

Southern Stories

Strong Southern roots connect four very different books.

BY KATE PARRISH

Late Migrations: A Natural History of Love and Loss by Margaret Renkl (Milkweed Editions) In her debut essay collection, Renkl takes readers from the riverbeds and back roads of her home state of Alabama to her backyard in Nashville today. The editor of Chapter 16, the daily literary publication of Humanities Tennessee, weaves together reflections on her own life—complicated parents, motherhood, loss—with rich observations of the natural world she finds all around her. *(Available July 9.)*

Stars of Alabama by Sean Dietrich (Thomas Nelson) Dietrich, better known as Sean of the South, returns this month with a story of survival and families that are anything but traditional. When teenage Marigold loses her baby in the forest, her world comes undone. Then local migrant workers find the baby and take her in, creating a new family alongside a widow they've befriended. As the characters' lives begin to intertwine, hope arises even as a world war approaches. *(Available July 9.)*

Home for Erring and Outcast Girls by Julie Kibler (Crown) Set in the early 1900s in Arlington, Texas, readers follow Lizzie and Mattie, two women whose friendship is born out of their shared experience of hardship and a desire for better. They meet at the Berachah Home, a refuge for prostitutes, addicts and unwed mothers. But their lives will soon lead them in opposite directions, and it will take a curious librarian a century later to piece their story back together. *(Available July 23.)*

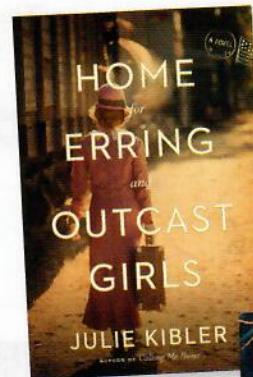
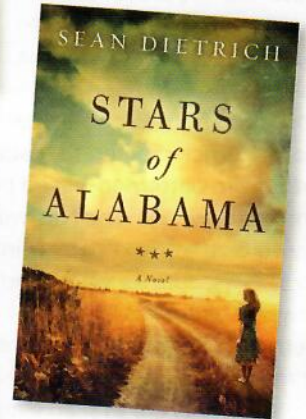
The Gone Dead by Chanelle Benz (Ecco) Billie's father, a renowned black poet, died when she was just four years old. Thirty years later, Billie finally returns to the South and to her father's secluded property in the Mississippi Delta. But a mysterious rumor about her surfaces almost immediately and threatens to put her in danger in a place weighed down by a history that can't be forgotten. *(Available now.)*



Margaret Renkl



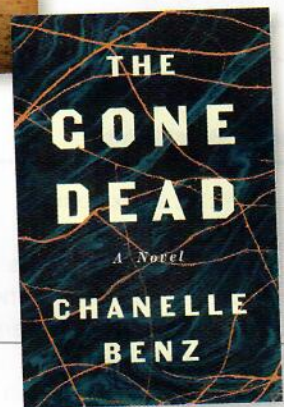
Sean Dietrich



Julie Kibler



Chanelle Benz



TUNES TO SPIN

Three albums to plug into this month. —Chris Parton

CLARE BOWEN

Clare Bowen

Nashville actress Clare Bowen tells her own dramatic life story on her self-titled album debut. Fluttering vocals and a sense of defiant optimism prevail as she opens up about a childhood cancer diagnosis and more, with a



guest appearance by Americana great (and Nashville alum) Buddy Miller.

JENNY TOLMAN

There Goes the Neighborhood

Nashville native Jenny Tolman taps a healthy imagination on *There Goes the Neighborhood* — a concept record relating the eccentricities of a fictional town called “Jennyville.” Wise-cracking characters,

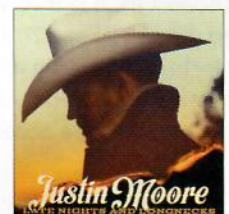


smart-aleck sass, and a rootsy stomp play like a cross between Dolly Parton and Brandy Clark.

JUSTIN MOORE

Late Nights and Longnecks

Justin Moore covers familiar country ground in his fifth studio album, *Late Nights and Longnecks*, but with an extra dose of edgy grit. Drinkin’ tunes and small-town sagas join baby-raisin’ ballads and tributes to first responders,



delivered with a tough-talking, but dynamic, Arkansas drawl.