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## **A VISIT TO YAZOO**

*By Charles Neider*

*83 pp. Penguin Books*

Cruising at 90 MPH down the Eastern shore, Christopher Burbank's customized "special, all-American car" throws an engine rod and coasts into rustic Yazoo. In language alternately crisp and arch, Twain and Kafka scholar Charles Neider swiftly shapes this novella into a mordant parable of contemporary America. Burbank, a supercilious banker led by alcohol into compulsory "retirement," is isolated by his blustery self-importance and finds "a hollowness in his life which only trouble could fill." Broken-down, forced to settle for retooled machinery that sacrifices ostentation for efficiency, the callous egoist proves tragically ill-prepared for the roads that lie ahead.