

TEN TITLES TO PICK UP NOW

West of Sunset

By Stewart O'Nan

This fabulously dark novel imagines F. Scott Fitzgerald in his postprime scraping together a living as a Hollywood scriptwriter while Zelda languishes in a sanatorium.

Publishing

By Gail Godwin

If at first you don't succeed, keep writing, live in Europe for six years, marry twice, and earn a PhD. This memoir by the acclaimed, prolific novelist is testament to both her talent and her perseverance.

Refund

By Karen E. Bender

Each day Bender's cast of ordinary people struggle to make sense of their debts, their fears, and how to be satisfied with what they've got, in short stories that are both lean and expansive.

Descent

By Tim Johnston

On a family vacation in the Rockies, recent high school graduate Caitlin goes out for a run—and never returns, in this twisty thriller about a family grappling with loss.

The Encyclopedia of Trouble and Spaciousness

By Rebecca Solnit

From the Arctic to the Arab Spring, astute commentator and activist Solnit's finely wrought essays probe lofty issues in ways that make them feel intensely personal.

Almost Famous Women

By Megan Mayhew Bergman

The conjoined Hilton twins; Lucia, the dancing daughter of James Joyce; lesbian jazz musician Tiny Davis...just a few of the rough-cut gems of a bygone era revisited in these quasi-fictional tales.

Leaving Before the Rains Come

By Alexandra Fuller

The *Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight* memoirist returns with a devastating and deft account of how her youth in Zambia and Zimbabwe led to the joys and disasters that followed her into adulthood.

Vanessa and Her Sister

By Priya Parmar

Parmar inhabits the gilded "bohemian hinterland" of Virginia Woolf and her sister Vanessa, creating a vibrant fictional homage.

Lillian on Life

By Alison Jean Lester

Lester's novel about a tenacious, well-traveled heroine of a certain age is replete with the profound and comical observations of a vivacious spirit.

Honeydew

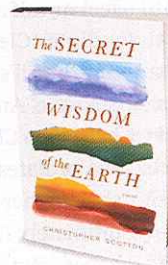
By Edith Pearlman

A generous collection of depth and sensitivity featuring a range of unusual characters, including an anorexic teen with an insect obsession.

—SARAH MEYER

THE CALL OF THE WILD

A boy's newfound bond with his grandfather offers a second chance.



A BRUTAL HATE CRIME and a hiking adventure gone wrong—one event leading to the next—fuel the action in **The Secret Wisdom of the Earth** (Grand Central), Christopher Scotton's pulse-quickening debut that has elements of such classics as *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Deliverance*. Set in the 1980s in the fictional Medgar, Kentucky (the town's name is an homage to the

civil-rights-era martyr Medgar Evers), the novel examines the animosities simmering in an impoverished coal-mining community caught between its ingrained traditions and threats from the outside world.

Reeling from a personal tragedy, 14-year-old Kevin Gillooly and his mother seek sanctuary with her father, Pops, a shrewd, avuncular veterinarian whom his fellow citizens often turn to for guidance. Kevin finds companionship in Buzzy, a half-wild teenage boy; together they roam the mountains and hollows that surround Medgar, exploring caves and canoeing lakes and basking in Pops's jokes and stories. But their idyll is interrupted by the murder of Mr. Paul, a family friend and gay businessman determined to protect the land from strip mining. In the aftermath, Pops decides to take the boys on a "tramp," a days-long wilderness trek that becomes a harrowing descent into Medgar's heart of darkness.

Scotton tempers his Gothic tale with poignant insights into the crushing weight of loss. In prose as biting as Pops's sour mash whiskey, *The Secret Wisdom of the Earth* melds beguiling characters with an urgent ecological message.

—HAMILTON CAIN

