ForeWord Reviews

47 Rules of Highly Effective Bank Robbers
Troy Cook
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> *Tara started to panic … she closed her eyes and squeezed the trigger … Tara glanced over to Wyatt, hoping to see an amazed and proud dad. Instead, he was clenching his teeth, grimacing. His right shoe had a blackened hole in it and blood was escaping onto the floor.*

Because, in this flashback scene, Tara is only nine years old, the reader knows that this is no ordinary mystery. And since the reader knows who the bank robbers are—Wyatt and his daughter, Tara, who is twenty-two years old when the book takes place—the only mystery is how the pair has avoided capture for thirteen years. It must be those forty-seven rules that Wyatt created for Tara to train her in the proper way to rob a bank.

Each chapter opens with one of the rules, such as "Rule #16: Change your M.O. about as often as you change your underwear. No need to make things easy on the law." When Wyatt starts to kill people during the bank robberies, Tara decides that once they score their biggest heist, she is going to strike out on her own.

Problems multiply when Tara falls for Max, the son of the sheriff in the town where she and her father are going to pull off their big robbery. Fortunately for Tara, the guy is as tired as Tara is of living under daddy's wing, and he is more than ready for his own escape! If only Tara weren't being pursued by her now manic and jealous father. And if only her father wasn't being pursued by two equally crazy ex-partners. Thank goodness for the Vietnam Vet who is a veterinarian and, on occasion, a doctor.

The author, who has worked on eighty feature films, deftly forges several plotlines together in this debut novel, while creating characters that precariously walk the border between the believable and the absurd. The FBI agent in charge has a hankering for blood and gore; the local sheriff has tried to live a good life and be a good father to his motherless son by reading every self-help book he can find; and the lawless bank robber, Wyatt, earns the name Preacher because of his tirades about the unconscionable behavior of insurance companies.

This book definitely has a sense of the theater of the absurd. The reader is often unsure whether to cheer for the good guys, or to hope they end up behind bars. One thing is certain, though—the pages will keep turning just so the reader can see whether the sheriff will turn in his son, whether the only sane FBI agent will catch the bad guys, whether Tara and Max will ride off into the sunset to rob their own banks, or whether crazy Wyatt will have the last word.