

In New Novel 'Gratuity Not Included' Ricardo Estrada Takes Readers on Compelling Journey of Young Adults in the Summer of 1978

NEW YORK, N.Y., March 11, 2014 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – "Gratuity Not Included" (ISBN: 978-0979675539), a new book authored by Ricardo Estrada, will strike a chord with any reader who has ever questioned best-laid plans, been inspired by love, or bound by loyalty.

Three years after high school graduation and after quitting college, childhood friends, Marcelo and Barry, are waiting tables at the popular Vineyard Restaurant in St. Petersburg, Fla. A year earlier, they'd made a pact to save and open their own place, but Barry's wasteful spending has derailed those plans.

One evening, Barry is captivated by Emily, a new waitress on vacation from her studies at Miami State. However, her eyes are set on Marcelo. Their lives soon intertwine in the summer of 1978 – a season that would bear rewards for heroism, the bliss of romantic love and the despair of insanity.

Marcelo's world is tossed upside down when his act of heroism propels him into the limelight. For his good deed, St. Petersburg showers him with cash for the business and the chance to return to college. He wonders if Barry was ever a good choice for a business partner.

While Emily and Marcelo's romance blooms, Emily ignores the reason for her summer in St. Petersburg: to pressure her widowed grandmother into a retirement home. She struggles to gauge her mother's agenda against her grandmother's right to run her life.

Barry, delusional and hallucinating, spirals into darkness. He flees the scene of a car accident, and the next day he is horrified to learn that a teenager is now dead. Bewildered, he leaves town and goes into hiding. Consumed by madness, he longs for the life he left behind.

The novel is a dramatic, yet humorous read that brings levity to the serious topic of mental illness. It's sure to compel the reader from beginning to end. "Gratuity Not Included" demonstrates that destiny is a myth, people build their own prisons, and hold the key to their future.

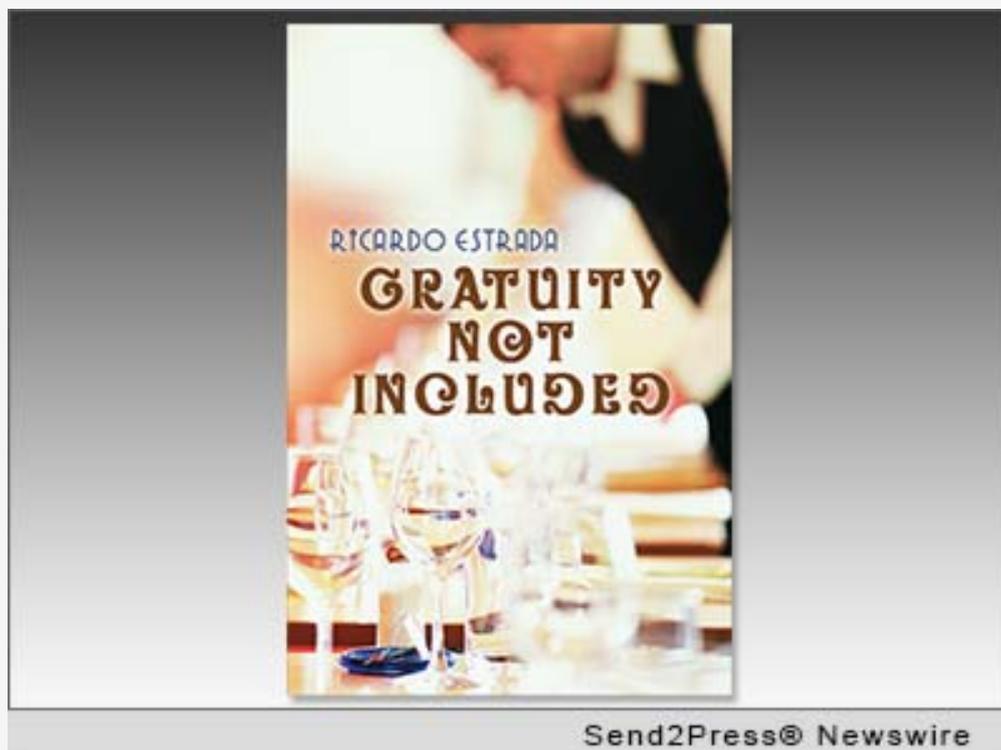
About the Author:

Born in Lima, Peru, Ricardo grew up in St. Petersburg, Fla. His inspiration for "Gratuity Not Included" came from a combination of his restaurant work during college and his experience as a psychotherapist. He lives in New York City and is currently at work on his third book.

“Gratuity Not included” is available in paperback for \$15 and in Kindle or Nook versions for \$7.99. For contact details, review copies, photos and a complete author biography, visit: <http://ricardoestrada.net/>.

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