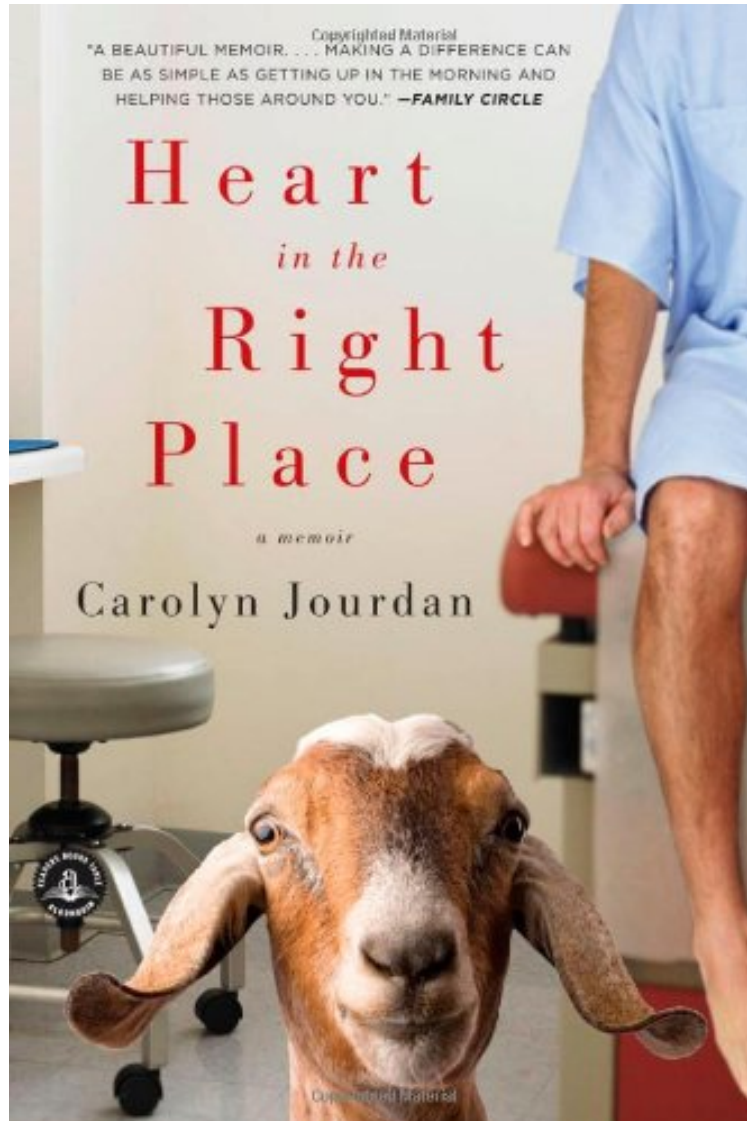


(Read now) Heart in the Right Place: A Memoir

Heart in the Right Place: A Memoir

Carolyn Jourdan

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Carolyn Jourdan : Heart in the Right Place: A Memoir before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Heart in the Right Place: A Memoir:

18 of 18 people found the following review helpful. You Will Love This BookBy Deborah HawkinsI can't say how much I love this book. My family is from upper East Tennessee; and although I grew up in Chattanooga, which is closer to Atlanta, as a child I spent so much time visiting this area between Knoxville and the Virginia border. The author has done the most fantastic job of creating the people of this area, their eccentricities, they wonderful hearts,

and their view of the outside world. Through them, Ms. Jourdan makes you cry, makes you laugh, and makes you think about what really matters in life. Compassion and respect for others are the hallmarks of Ms. Jourdan's memoir. She leaves the compassionless legal-political world of Washington, D.C. for her father's rural medical practice where patients, even those who can't pay, are never turned away yet are never deprived of their dignity. What begins as a three-day temp job to cover for her seriously ill mother becomes a much longer opportunity for the author to reconnect with her roots and to reexamine the meaning of her own life. Her account is always honest and never sentimental; and Ms. Jourdan makes the reader feel, along with her, the strength of the competing forces in her life. Does she go back to D.C. or does she stay in Tennessee? The resolution of her dilemma is heroic and authentic. This book is funny, sad, tender, and compassionate. There are so few books that I know I will read again, but *Heart in the Right Place* is at the head of my list. You will love every minute you spend with this book.

