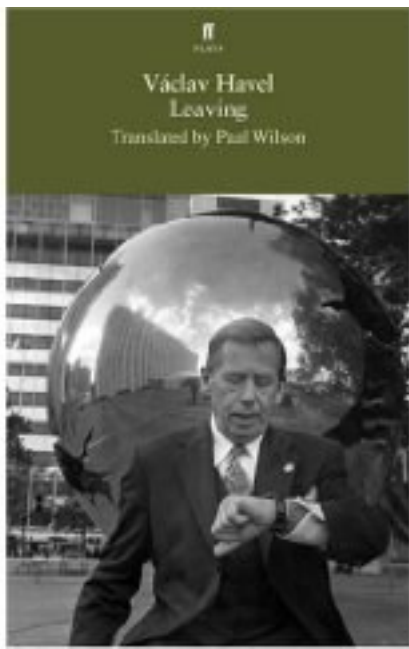


Leaving



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出版者: St Martins Pr

出版时间: 2003-4

装帧: Pap

isbn: 9780312302870

Winner of the Joseph Henry Jackson Award Pushcart Editors' Prize Nominee In 1959, newly-widowed and pregnant Ruby Washington and her thirteen-year-old half brother, Easton, board a bus in rural South Carolina, destined for Oakland, California. There, far from the violent events that forced her to flee her home, Ruby hopes to make a new life for her family. Ruby gives birth to a daughter, Lida, and strives to raise the girl and Easton. But as their Oakland neighborhood changes during the turbulent 1960s, the three are driven apart by forces that Ruby cannot control. Easton becomes involved with civil rights activism and the Black Panthers; Lida, keeping a hurtful family secret to herself, spirals into a cycle of dependency and denial. Finally, Lida's sons Love LeRoy and Li'l Pit must fend for themselves in the inhospitable streets of America, leaving one city for another, searching for a home. Centered around three generations of a family

and set against the larger dispossession of African Americans, "Leaving" is a blend of history and intimately-observed everyday life. A reader's guide to "Leaving" can be found at <http://www.stmartins.com/smp/leavingrgg.html>.

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