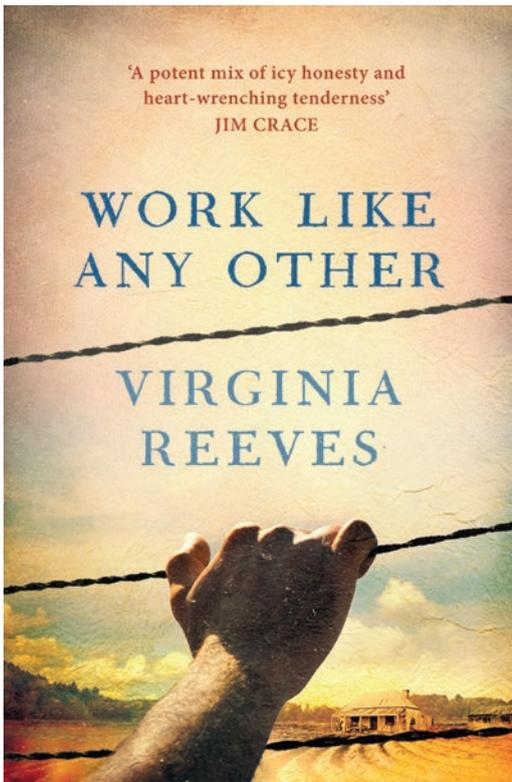


Reader's Guide



Work Like Any Other
is Virginia Reeves' first novel

Work Like Any Other Virginia Reeves

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About the author	Virginia Reeves is a graduate of the Michener Center for Writers at the University of Texas. Her fiction has appeared in <i>The Common</i> and <i>The Baltimore Review</i> and was shortlisted for the Tennessee Williams Fiction Contest and the Alexander Patterson Cappon Fiction Award. She spent most of her life in Montana, but now lives in Texas.
About the book	<p>Alabama, 1920s: Roscoe T. Martin is an electrician by trade. It's what he loves, where his talents lie. But when his wife, Marie, inherits her father's failing farm, he must give up his livelihood, at great cost to his sense of self, his marriage and his family.</p> <p>Realising he might lose them all, he starts siphoning electricity from the state power lines, ushering in a brief period of bounty and happiness. Then a young man is electrocuted on Roscoe's illegal lines and everything changes: Roscoe is arrested, the farm falls back into decay and Marie abandons him to face his twenty-year prison sentence alone.</p>
Discussion points	<p>When Roscoe is arrested, he thinks 'Marie, I did this for you'. How do you interpret this? And what does it reveal about Roscoe's character?</p> <p>Roscoe is incarcerated in the 1920's, almost a century ago. American society has changed significantly in that time, but has their prison system?</p> <p>Roscoe and Wilson get very different sentences for what they did. This is largely due to race – how much do you think this has changed in America today? Discuss Wilson's part in things: do you think he should have been punished? How you think Roscoe feels about Wilson at the end of the novel?</p> <p>Discuss the ending. What were you hoping would happen? Why do you think the author chose to resolve things this way?</p>
Themed reading	<p>Ray A. March <i>Alabama Bound: Forty-Five Years Inside a Prison System</i></p> <p>Michael Faraday <i>On the Various Forces of Nature</i></p> <p>Mary Ruth Graham <i>These Came Back: A Study of Alabama Parolees</i></p> <p>Neltje Blanchan <i>Birds Every Child Should Know</i></p> <p>Robert Perkinson <i>Texas Tough: The Rise of America's Prison Empire</i></p>
Useful links	<p>http://www.virginia-reeves.com/</p> <p>https://twitter.com/virginiareeves_</p> <p>http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/25814223-work-like-any-other</p>