

# WRITER'S DIGEST

SELF-PUBLISHED

BOOK

AWARDS



ODD JOBS- A Novel

By Karl Meade

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. If you like Richard Russo, You'll love Karl Meade. Marty Drysdale is Canada's underclass antihero. This masterfully-written book includes characters lovable though loathsome and plot twists that kept me turning the page. The characters are highly crafted and relatable even in their most irksome moments. Meade paints them with a loving, indulgent hand. Even the most ruthless among them spark empathy and compassion on the part of the reader. Indeed, the often outre, always menacing minor players Donald and Fitz make this book a deeply satisfying read. It is no small task to depict petty criminals in all their flawed humanity, but Meade possesses a genius for seeing into human nature and depicting it on the page. The dialogue is on point and written with a keen ear for the natural rhythm and pace of conversation between and among this cast of shrewd smart alics. I love Marty's wry, self-deprecating observations. His world-weary tone at once encapsulates his intellect, his unimpassioned observation of life, and his lack of ambition.

I have a few, minor quibbles with this book. I think the violence committed by Donald is a bit gratuitous, and the penultimate scene (with the baby-blue faux-alligator purse full of cash)

drags on a bit. I found myself having to reread the part where Donald falls in order to picture it. Ultimately, it's a tightly controlled, choreographed scene but difficult to visualize straight through. This seems at odds with the fast clip of the previous 200+ pages. I felt as though I was living the experiences leading up to this scene, but I had to pull back and read this one repeatedly—like a recipe. Perhaps it was just overthought. I look forward to reading more work by this brilliant author.

— Judge's Citation, 27th Annual Writer's Digest Self-Published Book Awards