



## Death By Choice

Masahiko Shimada, translated by Meredith McKinney

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**Category:** FICTION/Urban Life

**Extent:** 251 pages

**Size:** 216 X 140mm / 8.5 X 5.5

### Description

**A darkly comic tale of a young man's decision to take his own life and the unexpected twists and turns of his last seven days on earth.**

Yoshio Kita's hopelessness and lack of faith in his future as an ordinary and lonely company worker crystallizes into a decision to take his own life, in what he calls 'execution by Death by Choice'. His only remaining problem is how to spend both his remaining self-allocated seven days on earth and all his worldly money, in this darkly comic exploration of the cult of suicide in Japan, a country with one of the world's highest rates of suicide. From fine dining with a former porn actress to insuring his life, from pursuing his ex-girlfriend to an entanglement with an assassin, Yoshio's last seven days on earth take on unexpected twists and turns as Shimada asks his readers what it means to have the freedom to end your own life, and what becomes truly important when your days are numbered – even if it is by free choice.

Sensitively translated by Meredith McKinney, this tale of a very modern Japan is now for the first time available to English readers.

### Readership

Fans of Japanese literature, readers of suspense and contemporary fiction.

### About the Author

**Masahiko Shimada** is one of Japan's best-known and most prolific writers. He made his debut with his 1983 piece 'Yasahii sayoku no tame no Kiuukyoku' (The Cassation for the Soft Left-wingers), which was nominated for the prestigious Akutagawa Prize. His later novels have earned him a reputation as an author for the new generation, as well as critical acclaim – he has been awarded the Izumi Kyoka Prize (1992) and the Ito Sei Prize for Literature (2006), among others. One of his operatic librettos was adapted into the Werner Herzog film, 'Jr. Butterfly', in 2004.

**Meredith McKinney** received a PhD in Japanese Literature in 2002 from the Australian National University, where she is currently a visiting fellow. She lived in Kyoto for twenty years, teaching English literature and language at various universities and working as a freelance translator. Her main publications include translations of the Japanese classic 'The Pillow Book', as well as Soseki Natsume's 'Kusamakura' and 'Kokoru', for the Penguin Classics editions. Her translation of Yoshikichi Furui's 'Ravine and Other Stories' which won her the US-Japan Friendship Commission Translation Prize in 2000.

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