the Church of the Piranha: New & Selected Stories* by Edward Falco

**Shelter from the Storm**, by Michael Mewshaw

*Outerbridge Reach*, by Robert Stone

*Blood Latitudes*, by William Harrison