



Fourteen Stories: Doctors Patients and Other Strangers (Literature and Medicine)

Jay Baruch

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“These edgy, heartfelt, wryly humorous stories, told from the authentic viewpoints of both young doctors and a wide canvas of patients, are wonderfully engrossing. They tell us what it’s really like to doctor, to patient, to suffer and to redeem. A joy to read.”—Samuel Shem, author of *The House of God*, *Mount Misery*, and *The Spirit of the Place* (Kent State University Press, 2008) “Plunging into one of Jay Baruch’s stories is like finding yourself in a busy Emergency Room at two in the morning—here you will meet characters whose lives are urgent and not always what they seem on the surface. Like his characters, Baruch’s writing is vibrant and intense, and his vision is prismatic. He speaks in many voices, among them doctor, patient, family member, medical student, and even ER janitor, and so examines the world of health and illness from many points of view. I appreciate the way Baruch acknowledges the complexity of life, and then dissects it for us into so many planes of action and consequence.”—Cortney Davis, author of *The Heart’s Truth: Essays on the Art of Nursing* (Kent State University Press, 2009) An emergency physician and faculty member at Brown Medical School, Jay Baruch has long been fascinated by how illness can make people strangers to their own bodies, how we all struggle to maintain control as the body decays and life slowly becomes unrecognizable, and how health professionals discover and struggle with the limits of their own competence and compassion. In *Fourteen Stories*, Baruch doesn’t present a series of clinically based essays but a rich collection of short fiction that gives voice to a variety of people who, faced with difficult moral choices, find themselves making disturbing self-discoveries. Baruch’s unique voice is a welcome addition to the genre of medical narratives—fiction and non-fiction alike—that is becoming increasingly important to medical and nursing schools’ and university curricula.

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