



Low Down Death Right Easy

J. David Osborne

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"It's about meth, fishing, trash American culture and young adult despair. Imagine a Raymond Carver or Jim Thompson for the text message age and that would only begin to get it."-Kris Saknussemm, author of Reverend America

Trapped in a rural Oklahoma town fueled by meth and doused in codeine, Arlo Clancy has made it his life's goal to keep his troubled younger brother, Sepp, out of prison. Poverty and the lure of easy drug money were pressure enough, before a gruesome discovery beneath the waters of their favorite fishing hole sent their lives into a tailspin. Torn by cowardice and conscience, the brothers make a fateful decision which will bring them ever-closer to Danny Ames-a vicious enforcer for the local meth trade-and a nightmare world where their only chance of escape might be...

LOW DOWN DEATH RIGHT EASY

"Working class fiction at its best."-Benjamin Whitmer, author of Pike

"A gritty tapestry of subversive drama the likes of which I'd compare to Harmony Korine's Gummo packed in with the terse lines of Bukowski."-Michael J. Seidlinger, author of My Pet Serial Killer

Low Down Death Right Easy Details

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From Reader Review Low Down Death Right Easy for online ebook

ABC Group says

J. David Osborne's latest novel is going to make you work. LDDRE is an easy read in terms of length of chapters as well as the overall narrative itself. Terse sentences leave a lot for the reader to weave together. This novel is a far cry from your basic sequential story.

Osborne's strength is his ability to write simple sentences that imbue the reader with a sense that each chapter is more like a short scene from a play. Dialogue is crisp. Character development is sparse, but not as subtle as I thought in the beginning. It wasn't until I finished the last few pages that I began to revisit earlier parts of the book and most things made sense.

Osborne has written a different type of noir. Ames is a drug addled murderous local enforcer. Arlo Clancy and his brother Sepp, two relatively normal guys, trying to make sense of lives unfulfilled. Arlo struggles through his marriage while Sepp attempts to live the straight and narrow. Their worlds come to loggerheads with one another, but only after a cast of junkies, bouncers and murders are introduced.

This was the challenge for me--the introduction of so many characters was hard to follow. It wasn't that the story itself was a challenge, it was the relevance placed in Ames, Arlo and Sepp that rendered others to wallflower territory. One of the least significant characters wound up being the main perpetrator in the story. This leaves me wondering if he was more relevant than I had thought, and maybe that's my call to make.

In the end, I must give props to Osborne for taking Bukowski-like sentences and packing them full of rich scenes. LDDRE was like reading a meth'd up version of *The Pillowman*. Osborne is a good writer, but you're going to work while reading this book. I do not recommend reading this book in your spare time. Two, maybe 3, sit down sessions will help streamline many of the details that are easy to forget. But, it will be worth your time.

Pedro Proença says

Holy fuck, this is amazing.

Steve Lowe says

Just a great, great book. JDO's Oklahoma setting is grimy and dirty and real and fantastic, as are the characters that inhabit the place, especially Danny Ames.

I love Danny Ames. He's more than a simple badass strongarm. He's got a momma and a little brother. Thomas was the good boy in the family, and Danny takes so much pride in that. When Thomas goes missing, Danny is hellbent on finding him. It becomes just as much of a search for the only good part of himself. Danny put Thomas through school, and let people know that whenever he could. But now Thomas is involved in some shady dealings, and Danny knows that his own bad influence is to blame. That he's just as responsible for Thomas's disappearance as those behind it. His pain is as much over losing his brother as it is

for being his mother's surviving son, the bad one that she failed at raising up right.

As the narrative goes on, Danny begins to lose teeth. One by one, they come loose and he nonchalantly spits them out. JDO doesn't bother explaining this, but he doesn't have to. For me, losing his teeth represents Danny's own rottenness. Danny's a violent man, so deep into drugs and their surrounding world that he can't see the other side anymore. And once Thomas goes missing, it's like the final piece of him that had any redeeming value is gone, and he begins to rot away.

J. David Osborne is in select company after this one. Sallis, Piccirilli, Donald Ray Pollock, JDO - all must-buys and must-reads from here on out. He's that good, and LDDRE is the proof. It reads like it was written by a young Cormac McCarthy who grew up in the age of cellphones. This isn't bluster, it's truth. I implore you to check it out and decide for yourself.

Rob says

J. David Osborne's second novel, *LOW DOWN DEATH RIGHT EASY*, is a compelling study of Middle American status quo poverty that doesn't miss the experiences that binds all people together. On its surface, *LOW DOWN* is a mashup of a murder mystery and revenge tale, acted out against a backdrop of petty criminality, human frailty and hazy surreality on a stage made of Oklahoma red dirt. Its characters are heroic also-rans, claiming triumphs in imperfect solutions and in whatever solace they can draw from those closest to them.

Osborne's greatest strengths are in his obsessive devotion to drawing the reader to what people are doing to rather than saying to one another and his bruising, choppy prose delivered in chapter microbursts. It is easy to imagine the Tarentinian dialogues that could be spun out of Osborne's tense plotting but the power in his prose comes from the awkward silences that swell in their absence. The lack of this excess verbiage leaves the reader on edge knowing that the smallest clump of words coming up in the sentence can end lives, change perspectives or contain one of the rare glimpses of beauty, love or peace that any of the characters may be fortunate enough to encounter.

