

Editorial Reviews

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Terence Newcombe, “a man with two busted marriages and one gut-shot love,” is in the midst of a crisis. He’s a literature professor “with nothing original or relevant to teach,” an alcoholic who’s suddenly sober due to the death of his grad-student lover, a neglectful father, and a man still haunted by the death of his best friend at the age of 10. Looking to fill the hours he used to spend drinking, he decides to mount a campaign to win back the love of his son, thwart the mercenary intentions of his soon-to-be-divorced second wife, and take up rock climbing with his former drinking buddy, Lester. Alternately quoting Rilke, dragging his 19-year-old son to the circus a decade too late, and discussing with Lester their mutual marital woes while perched on top of the roof, Newcombe makes for a very entertaining narrator. Yet Silvis, wordsmith extraordinaire, also powerfully conveys the malaise of a man at midlife who has finally realized he has not been paying attention to the things that matter. —Joanne Wilkinson