

[PDF] Trauma Junkie: Memoirs Of An Emergency Flight Nurse

Janice Hudson - pdf download free book

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Author: Janice Hudson

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Description:

Is there an afterlife? Janice Hudson, who's seen her share of death, ventures an assuring yes in this memoir about her years as a trauma nurse.

In May 1987, newlywed intensive-care nurse Hudson was recruited to join a helicopter ambulance service and "fly out to accidents, scrape up the patients and try to get them to qualified care in that first 'golden hour,' when they'd have the best chance for meaningful survival after traumatic injuries." The possibilities for traumatic injury are, of course, legion. Hudson hits on the usual suspects: barroom brawls, failed suicide attempts, and grisly car wrecks. She also recounts what are likely to be some of the more unusual cases in the annals of emergency medicine, including a call

from a woman who insisted that her mountaintop home was being overrun by an army of mountain lions (which turned out to be a single housecat, amplified thanks to the caller's diet of alcohol and crystal meth). Death is a constant in her pages (and death itself isn't so bad, she observes: "It's the circumstances that are tragic"). But so is Hudson's belief that something interesting awaits us afterward, as a few of her eerie anecdotes attest.

Doctors' and medical researchers' memoirs are many; those of nurses are comparatively few. Well written and thoughtful, Hudson's is a welcome addition to that small literature--though it's definitely not for the squeamish. --*Gregory McNamee* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

From Publishers Weekly Devotees of medical adventures will enjoy this exciting and well-written account of the 10 years the author spent as a flight nurse for CALSTAR (California Shock/Trauma Air Rescue), a helicopter ambulance service based in the San Francisco Bay Area. Drawing on a journal she kept to help herself cope with the stress of dealing with so many critically wounded victims, Hudson describes the dramatic rescues she participated in daily. She worked 24-hour shifts with a second nurse and a pilot; crew members worked, ate and slept together and developed strong bonds based on the quick decisions they had to make to save lives and the heartbreak they sometimes shared. Many of the calls were to the sites of automobile accidents where severely injured people had to be stabilized and airlifted to the nearest trauma center. Hudson relates the story of "amazing Jim," who survived against the odds after she and her colleague worked with firefighters for hours to remove him from the wreckage of a tanker trailer. In other cases, death was unavoidable. Hudson and her crew were called to remove a five-year-old girl from a car crash caused by a parent who was driving drunk. After their patient died, the two nurses also struggled unsuccessfully to save the life of the girl's infant brother, who had been thrown from the wreckage. Despite such sad moments, Hudson, who now works as a nurse anesthetist, has fond memories of her former life on the edge, and she shares them vividly with readers. Color photos.

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