## Literary watcher weighs success as forecaster



REVIEW ladies and gentlemen. This is my Day of Reckoning.

Re me m be way back on May 20, when I ventured out on that literary limb? In ammed four not yet-published novels — Scott Turow's "Plending Guilty," Stephen Coonts "The Red Horseman," Jack Higgins "Thunder Point" and Barbim Kingsolver's "Pigs in Heaven," And I said we'd see each withem "on bestseller lists before summer's end."

'I then invited interested parties to check back here in September to see how my predictions went. There was the possibility, of course, that said interested parties might just get the chance to watch me eat my words.

So on this fateful day, do I find myself a condermed woman?

'Well, yes and no.

As it turned out, each novel did find a spot on either or both the New York Times and Publishers

Gather 'round, ladies and gen-ttemen. This is "By then, Turow's legal thriller, any Day of Reck-enjurg and the state of continuing appearance on each list for approximately 12 weeks. Ditto for Kingsolver's "Pigs in Heaven," a timely story about a struggle for custody of an adopted child.

struggle for custody of an adopted child.
Higgins' "Thunder Point," featuring his old hero, Brig. Charles Ferguson, had føred all right, appearing on one list or the other throughout the month of July. Coants' post-Sovlet "The Red Horseman" popped up on the NYT list for a short while toward the end of June.

Net forseman popped up on the MYT list for a short while toward the end of June. As the eternal optimist commented during his plunge from the tip-top of the Empire State Building: "All right, so far." You may remember that I didn't stop at forceasting beatself-erdom for each book by summer's end. Noocoo, not me. I went on to predict that these novels would make "some of the splashiest literary hits of 1993."

So much for yuitting when you're a head.

As I write this, you'll not find "Thunder Point" or "The Red Horseman" on either list.

"Pleading Guilty" has disappeared from the Publishers Weekly list and nas dropped out of the top in the New York Times.

If the think th

made it pest number 11.

In comparison, as of Sept. 1, Robert James Waller's senseation al seller, "The Bridges of Madison County," has been firmly enseeneed on the list some 50-plus weeks; John Grisham's "The Client" more than 20.

Laura Esquivel's offbeat "Like Water for Chocolate" also has held on to a spot in the top 15 formore than 20 weeks. (Although a place on the list doesn't indicate exactly the number of books sold in any given week, of course, it is usually safe to assume that if it has held to a top spot subtantially longer than another title, it has sold better in the long run.)

And so, here I am, nibbling on a word here and a word there, smiling sheepishly, and vowing never

ing sheepishly, and vowing never

to test my powers of prophecy in You really should keep an eye on Tom Clancy's "Without Remorse, though. Also, Larry McMurtry's Streets of Laredo." Many McMurtry's Caredo Laredo." Many McMurtry's Caredo Laredo. Many McMurtry's Caredo Laredo Lare

owntown Plymouth. The event will be co-sponsored by Poets & Victoria Diaz of Lious Interview of the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest You can leave a message for her Fund and the Lannan Foundation.

Twenty students will be invited



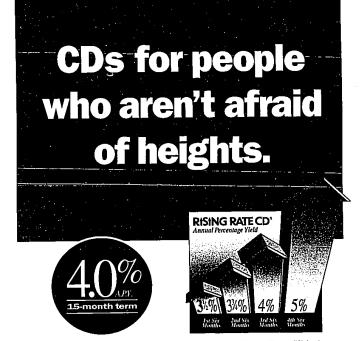


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