There is something in *LOW DOWN* for anyone who is willing to descend, however briefly, into the flattened and scarred lives with which its story is concerned. Its themes -- family, loyalty, ambition, despair, love -- are timeless and don't compete with the plot for the reader's attention. They are seamlessly woven into its fabric as Osborne tangles with them in the creation of the plot rather than in its execution. Genre-transcending and smartly written.

David Agranoff says

Shooters in basketball never shoot 100%. Batters in baseball are considered amazing if they bat .300. What does it mean then that every single book that Swallowdown press the mutant literary children of Jeremy Robert Johnson has ruled. I mean 100% badass dark bizarro novels from the man himself, Cody Goodfellow, Forrest Armstrong and now two from J. David Osbourne.

The first one was bleak mind fucker about a Russian prison. Osbourne has chosen nother disney world local

full of sunshine and rainbows in the meth infused rural Oklahoma backwaters. This novel to me feels a bit like Gummo crossed with Winter's Bone.

I mean the McGuffin in this novel is a random decapitated human head found by the characters during a hand fishing trip. Yikes this is not the kinda place I would ever like to hang out. What makes it a readable experience is Osbourne's ability with the written word.

The prose is the special effect here. The characters and descriptions are sparse at times leaving alot to the readers to fill in. Other times random sentances over achieve in character and world building. No one will accuse JDO of over writing.

This book is a must for word smiths with a fondness for dark tone. Big thumbs up. Shooters in basketball never shoot 100%. Batters in baseball are considered amazing if they bat .300. What does it mean then that every single book that Swallowdown press the mutant literary children of Jeremy Robert Johnson has ruled. I mean 100% badass dark bizarro novels from the man himself, Cody Goodfellow, Forrest Armstrong and now two from J. David Osbourne.

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Edward says

Low Down Death Right Easy is a meandering, strange, dark trip with drug addicts, gangsters, and brothers that often times turns brutal and sad. I enjoyed Osborne's minimalist style a great deal, although there were quite a few times the prose was so skeletal that I wasn't sure what was happening in the scene. The ending for instance felt like the story just dropped off as if the author wasn't sure what else to say. There was also a scene in which Danny Ames has an altercation with some trailer trash drug dealers that I had to read twice to understand it. I still don't know what exactly happened. Aside from those things it's a good book. JDO's writing style is a little bit George Pelecanos and a little bit Chuck Pahlinuick. Minimalist, surreal, and gritty. I liked his short story collection better, but this is well worth your time.

R.A. Harris says

J D Osbourne is proving himself to be a strong voice in the torrent of 21st century media. I may write more on it in the future, but suffice to say, he uses language masterfully, his characters are all well thought out and believable; Danny Ames is one of the best/most interesting characters I have read about in a long while. If you enjoyed Osbourne's first book *By The Time We Leave Here, We'll Be Friends* then you already know how brilliant he is and you shouldn't even be hesitating to read this one. His prose is sparse, but packed with meaning and intent. I loved it. I look forward to the next book by him, and I'm sure you will too once you've read *Low Down Death Right Easy*.

Benoit Lelièvre says

I have to admire the wit and gracefulness in delivery here. *LDDRE* (for the initiates) is definitely a "working class tragedy" kind of noir, yet it doesn't come off as pompous and melodramatic as most of the genre's novels are. The reason is simple: J. David Osborne delivered his novel in a series of interlaced vignettes that each expose a crude and unpleasant reality that's both the motor and the inevitable endgame of *LDDRE*'s deceptively intricate plot. The fun and fast flowing structure of this novel keeps the heartbreak always raw and immediate.

I recognized a lot of where I grew up in this novel. The inevitability and finality of adult age in small towns. The fatality of being a good citizen vs. the mindless thrill of pursuing dangerous and ultimately meaningless fortune. The otherworldliness of drama. *LDDRE* is both powerful and accessible. Raw and real. I loved it.

Michael Seidlinger says

With *Low Down Death Right Easy*, J David Osborne catalogs the descent into the poverty line. There are voices, plenty of voices – like the voice that belongs to Danny Ames as he spits out teeth and searches far and wide for his missing brother. There's the voice of Arlo Clancy doing his best to stay straight – no more crime – but ultimately, their voices collide into a gritty tapestry of subversive drama the likes of which I'd compare to Harmony Korine's *Gummo* packed in with the short, terse lines of Bukowski all rolled up with death metal and other deadly beats.

It's the one spliff that you'll do well to light up and smoke until everything, even the impossible, seems muted, and downright easy.

Mark Eagleton says

Brothers. Younger brothers. Older ones. If you've got one then this novel is going leave you with a few gaping wounds you're going to be carrying around for a while. They're not going to heal quickly. Or at least that's how I felt when I closed this one.

What we've got here is the story of two sets of brothers in West Texas. Their lives are going to become tangled up in a net of drugs and murder and the question you're left with is - what can you do to protect someone who can't be protected from themselves?

