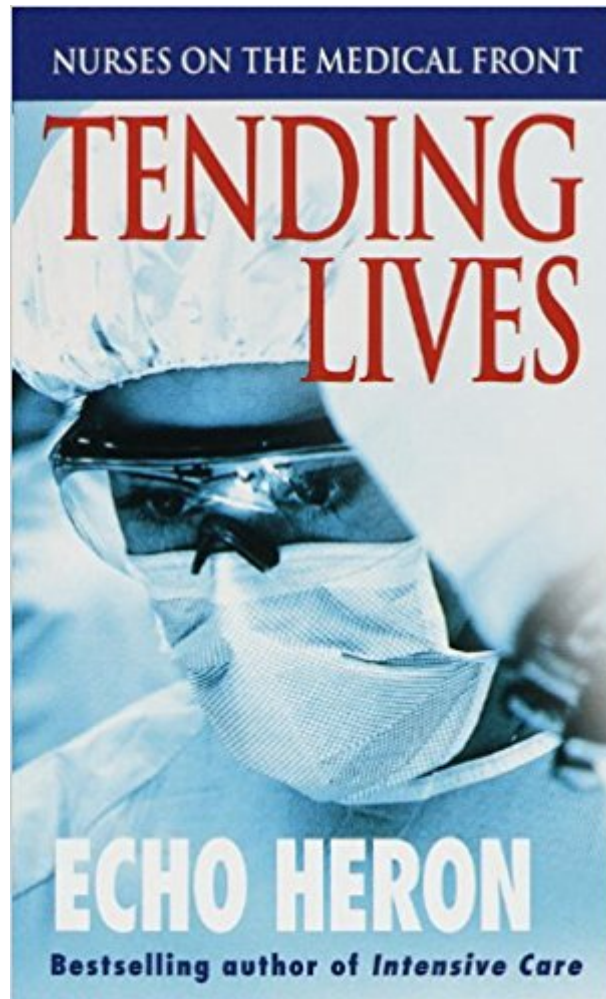


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# Tending Lives: Nurses On The Medical Front



## Synopsis

A critical-care nurse in coronary and emergency medicine for eighteen years, Echo Heron has seen and heard it all. Here she recounts narratives of real-life medical dramas experienced by nurses across the country, sharing with us the inspiring, the tragic, and the outrageously funny: a penitentiary nurse who was responsible for orchestrating a murderer's execution; a stroke victim who rose out of his depression when his nurses began telling him jokes; and, perhaps the most riveting testimony, moment-by-moment memories of several nurses who served in the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing. Filled with both tears and laughter and charged with the issues that afflict nursing care today, *TENDING LIVES* is a gripping, moving, inspiring book, a fitting tribute to a noble profession.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This best-selling nurse-author has created another exceptional book -- a powerful collection of realistic experiences from a diverse group of American nurses. Each chapter is written in realistic, first person narrative style, that takes the reader on an emotional roller coaster ride from scenes in a psychiatric ward, to the aftermath of the Oklahoma City Bombing. The author wants the reader to experience "the soul of nurses as they go on about their business of caring," a goal she brilliantly achieves. She borrowed from real-life incidents, and based many scenes on events that she had seen, or that were sent to her by contributors. Echo Heron refers to nurses as "proven heroes," and invites us to "come, take a walk in their shoes." She walks us through exquisite stories that were

