

## Ways to Die in Tokyo

**Thomas Ran Garver.**

BookBaby

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*The gripping thriller Ways to Die in Tokyo follows a broken man as he tries to rebuild his family—and to survive Tokyo's criminal underground.*

An MMA fighter is embroiled in an attempted criminal organization coup in Thomas Ran Garver's tense thriller *Ways to Die in Tokyo*.

Hank Fisher lost himself in the pursuit of breaking out of the underground Tokyo fighting scene and becoming a legitimate mixed martial arts champion. As his losses stack up, and as his money disappears, his dreams fade. He can't even afford the private investigator he hired to find his family after his divorce. At rock bottom and with nowhere else to turn, Hank agrees to take on an outwardly simple job as a bodyguard for a yakuza gathering.

The gathering goes awry; Hank finds himself on the run in Tokyo. He failed to protect his client, and he winds up stealing a bag brimming with drug money. On top of all that, he's framed for murder. Hank is hunted by the police, the yakuza he failed to protect, and a man who hopes to throw the Tokyo underground into chaos. Hank has a dwindling supply of allies, and the only man he can turn to is an old foe.

The heart of the story is Hank's determination to rebuild his family, even though years have passed since it fell apart, and Hank has no idea where his ex-wife and his two sons are. Every choice he makes throughout the story is made in service of this goal. That firm dedication makes him a compelling lead, even when he puts innocent people in danger. In a standout dream scene, Hank grapples with the memories that led into his present troubles; these reminiscences are intriguing and insightful, showing how Hank's love for his family blinded him to painful truths.

Because Hank is a brusque narrator, the tender moments that he shares with a love interest have a softening effect. And in a wrenching twist of fate, he is forced to confront the reasons for his divorce and push toward personal growth, even though he's surrounded by corrupt, power-hungry people who impede him. The movement toward such revelations is suspenseful: the story is slow in ramping up to Hank's decision to accept the bodyguard job, and then doles out a series of violent deaths, increasing its excitement. Hank's attempts to survive when he has nowhere to turn are engrossing, putting him into contact with corrupt law enforcement officers and ambitious yakuza underlings, among others. The mystery of who is pulling the strings is resolved in an emotional and satisfying manner.

The gripping thriller *Ways to Die in Tokyo* follows a broken man as he tries to rebuild his family—and to survive Tokyo's criminal underground.

JOHN M. MURRAY (April 1, 2022)

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