You know that things aren't going to end well. You can feel it. It's in the writing. In the the pared to the bone prose that swallows you up and sets you down somewhere dark. Kind of like the lives these characters inhabit.

You know things aren't going to end well, but you want them to. You want good things to happen to them. For their futures to be different futures. For their decisions to be different decisions.

But for the people in this book there's no escaping those dark clouds that have been lurking on the horizon since the day they were born. It's like they've been waiting for it their whole lives. And now it's here and they're not surprised.

It was always going to happen.

That's how some lives are. A lot of lives. They don't end well and they were never going to end well. And sometimes you can try to make it different, you can do your best to change the course of someone you love, but people aren't boats. And even if they were the sea sure as shit ain't calm.

This is what it's like to watch someone you love fuck up. This is what it's like to not be able to do anything about it. You're just there in the aftermath, wondering if you did enough. But it's never really enough, is it? This is a book I'll be reading again. One of those books like Dennis Johnson's Angels I'll return to every couple of years just so I can reopen the wounds it gave me the first time. Some wounds are essential.

Ola Elnaggar says

I absolutely loved this book. This guy is the future, he's the evolution of fiction novels, taking writing to the next level. Every word in every sentence was accurately chosen, no matter how short the chapter may be, it's like bullseye, getting the point across. One sentence sets the atmosphere, the relationship between characters and the normal flow of events (and I'm using the word "normal" quite wrongly). It gets confusing because some important details might be overlooked in the first read, I found myself going back and forth a lot and actually when I finished it I skim read it a second time to connect some dots. There are still some unanswered questions and some things I need explaining but I realise that's not the point, as I believe they're that way for a reason.

If I were to describe this book in two words, it's "sweet torture". You'll laugh and cry reading this, you'll love and hate all the characters, the ambiguity will make your head spin but you won't be able to put it down. Unlike the characters of *BY THE TIME WE LEAVE HERE*, the characters of this book are lovable. No matter how bad, they still have a soft side. They're more real and relatable. Their dialogues and interactions are not heavily detailed, but he'll throw in a couple of words to let you know exactly how they feel about one another and it will be enough. Moments with Jen and Arlo or Daniel and his mother were just pure genius. I feel like I can't do it justice, it needs to be experienced. I fail to explain just how good it is as I lack the talent of writing, which is made more clear to me whenever I read anything by this guy... I just can't recommend him enough. Really can't wait to get *Black Gum*!

Ju\$tin says

read this on kindle unlimited. been reading a lot of garbage on KU lately so this was a breath of fresh air. it's a book i would like to own one day in paperback. third book i've read by J. David Osbourne. i thought this was a 3.75 stars. thought his book *Black Gum* was a 4.25 stars so i would recommend starting with that one. i didn't care much for the other one i read of his called 'Our Blood In Its Blind Circuit'.

negatives for *Low Down Death Right Easy* were that at times it was hard to follow and certain passages were weak or cuttable. positives were i thought lots of passages were well written or straight up brilliant. it's been a few days since i've read it and i've found myself remembering some of the scenes and smiling. would recommend.

Steven says

This is a tough novel to get a bead on initially because of its stylistics - I'll get to those shortly - but if you embrace them the novel really comes into its own at the end. Small town drug dealing is the milieu. And following two pairs of brothers through an arc is the story. Danny Ames, bouncer and enforcer, is a great conflicted character and ultimately it is his arc that makes this such a strong story. On the other hand, there is a bewildering amount of characters and names to keep track of, particularly at the beginning and I thought that really made it hard to settle in and get attached.

As for the stylistics, Osborne has taken some creative writing and screenplay chestnuts and maximized them: (1) *Show don't tell*; you are on your own here as he tells you nothing. There is a succession of scenes and you have to absorb them and figure things out as it progresses. (2) *Enter scenes at the last possible moment and exit them at the earliest possible moment*; many great scenes but you don't always know how or why the characters got there or what it means. (3) *Dialogue that is not on the nose*; the dialogue is total verisimilitude with the characters speaking as real people do when talking to someone who already knows what the conversation is about, with the result being that a lot of the dialogue does not move the story forward. This list could be expanded, but those three are enough to indicate how the reader must be willing to hang out without guidance and allow story and meaning to accumulate scene by scene without any explicit hand holding from the author. It is a screenplay style adapted to fiction and won't appeal to a lot of readers. Overall, I think Osborne does this style quite well. Fewer characters to keep track of would have made it exceptional, but too many characters, coupled with the oblique techniques, makes it all confusing early on. Saying you have to soldier through is not the best recommendation, but you will be rewarded.

Benjamin DeVos says

This book wasn't perfect, but the pace kept me engrossed, the characters were real, and I felt a lot of emotion while reading it. That, to me, is what makes a good book. I'm not usually a crime fiction reader, but when I am, it's crime fiction by J David Osborne.

B.R. Yeager says

A strange, creeping neo-noir. The hazy, blown out atmosphere, compelling characters, and punctuations of devastating, often surreal violence make BLOOD AND WATER feel like the pocket of a irreparably damaged world. Bleak, but frequently quite funny too.
