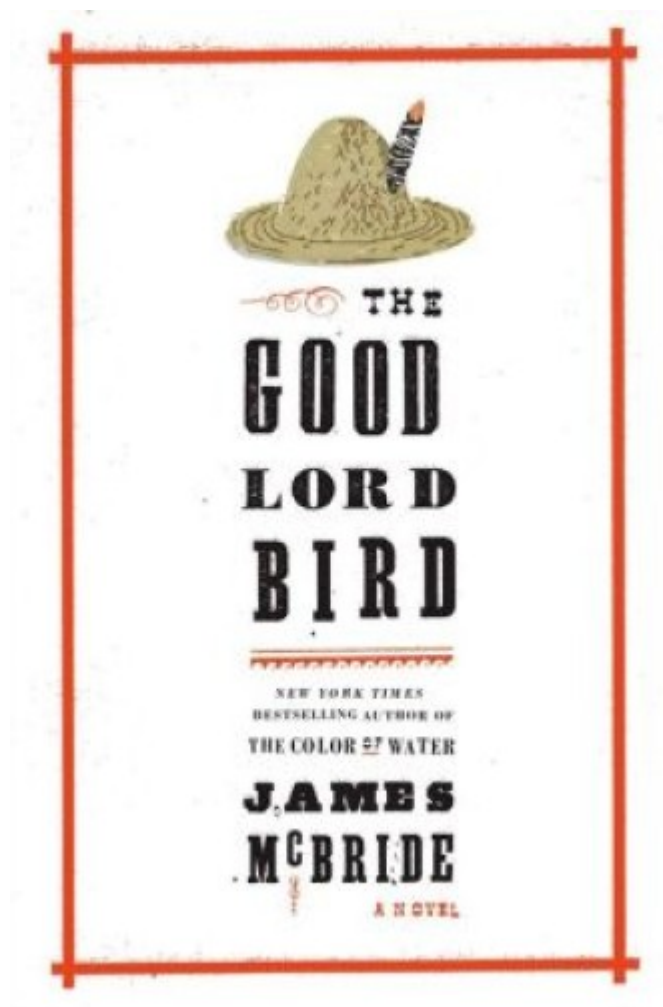


Fiction

selected by [Amy Frykholm](#) and [Janet Potter](#)

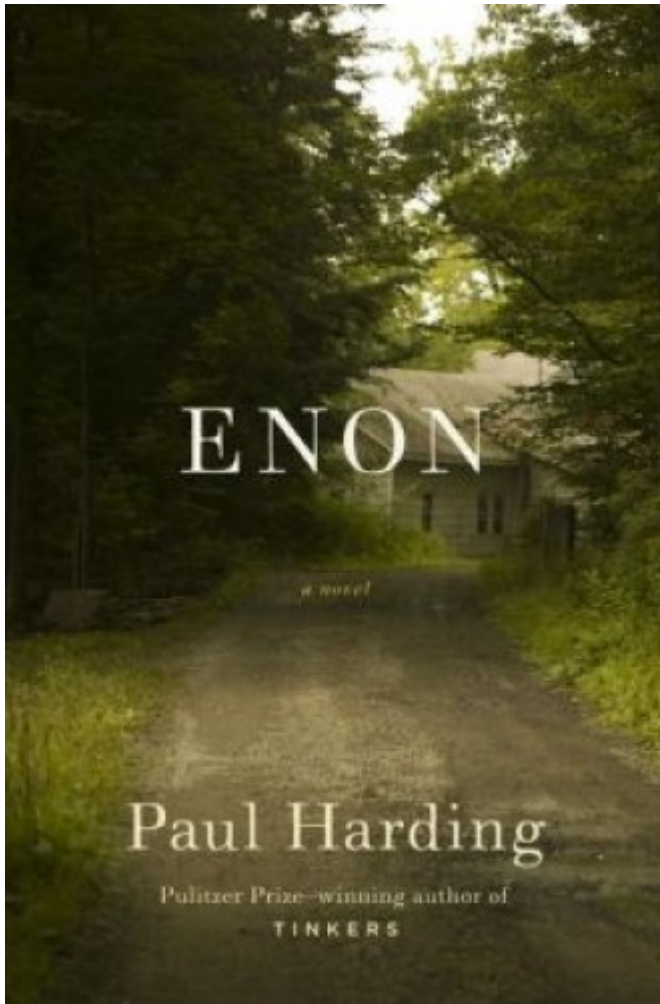
This review appears in the [December 11, 2013](#) issue.

