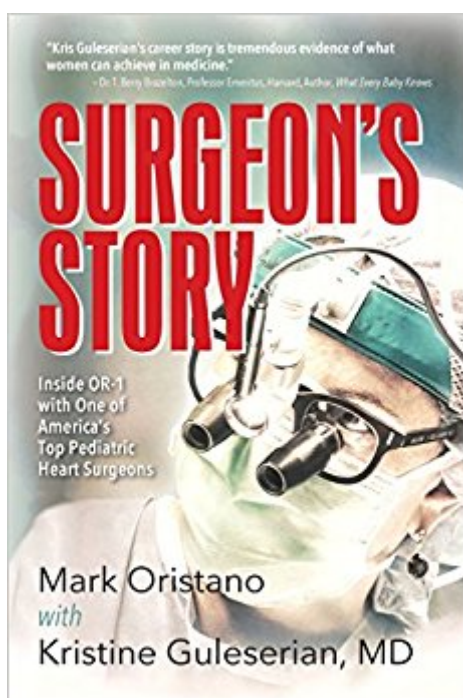


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# Surgeon's Story: Inside OR-1 With One Of America's Top Pediatric Heart Surgeons



## Synopsis

"If you can't operate in heels, you can't operate!" - Dr. Kristine Guleserian

"This book should be a gift to any young woman considering a medical career and wondering if she could do it. "A fantastic journey into the science of the human heart and one heroic doctor who repairs and replaces them." "From the very first page right up to the climactic ending, this book will entertain you with the real life wit, humor, and drama." Kristine Guleserian, pediatric cardiothoracic surgeon, is scrubbed in. Dr. G, as she's known, is one of only nine women in the U.S. sub-specialty board certified by the American Board of Thoracic Surgeons to do what she's about to do -- take a scalpel sharper than a dozen razors, cut through eleven-month old Claudia's skin, saw open her breastbone and spread her ribcage apart in order to repair congenital defects threatening a malformed heart the size of a walnut. It's just after 9:00 AM. Claudia will be in the OR until 2:00 PM, along with a team of talented surgeons, nurses, techs, anesthesiologists, perfusionists and others. Dr. G is in charge. What will she find when she opens the chest? How will this tiny little child hold up in surgery? You won't believe the real-life medical drama in this intense, close-up visit to the cardiac OR. Pick up your copy with just one click. What made you decide to write Surgeon's Story? I've been a volunteer at Children's Medical Center in Dallas for 20 years, and I got to know Dr. Guleserian in a very casual fashion, seeing her give a couple of lectures and things. But the more I found out about her, as both person and surgeon, the more I thought she'd be a great subject for a book. And she agreed to the project with the one proviso that it would not be in her first-person voice. What it is like to watch heart surgery? Well, if your only notion of heart surgery comes from watching MASH, you'd be disappointed. It's almost bloodless. But the most impressive thing is the incredible, complete teamwork in the OR. Surgeons, nurses, scrub techs, perfusionists, anesthesiologists, all work like a well drilled football team, or a perfectly synchronized ballet company. It's really a very beautiful thing to watch. Who are you hoping will be eager to read Surgeon's Story? Well, pretty much everybody, obviously. But beyond that, there are two core audiences. First, anybody who has ever enjoyed Chicago Hope or Gray's Anatomy, or ER, and wants to see what really goes on in those life-or-death hospital settings. And secondly, young people, especially girls, who are thinking of careers in science and would like to follow in Dr. G's shoes.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Oristano begins by breaking down a day in the life of "Dr. G," his nickname for her, as he observes her at work. He does a fantastic job of bringing the atmosphere of the operating room to life and offers a behind-the-scenes look at a bustling hospital environment. After setting the scene, Oristano introduces some of the harrowing stories of Guleserian's patients, all young children who've suffered due to debilitating heart conditions. He interviews their families about their experiences, and one mother sums up the attitude of many parents of sick children when she wonders how to thank the woman who "literally saved your child's life." Interspersed with these emotional stories is Guleserian's own history, told in her own words. Oristano weaves these threads together to create a book that's both a biography and an in-depth look at the lives of patients and families who spend most of their time in hospitals, and who put all their hopes and fears in the hands of others. An emotional journey that offers a glimpse into a complicated world." Kirkus Reviews "Oristano has spent 20 years volunteering at Children's Medical Center, a teaching hospital that is part of the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas. Throughout this book he shadows Dr G., observing her manner with staff, patients and parents as she performs heart transplants - repairing the tiny hearts of tiny children. Stories of actual patients undergoing procedures, plentiful photographs of the patients and personnel and the complexities of the surgeries, descriptions of surgeries, excellent anecdotes and asides that inform the reader of the science of medicine all provide an involving read. But it is the personal history of Dr G. coupled with the aura of her persona that make this book not only a tribute to an important surgeon but to a great humanist lady." Grady Harp, MD Top 100 Hall of Fame Reviewer "Truly inspiring... The book combines Oristano's vivid and lively

descriptions of Dr. Guleserian with her own reflections on her life, her medical training, her career, and above all, the full range of her emotions as she performs various extremely delicate operations on children who otherwise would almost certainly not survive. I highly recommend this book to anyone who is at all interested in reading an inspiring story of someone who is a real hero and whose story needed to be told. Thanks to Mark Oristano for telling it." — Doug Erlandson Top 100 Reviewer

I spent nearly seven years shadowing Dr. Kristine Guleserian, one of the nation's leading pediatric heart surgeons. I saw heart transplants, patient consults, physician rounds, and more. Dr. G, as she's known, is one of the most dedicated, talented people I've ever known. Her dedication to her patients is immense. But best of all. She is an ordinary woman with an extraordinary skill set. It was a privilege to work on this project, and to be able to tell a story so much worth telling.

