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**ADVANCE QUOTES: *EVACUATION PLAN*, a novel from the hospice, Joe M. O'Connell**

“Joe O’Connell’s fictional screenwriter has one advantage over the real-life obituary writer, in that he’s able to meet the people he writes about before death asserts its tyranny. What we have in common, however, is something quite profound: We’re both dealing with death, but we’re writing about life. *Evacuation Plan* itself may be set in a hospice, but it is, in fact, a rich and compelling book of life.”

—**Joe Holley, *Washington Post* obituary writer**

“Here’s a book so rich with stories of the living, so filled with people’s bountiful problems, as well as incidents of wry forgiveness, one realizes over and over the circling forces of life’s completeness. It’s not a sad tale nor a needless feel-good account but a balanced, sometimes comic, affirmation of what is here and what we all know is waiting. *Evacuation Plan* is a book to ponder and to enjoy.”

—**Carolyn Osborn, Award-winning short story writer**

“In *Evacuation Plan* Joe O’Connell does for the process of dying what Sherwood Anderson did for middle America in *Winesburg, Ohio*—he shows us in brief flashes the aching beauty of the grotesque, and shows us how extraordinary small lives and quiet deaths can be. A heartbreaking collection of stories drawn together by the voice of the voyeur and interloper that is, in effect, all of us as we stand in fascinated witness to the one true inevitability in life.”

—**John Blair, Drue Heinz Literature Prize winning author of *American Standard***

“Writers are adventure mercenaries. That is, many of us approach any experience—mundane, horrific, embarrassing—with the question: can I get a good story out of this? O’Connell’s protagonist skillfully navigates under the guise of a writer seeking raw materials for his craft in the stories of the dying, but mines and refines instead the stuff we’re all made of. In this finely crafted novel, we come away with much more than the astute observation that many of the best stories begin at the end. But, then again, that notion is also worth a lot.”

—**Jesse Sublett, cancer survivor, rocker and author of *Never the Same Again***

“Reading *Evacuation Plan* is akin to unwrapping a series of small perfectly-chosen presents. Both human and humane, the book resembles a modern *Spoon River Anthology* with its vivid, touching glimpses into the lives of those in and around a hospice.”

—**Tim McCanlies, writer/director *Secondhand Lions*, writer *The Iron Giant***