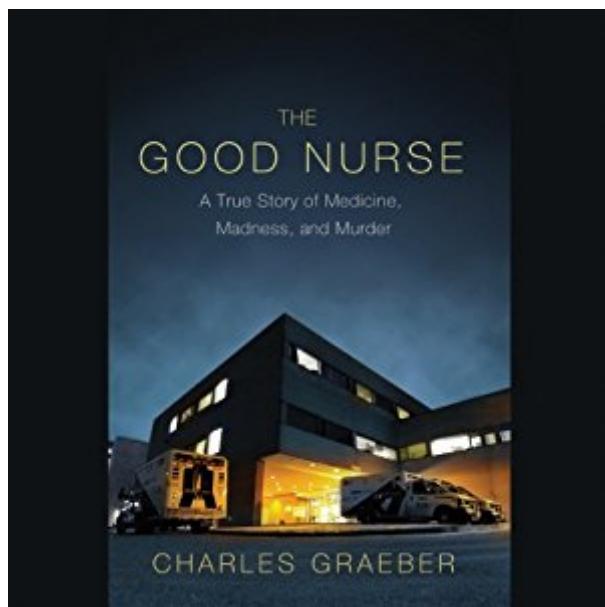


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The Good Nurse: A True Story Of Medicine, Madness, And Murder



Synopsis

After his December 2003 arrest, registered nurse Charlie Cullen was quickly dubbed "The Angel of Death" by the media. But Cullen was no mercy killer, nor was he a simple monster. He was a favorite son, husband, beloved father, best friend, and celebrated caregiver. Implicated in the deaths of as many as 300 patients, he was also perhaps the most prolific serial killer in American history. Cullen's murderous career in the world's most trusted profession spanned 16 years and nine hospitals across New Jersey and Pennsylvania. When, in March of 2006, Charles Cullen was marched from his final sentencing in an Allentown, Pennsylvania, courthouse into a waiting police van, it seemed certain that the chilling secrets of his life, career, and capture would disappear with him. Now, in a riveting piece of investigative journalism nearly 10 years in the making, journalist Charles Graeber presents the whole story for the first time. Based on hundreds of pages of previously unseen police records, interviews, wire-tap recordings and videotapes, as well as exclusive jailhouse conversations with Cullen himself and the confidential informant who helped bring him down, *The Good Nurse* weaves an urgent, terrifying tale of murder, friendship, and betrayal. Graeber's portrait of Cullen depicts a surprisingly intelligent and complicated young man whose promising career was overwhelmed by his compulsion to kill, and whose shy demeanor masked a twisted interior life hidden even to his family and friends. Were it not for the hardboiled, unrelenting work of two former Newark homicide detectives racing to put together the pieces of Cullen's professional past, and a fellow nurse willing to put everything at risk, including her job and the safety of her children, there's no telling how many more lives could have been lost. In the tradition of *In Cold Blood*, *The Good Nurse* does more than chronicle Cullen's deadly career and the breathless efforts to stop him; it paints an incredibly vivid portrait of madness and offers a penetrating look inside America's medical system. Harrowing and irresistibly paced, this book will make you look at medicine, hospitals, and the people who work in them, in an entirely different way.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Most patients go to hospitals when they are extremely ill. They hope to get better and be treated by competent and caring staff. Nurses, especially, are in the front and center of patient care. It is ironic, then, that Charlie Cullen, a board licensed nurse was a serial killer, preying on the sick and dying at nine different hospitals for years. Estimates of his victims hover around 300 patients. He is one of the worst serial killers known. It is also astounding that he got fired or was asked to resign from each of these hospitals and all but one never even reported him to the nursing board. Charlie Cullen failed at many things that he tried. He got into a lot of trouble in the navy and was afraid he'd get a dishonorable discharge, had his marriage fall apart, and was a loner without friends. People found him weird and unlikable. He had a criminal record for stalking and breaking and entering. He was a raving alcoholic who would hole himself up in the basement and consume large amounts of alcohol. If alcohol wasn't available he'd use Listerine or some other compound containing alcohol. He had a history of killing animals and it's even probable that he poisoned his sister's abusive boyfriend when he was still a teenager. His modus operandi was to inject patients with insulin or digoxin or other lethal medications and wait till they died. Sometimes he'd steal drugs from the medicine closets in the hospitals and not even use them. It was as if he was calling for help and no one came. He had a history of multiple suicide attempts or gestures. He liked the ride in the ambulance to the emergency room and having people take care of him. He spent months in psychiatric hospitals for depression, alcoholism and various other psychiatric problems.

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