

Doubting Thomas

Matthew Clark Davison

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Doubting Thomas is a harrowing novel in which Thomas, a gay teacher, is falsely accused of inappropriate touching.

Thomas is a fourth grade teacher at a prestigious private school. He is dedicated and well liked, and his teaching methods are innovative. But he's also recovering after his ex-lover, Manny, left when his work visa ran out.

After a fundraiser, a boy alleges that Thomas touched his pants in class. As liberal and as LGBTQ+ friendly as the school is, it renders Thomas a victim of the community he once loved. He loses his job and his best friend; he is forced to defend himself as he tries to rebuild his life. He struggles to determine who he is amid his losses, and he makes mistakes in the process of rediscovery.

Thomas is also faced with one brother's cancer diagnosis and other family complications. His brothers, Jake and James, are very different: James is an accomplished New York doctor; Jake is a recovering addict with a young son. Though their family is close, Thomas rebels against the old, acquiescent version of himself as he works through his anger about what's happened to him.

The book jumps time; its chapters cover a three-year period, but focus most on the period after Thomas is accused. Glimpses into his past add context to the story line, while Matthew Clark Davison's clear prose highlights Thomas's external challenges and internal struggles. After his troubling experiences, redemption comes only when Thomas is able to acknowledge and honor his own truths.

In the riveting novel *Doubting Thomas*, an ex-teacher learns about the dangers of masking who you are to appease others.

MONICA CARTER (May / June 2021)

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