

HEALTH

That Damn Dialysis

Cindy Barclay

Mauricio Menjivar, Jr., Illustrator

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Five stars

Although literary scholars might not think it makes the cut, the target audience—those with chronic kidney disease—will find certain benefit and quality of life improvement.

*“I want to tell my story so that people will have a better understanding about kidney failure...please accept my apology in advance if you find any of the vivid parts of my story offensive...definitely not my intent, but they **are** part of my story.”*

It’s not the vivid parts that one might take offense to, but some of the profane responses. That is, until one becomes so intimately involved in Cledus B. Washington’s journey from an everyday healthy life to chronic kidney disease. His honest sass clearly shows a little of the anger process—one of the many psychological responses to a chronic disease—but wonderfully spun through humor.

Cledus B. Washington is a fictional creation based on a collage of patients author Cindy Barclay has cared for as registered nurse and Founder of Quality Dialysis. With skill and wit, Barclay guides readers on one of the most intimate of journeys— of the body, the mind and disease.

Readers will experience every physical aspect of the disease and the domino effect throughout one’s whole body; the effects on one’s home, work and love aspects; and, of course, the financial. No aspect of Washington’s life is spared for analysis. Most characters are given personality-driven names—Frenchie, Dr. Killjoy, Mel Lippschitz, Dr. Eye Candy—bringing a down-to-earth reality, and humor.

Of special note on two levels are the great graphics envisioned by Cindy Barclay. Artist Mauricio Menjivar, Jr. sketches expert comprehensible depictions of what doctors struggle to explain on a lay level. On a lighter note, Barclay and Menjivar begin each chapter with kidney-shaped figures in a snapshot scene—very creative!

The skillfully written biography should be a basic Rx from every doctor serving the chronically or terminally ill as it offers readers hope, plenty of laughter, great graphics and inside information. Now, there needs to be a sequel for cancer patients...

Reviewed by Nancy Tamburello