I laughed, I cried, I learned, I loved it. Great story

I loved the book, I highly recommend it!!

Mark Oristano's fantastic journey into the science of the human heart and one heroic doctor who repairs and replaces them, "Surgeons Story," is an emotionally moving and awe-inspiring look into the daily magic and miracles performed in the Pediatric Heart Intensive Care Unit at Children's Medical Center in Dallas. It's also a partial biography of the book's heroine, Dr. Kristina Guleserian (or Dr. G. For short). The author, a former football play-by-play announcer, leaves the gridiron to capture quite magnificently the feel and flow of the microscopic, lifesaving surgeries that Dr. G. performs with such passion and mastery. Using everyday language, Oristano gives us a primer on heart surgery while also charting the career of one of the few female pediatric heart surgeons in America. The result of this in-depth look at life in the operating rooms of Children's Medical is a stunning and immensely dedicated group of professionals who save lives like some mechanics change oil and a portrait of a passionate and truly human heart surgeon who may not make headlines, but does God's work under a very bright light. Oristano, himself fascinated with the workings of the most incredible machine, the human body, says he "shadowed Dr. G for seven years" in order to write this book. What he discovered in his travels make up the truly jaw-dropping stories contained in "Surgeons Story." Each chapter contains a new case study as we learn about

the intricate, state-of-the-art medical equipment and procedures that are now routinely done in saving lives. From the very first story which details the delicate handiwork done under the microscope to "correct a life-threatening cardiac abnormality on the surface of the heart of an 11 month old infant named Claudia, the author is at ease with his naturally well-tuned cadence and delivery. Oristano is familiar enough medically to explain even the most detailed surgeries as he wheels us along with Dr. G.'S medical cart inside The Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit with its multimillion dollar equipment all working in perfect synchronicity. You can almost hear the roar of the football crowd as Oristano describes "one patient (who) has ten IV drips, each one delivering a different life supporting medication - sedation, painkillers, antibiotics, anti-coagulants" hike, hike, hike. We also get to go deep into the family waiting rooms, as the author describes Dr. G's reassuring manner and then the long, painful delays with occasional interruptions to inform of progress during these surgeries. In a way, this book is a thriller with the drama of the operating rooms, and a biography as Oristano details Dr. G's long and difficult ascent to her current job title in a historically male-dominated profession. Oristano shows what lengths the good doctor had to go to to break the glass ceiling; a litany of degrees and internships that is bound to serve as inspiration to any young female medical minds who read "Surgeons Story." The author builds his stories to the book's inevitable climax, one that made this reviewer hungry for even more suspense and heroics. This is the kind of book in which you find yourself cheering for the doctors and worrying along with a constantly changing group of relatives and loved ones waiting to hear good news. In this book, Oristano shows that miracles are made material ever single day in this and other hospitals around the world. "Surgeons Story" teaches us about the miracles of our own bodies, the inner workings we take for granted and the passionate fight each day to fix the hearts of our most innocent infants. This is an uplifting book with its own heart of solid gold.

From time to time a book comes along that succeeds at every level. Mark Oristano's "Surgeon's Story" is one such book. The subject of this book is pediatric cardiac surgeon Kristine Guleserian, a remarkable woman whom Mark had the privilege of shadowing and interviewing over a period of several years. The book combines Oristano's vivid and lively descriptions of Dr. Guleserian with her own reflections on her life, her medical training, her career, and above all, the full range of her emotions as she performs various extremely delicate operations on children who otherwise would almost certainly not survive. One cannot come away from reading this book without a greater appreciation for anyone who sacrifices so much to attend medical school and then go through internship and residency as well as years of training in her specialty on the road to attaining her

goal. And one will most certainly come to a better understanding of the struggles that the patients and their families go through as well. But what I appreciate most about the portrait Oristano provides of Dr. Gulesarian is that it does so much to show her as the multifaceted person she is. Yes, she is focused on her work. And she has sacrificed much to be where she is at today as a sought-after surgeon. But we also come to know a person with a wonderful sense of humor who loves to cook and is an ardent baseball fan as well. (The only thing that would have made this story better is if she had been a lifelong Cubs fan instead of a Red Sox fan. But I can forgive her for that.) I highly recommend this book for anyone who is at all interested in reading an inspiring story of someone who is a real hero whose story needed to be told. Thanks to Mark Oristano for telling it.

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