In Review



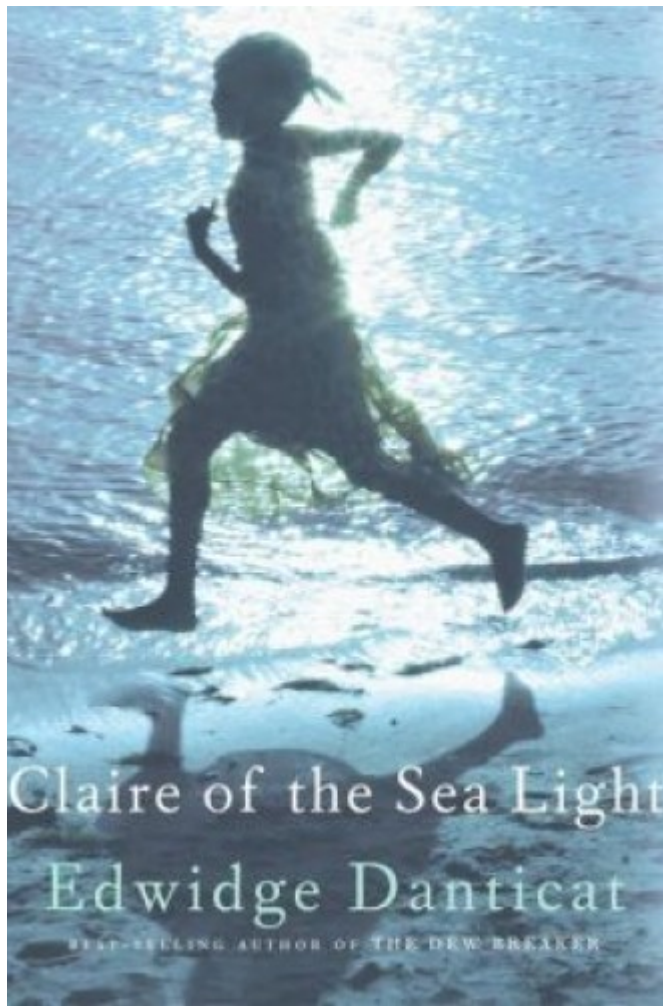
The Good Lord Bird

By James McBride
Riverhead Books



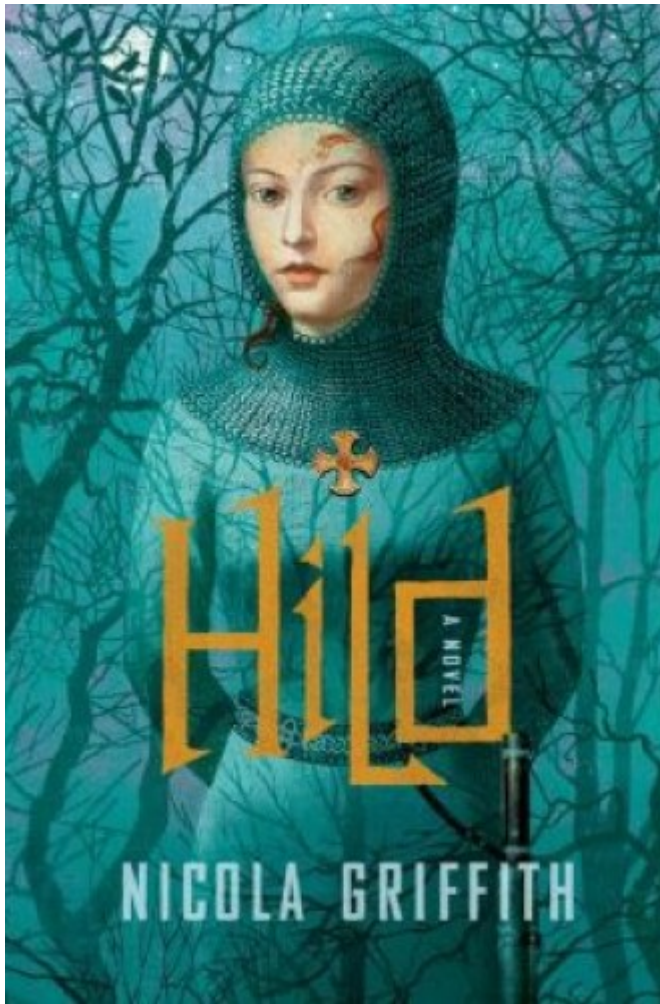
Enon

By Paul Harding
Random House



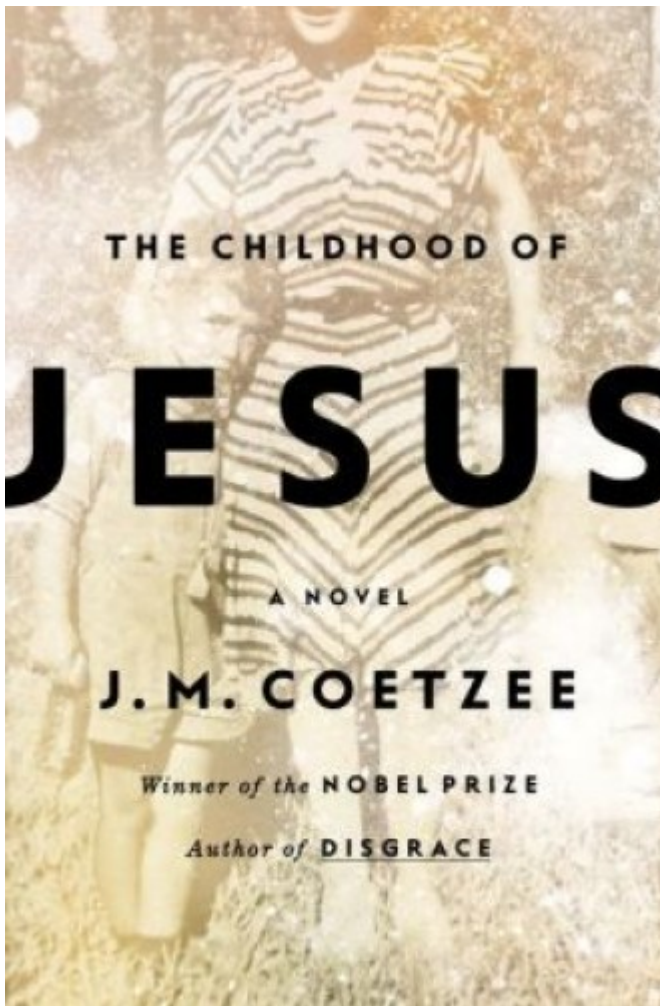
Claire of the Sea Light

By Edwidge Danticat
Knopf



Hild

By Edwidge Danticat
Knopf



The Childhood of Jesus

By J. M. Coetzee
Viking

The Good Lord Bird, by James McBride. The author of *The Color of Water* trails abolitionist revolutionary John Brown in this exploration of heroism and consequences. The tale is told through the eyes of a young slave, Onion, who assumes the role of girl and boy in search for his own social, sexual and political identity in the shadow of figures like Harriet Tubman and John Brown. The novel is a meditation on fanaticism and idealism, passion and meaningful action, rolled into an adventure story.

Enon, by Paul Harding. Following his 2009 debut novel *Tinkers*, the dark-horse winner of the Pulitzer Prize, Harding offers the story of Charlie Crosby, grandson of *Tinkers* protagonist George Crosby. Tracing the year in his life after the death of his

young daughter, Charlie faces the impossible necessity of moving forward with lost faith and a crumbling marriage. With the same profound, lyrical connection to New England's landscape and seasons that typified *Tinkers*, *Enon* is a raw account of loneliness and resilience.

Claire of the Sea Light, by Edwidge Danticat. In a little fishing village in Haiti called Ville Rose, a girl disappears on her seventh birthday. She has apparently run away, afraid that her father is about to give her away to one of the town's wealthier citizens. Her father and the woman whom he has chosen to be her new mother undertake a search. Danticat intertwines this story with the lives of villagers who live in the fragile space between earth, sky and sea.

Hild, by Nicola Griffith. This sweeping historical novel set in seventh-century Britain is about the young girl who will become St. Hilda of Whitby. In 664, Hilda hosted the Synod of Whitby, a debate between advocates for the Celtic and Roman churches that changed the course of British political and religious history. Hilda, one of the most powerful women in medieval history, was a child in the king's court when Christianity was first taking root.

The Childhood of Jesus, by J. M. Coetzee. Nobel Prize-winner Coetzee tells an allegorical story of a young boy and his guardian who come as refugees to a land where people live with good will as their highest ideal and yet are somehow colorless and lacking in humanity. Simón and David search for David's mother, while Simón is distressed by his new life in this semiutopian world. The identity of David is a central mystery in this very mysterious book.