



In a Pig's Eye

Robert Wright Campbell

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"How's it goin'?"..

"Up and down and 'round and 'round. You?"

"Sixes and sevens"

Plump blue-eyed Italian looking man drops dead right in front of red-haired Irish narrator Jimmy Flannery during their exercise class. Teddy's membership name is "Porky Pig", and his pockets hold no ID, yet old Italian lire "30 pieces of silver". First a police chief asks the newly elected ward rep for help, then says back off. Meanwhile, very pregnant wife Mary counsels pregnant poor teens in their 8th floor walkup. Always curious, Jimmy runs up against Chicago big boys--and an underworld warlord.

In a Pig's Eye Details

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Author : Robert Wright Campbell

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From Reader Review In a Pig's Eye for online ebook

Hans says

I intend to focus a bit more of my 2019 book reading away from the endless library shelves and closer to my overstocked home shelves. Though I'm reading this series because it was time to clear off a book from home. However, if you do the math, reading 10 books from the library to clear 1 book off my shelf points to the idea that maybe I should be limiting the series that I start right now.

Anyway, Jimmy's back and nosey as always. He's picking up some new tricks and character ticks as he starts to attend some night school classes.* Though perhaps I should let Jimmy take us all to school:

The next day I go down to the police property room at the Twelfth District station. There's a new man behind the counter. A Hispanic. I know better than to ask where the other cop--the one I know--is, because if you do that instead of acting like you're really happy to be having the chance to make a new acquaintance, then you take something away from the person in front of you. It's always better to ask for what you want and let them tell you they can't help you and then you ask them to help you get to the right place or person, which means they end up giving you a hand after all. Which makes them feel good. Which means they got your marker. Which means they'll remember you the next time you bump into one another.

This goes on with another part of the conversation that deserves a highlight: "I can't help you unless you tell me what it is you want," he says. // "You're my kind of man," I says. "No fooling around. Get right to the point." // "So do it and never mind the marmalade." // "Marmalade?" // "Most people just spread a little butter but you're all sweetness and light, ain't you? You got to go the extra mile. So you went the extra mile and I feel all gooey. So what is it?" // This man has had a bad night or the wife had a fight with him this morning or his dog peed in his shoe. Something.

*Oops...night school happens in book 9. Book 8 is an exercise class. Eh...I like my little review transition, so I'm leaving the error with this correction.

Helen says

pleasant Jimmy tale

Dave says

One of the great things about the Jimmy Flannery series is how Flannery narrates the stories in a down-home, folksy vernacular. The stories harken back to a time when we lived in actual neighborhoods and knew each other. Flannery works in the Chicago sewers but he is better known around town for doing favors Chicago-style as a cog in the old machine politics of a different era.

In this eighth novel in the series, there are no 600 pound gorillas, no alligators, and no crazy goats. Flannery has grown up a little. He now has a wife and a baby on the way. And he needs to get used to now having Chips Delvin's job as the warlord of the 27th.

Not a traditional mystery by any means. And none of that shoot em up, chase em down action. There's a mystery to be sure and Flannery figures it out by poking his nose where it don't belong and having conversations with folks. The magic of the storytelling here is not so much in narrating action scenes as it is establishing a certain world of neighborhoods and people doing favors.

Tom Buske says

All Jimmy Flannery books have the same basic plot. Jimmy finds a dead body and starts looking into it even though he is not a cop but a local Chicago politician. Along the way he gets favors from people, does favors for people on his way to a satisfactory conclusion. Campbell has a great ear for dialogue and gets the Chicago vibe perfectly. These books are all loads of fun.

An Odd1 says

"How's it goin'?"..

"Up and down and 'round and 'round. You?"

"Sixes and sevens" p 102.

"just keep putting one foot in front of the other" p 130.

"like Scarlet O'Hara .. I'll think about it tomorrow" p 131.

"you might bend the rules, steal a base, or come in through a back window if you can't get what you're after any other way, but I'd bet my life that you'd never break a promise or your word if you could help it" p 188.

"Somebody said that a man with bad grammar wasn't necessarily stupid, but a man without vocabulary couldn't appreciate anything subtler than a smack in the kisser" p 188.

Narrator hero Jimmy may heavily "ain't" and garble grammar, but his vocabulary is extensive, and he sure can solve mysteries. Is Theobald Tramontina really the Black Hand? Jimmy's personal life, including his very pregnant wife Mary, shows how caring and kind to all he is, letting her hold pre-natal classes for pregnant poor teens in their 8th floor walkup or his borrowed ward office, and their friends being other-gender folk.

Canavan says

☆☆☆☆