submitted by thirty-nine different contributors, as well as two of her own personal experiences as a critical-care nurse. Every chapter portrays a different nurse, identified by a fictitious name, who is introduced by a brief, personal portrait. Here are two examples: (Ellen) -- "We get so much from the patients...they touch us deep down...They break our hearts, change our lives." (Kate) -- "...there are two kinds of patients who stick out in your mind -- those who might have died if it hadn't been for your intervention, and those who would not have died with dignity if it hadn't been for your intervention." The author shares each vivid scenario while sparing no detail. She takes the reader from tears to laughter in seconds. The short chapters facilitate reading in short increments of time. Because it is intense, reading only one or two chapters at a time will enhance appreciation of each emotional exposure. While doing research for her book, Ms. Heron contacted about four hundred nurses from all fifty states, one hundred permitted an interview, and less than half of these allowed their stories to be published. Many were apprehensive about reprisals, and one even insisted on being interviewed in disguise. As Echo Heron writes, "when a person becomes a nurse they sign on for life...there is a...spirit, a depth of soul... unique to the nurse." She describes nurses as "nitty-gritty hands-on people... Those who choose this profession are...as front-line as front-line gets." This book is for "the millions of nurses worldwide who dedicate themselves to the art of healing," in spite of the turmoil and transitions in healthcare today. This book is recommended for anyone considering nursing, definitely prescribed for those who are already working "on the front line," and for those who had been there at one time. Because of the vivid detail, this book might be too intense for the faint-at-heart or those unfamiliar with the nursing profession. It was my pleasure to relive pieces of my own nursing career as I shared this well-written book. This roller coaster ride was well worth the trip. I am inspired to continue writing my own stories and compiling stories for my own book about nurses, and anyone who was ever "touched" by one. I can't wait to read Echo Heron's next creation!

I have read most of Echo's books, (I haven't read Paradox or Mercy yet) but this one is my favorite so far. It is nice to know that I am not alone and nurses throughout the nation experience the same feelings and experiences that I have on a daily basis. I'm glad that someone has provided a forum for us to tell our side for once. It lets the public know that we, the nurses are NOT the enemy. I have been a critical care nurse like Echo for thirteen years. When I read her stories, I find that she and I have a lot in common. She is by far, my idol. We need more nurses like her in the practice.

As a Registered Nurse, I was very excited to see the arrival of Echo's latest new book. Echo was the first to give the most "honest" look at our profession, much to the dismay of some who feel that

"good girls should not talk back". In this new book she gives voice to some of the 2.2 million nurses in our country who are, as a whole, concerned about the progress of health care away from the patient, and centered on the dollar. True, these stories may scare some about to enter the hospital, but being well-informed is your best weapon to fight against those risks. Hospitals ARE scary places these days, as they replace skilled nurses with lesser trained (and lesser paid) non-professionals, and the remaining nurses are "burning out" trying to give the best care that they can. Books like Echo's are important to correct that "handmaiden" image of nursing. Anyone who is enthralled by "ER" and other medical dramas will be drawn right into these tales. Nurses have far more to tell than other care providers about the real stories behind the drama, since by the amount of time spent at the bedside, and the intimate work that they do, they are much closer to the heart of humanity-with all its joy, pain, humor and tears.

I love reading Echo's non-fictional stories the best and this one is great. I feel as if I'm in the story with similar situations in nursing. And I learn so much from the many situations. Echo and her writings have been an inspiration to me to keep fighting for patients "lack of rights" concerning personal care/staff. How I wish I had seen her ad to talk with her, what an honor that would have been. Thank you Echo.

I listened to this on tape, and found myself finding excuses to go somewhere in the car. This collection on vignettes from nurses around the country is captivating. Aside from the sadness, fear, frustration, and joy, you will laugh a lot. A theme that keeps coming up throughout the tape focuses on cutbacks made in the medical profession. Just when you are lost in a story, the "reality slap" of how the system has been altered reaches out and gets you. Although I appreciate this now, I think only a nurse functioning within the constraints placed on them in some situations can truly appreciate it. Nurses are some of the real heroes out there.

Echo Heron is a Registered Nurse who writes medical stories on the side. Some novels are of her own experiences, others are fictional thrillers with lots of nursing thrown in, and many open your eyes as to what the RN's see and feel on a daily basis. This one is a collection of true nursing stories from nurses all over the USA. Some of the nurses were there for the victims of the Oklahoma bombing and tell their stories. Of course, all the names are changed and few details left out. But this book was one of the most fascinating to read. A word of warning though. I could not read this one straight through. I had to stop sometimes due to emotional overload. The book holds no punches

back and you will be walking in the shoes of the nurses who tell the stories. I cried from despair and then laughed from wild humor in the very next story. You never know how they will end. But, of course, neither did the nurses as the events unfolded to them in reality.

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