



The Secret Wisdom of the Earth

By Christopher Scotton

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Timely and timeless, this is a dramatic and deeply moving novel about an act of violence in a small, Southern town and the repercussions that will forever change a young man's view of human cruelty and compassion.

After seeing the death of his younger brother in a terrible home accident, fourteen-year-old Kevin and his grieving mother are sent for the summer to live with Kevin's grandfather. In this peeled-paint coal town deep in Appalachia, Kevin quickly falls in with a half-wild hollow kid named Buzzy Fink who schools him in the mysteries and magnificence of the woods. The events of this fateful summer will affect the entire town of Medgar, Kentucky.

Medgar is beset by a massive mountaintop removal operation that is blowing up the hills and back filling the hollows. Kevin's grandfather and others in town attempt to rally the citizens against the "company" and its powerful owner to stop the plunder of their mountain heritage. When Buzzy witnesses a brutal hate crime, a sequence is set in play that tests Buzzy and Kevin to their absolute limits in an epic struggle for survival in the Kentucky mountains.

Redemptive and emotionally resonant, THE SECRET WISDOM OF THE EARTH is narrated by an adult Kevin looking back on the summer when he sloughed the coverings of a boy and took his first faltering steps as a man. His story is one with a rich cast of characters and an ambitious effort to reclaim a once great community.

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The Secret Wisdom of the Earth By Christopher Scotton Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

The Amazon Debut Spotlight of the Month, January 2015: This earnest debut is part coming of age story, part tale of redemption and part Greek myth played out in the holler. After the horrific death of his younger brother in an accident on the lawn, 14 year old Kevin Gillooly and his distraught mother seek healing in the rural Kentucky home of his grandfather. There, Kevin – who is suffering from survivor guilt at the very least – meets up with a local boy, Buzzy Fink; the two embark on the kind of Huck Finnish boyhood adventures – fishing, hunting, hanging out in the tree house – meant to be wholesome and soul-cleansing. But this rural Kentucky town is rife with bigotry and rage, and soon Kevin and Buzzy are drawn into local politics that involve a mountaintop clearing project and the death of a local gay man who had opposed it. There are unabashed good guys, like Kevin (who has a bit of a pyromaniacal tendency, which could have been more thoroughly developed) and his “Pops,” a gruff old man who charms with remarks like “I’ll take another bullet before I eat any more of this hospital slop.” There are some very very bad guys, like the townspeople who murders his neighbor because of his own not unexpected issues. And then there are the guys – like Buzzy and Kevin – who find their characters forged and burnished by one particular hike this particular summer, the summer “when we left the coverings of boy behind,” as Kevin puts it. Readers might recognize something in the tone and style and plot; take one virtuous man, one redneck town and two scrappy, interesting kids. Add in the narration by a boy now all grown up. And you’re just begging for comparisons to Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*. And yet, Scotton’s very earnestness, the obvious love he has for this particular bit of land, and the perfect ear for its youngsters’ dialogue (“She smiled at me and I almost lost breakfast”) make this novel his own. At once familiar and modern, it is always poetic and compelling. --Sara Nelson

Review

"A page turner featuring masculine challenges, bloodshed and stoic survival...Scotton's prose is colloquial and evocative; the descriptions are sharp, the voice down-to-earth...What [Scotton] should be congratulated on is his willingness to tell a new story in an old neighborhood, to draw characters who are thoroughly human, and to create a story that leads to terror and redemption, love and survival." *The New York Times Book Review*

"THE SECRET WISDOM OF THE EARTH is a marvelous debut...The setting, in the coal country of Appalachia, is rich in history and lore and tragedy. A young teenager comes of age under the wise counsel of his grandfather. An ugly murder haunts a small town. The story has everything a big, thick novel should have, and I hated to put it down." *John Grisham*

"How marvelous to start the year of reading with Christopher Scotton's big-hearted THE SECRET WISDOM OF THE EARTH...In the world created by Scotton, Appalachia is more than verdant or hardscrabble... Scotton writes with deep understanding about how the mines eventually got played out and the impact of mountaintop removal... Evil may defy understanding, but in that inquiry into evil, this lovely novel brings readers closer." *The Chicago Tribune*

"[A] pulse-quickenning debut...Scotton tempers his Gothic tale with poignant insights into the crushing weight of loss...THE SECRET WISDOM OF THE EARTH melds beguiling characters with an urgent ecological message." *O Magazine*

"The coming-of-age story is enriched by depictions of the earth's healing and redemptive power...makes for compelling reading when the action grows intense-managing, like the landscape it describes, to be simultaneously frightening and beautiful."?Publishers Weekly

"Gut-wrenching...A powerful epic of people and place, loss and love, reconciliation and redemption."?Kirkus (Starred Review)

"Scotton is a natural storyteller with a terrific knack for visiting trouble upon his characters and pushing them into confrontation...Not a page goes by without a threat, a promise, an action or a reckoning...expertly woven."?The Washington Post

"Christopher Scotton's first novel opens with such a grand sweep of language that I knew at once I was in the hands of a master storyteller. I was swept up in the drama of a boy watching his world come apart. The book is big as all get-out--human and warm, richly detailed, beautifully told, impossible to put down."?Mark Childress, author of Georgia Bottoms

"Astonishingly confident debut novel...a hugely powerful meditation on the deep cost of change...that will absolutely rivet his readers with an virtuoso combination of uplift and heartbreak. Writing careers don't begin any more promising than this."?Christian Science Monitor

"Solid, sometimes soaring debut...written in taut, propulsive prose...a big, old-fashioned yarn well worth the telling."?USA Today

"Violent and wonderfully tender...bittersweet...full of gorgeously rendered, intricately interwoven story threads...But it's Scotton's clear love of and respect for his subject--and his refusal to rely on cliches when describing Appalachia's humble people, their trials or their successes--that makes the novel so surprisingly uplifting at times, and profoundly rewarding."?San Francisco Gate

"Marvelous...Scotton writes with deep understanding...with a vivid but light touch."?News and Observer

"A deeply moving story about human cruelty and compassion...wonderful...This book reminded me a little of Harper Lee's 'To Kill a Mockingbird'"?The Oklahoman

"With its hardscrabble setting and cast of burdened characters hemmed in by seemingly insurmountable circumstances, Scotton's violent and wonderfully tender novel speaks not only to a bevy of America's centuries-old troubles but also to our frustrated yet ardent attempts at fixing them."?San Francisco Gate

"A masterpiece...Scotton sketches a rainbow of humanity...splendid and hopeful. Scotton's undeniable love and awe for this region shine through as he painstakingly portrays strokes of beauty in man and nature...The belief that everyone can make a difference in even the smallest of efforts shines optimism in the bleakest corners of the novel."?Shelf Awareness

"The debut novel from Christopher Scotton weaves the impacts of mountaintop removal mining into a poignant story of humanity and healing."?Appalachian Voices

About the Author

Christopher Scotton is an experienced public speaker, seminar leader, online marketer and technology entrepreneur. After a stint as a venture capitalist, he joined his third start-up, a computer-aided design (CAD) software company, where he is currently President and CEO. Scotton is a recognized expert and frequent

speaker on search engine marketing, search engine optimization, social media marketing and online lead generation.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jean Young:

Have you spare time to get a day? What do you do when you have considerably more or little spare time? Yes, you can choose the suitable activity intended for spend your time. Any person spent their spare time to take a move, shopping, or went to the Mall. How about open or even read a book allowed The Secret Wisdom of the Earth? Maybe it is for being best activity for you. You already know beside you can spend your time with your favorite's book, you can cleverer than before. Do you agree with its opinion or you have other opinion?

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