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Real-life, Funny, Sad, and Beautiful Stories: Great for those who love *Call the Midwife*! By A. Ransom I recently re-read this book for an online book club and was reminded of just how wonderful it was. Anyone who likes *Call The Midwife* will love this memoir full of stories of the hard and the beautiful stuff of life. (But the writing is much, much better than the *Midwife* books.) I grew up in East Tennessee, the daughter of a small-town doctor, and I left to fulfill my dream of living overseas. Carolyn's story of coming home to East TN to help out in her doctor father's office were so personal for me. She gets it exactly right, what it's like to come home to a small town where everyone knows your business, what it's like to live in a community of colorful characters who take care of each other, what it's like to struggle with your identity when your roots are so deep in one place yet you have traveled and become so much more than your small town can offer. She writes with honesty and love about a people who are often maligned or treated as ignorant, and you will leave this book knowing so much more about Southern Appalachian culture than you ever could learn from TV or movies. But you don't have to be from East Tennessee, or even a small town, to enjoy this book. The characters will make you laugh out loud (and sob out loud, too). Carolyn's honest self-disclosure will be sure to resonate with some part of your own story, and you will be all the better for having read this book and thought about what it means to truly serve people and do something meaningful with your life. I highly recommend this book for anyone looking for an entertaining, thoughtful, and poignant read. You will get an intimate look into a community, a family, and your own heart. Also, you will probably have to explain to anyone in the same room with you what on earth is funny enough to make you laugh out loud in the middle of reading it!

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Deep heart decisions... By Gems4Yeshua When life happens and you must revamp all you know to the unfamiliar, that's when you find out who you really are. The change from Washington DC to the small doctor's office where you don't understand all that is happening right in front of your eyes can be a huge change in your life perspectives. A good dose of reality can happen to you in these circumstances. I loved the heart surgery! What a way to gain real understanding of life in an unusual way. I loved all the character descriptions and the detail used to describe her perceptions of situations as they happened. A wonderful read!

Carolyn Jourdan, an attorney on Capitol Hill, thought she had it made. But when her mother has a heart attack, she returns home to the Tennessee mountains, where her father is a country doctor and her mother works as his receptionist. Jourdan offers to fill in for her mother until she gets better. But days turn into weeks as she trades her suits for scrubs and finds herself following hazmat regulations for cleaning up bodily fluids; maintaining composure when confronted with a splinter the size of a steak knife; and tending to the loquacious Miss Hiawatha, whose daily doctor visits are never billed. Most important, though, she comes to understand what her caring and patient father means to her close-knit community. With great humor and great tenderness, *Heart in the Right Place* shows that some of our biggest heroes are the ones living right beside us.

From Publishers Weekly Starred . Former U.S. Senate counsel Jourdan writes of giving up her fast-paced life in Washington to work in her father's family medical practice office in east Tennessee. "For forty years, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week," she writes, "Momma and Daddy ran a homemade, low paid 911 service for a large rural community. There was no such thing as a day off, ever." When her mother had a heart attack, leaving the front desk unmanned, Jourdan returned home to help keep the area's only doctor's office afloat while she recovered. What began as a two-day stay stretched out indefinitely, forcing Jourdan to learn to "calmly register nice people with hard jobs who routinely came in covered in hog or chicken blood." Missing Washington, she wrestles with questions of courage and loyalty, belonging and identity, and living with meaning and purpose. The demands of her new job test her, from the drama of triaging the waiting room and the tedium of negotiating the Medicare coding system to the loss of several favorite patients. In the end, she finds that she is after all her parents' daughter, possessing strength that earned her mother the nickname "Sarge," as well as her father's selfless devotion to this working-poor community. Jourdan's dispatches from the reception desk make for a stirring, beautiful memoir that is alternately hilarious and heartbreaking, and ultimately a triumph. (June) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist One day she's hearing congressional testimony and attending black-tie fund-raisers, the next she's filing Medicare forms and mopping up bodily fluids. As the [...] child of a country doctor and his

receptionist wife, Jourdan respected her parents' selfless commitment of caring for the disenfranchised people of east Tennessee, but she reveled in her glitzy life as a superstar lawyer in Washington, DC. When her mother suffered a heart attack, however, Jourdan was called home to help out for a "few days" that quickly turned into weeks, then months. Faced with the dilemma of forsaking a high-powered career that could influence matters on a national level for a menial job that directly affected the lives of one small town, Jourdan was surprised to discover that sometimes the greater good can best be served one person at a time. With lavish affection, genuine respect, and exuberant humor, Jourdan offers a zestfully compassionate portrait of a poor community rich in the ways of true humanity. Carol Haggas Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "[A]n absolute delight of a book: warm, funny and written with great heart and understanding." Howard Shirley, BookPage