



My Own Country: A Doctor's Story of a Town and its People in the Age of AIDS

Abraham Verghese

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The memoir and first book from the author of the beloved *New York Times* bestseller *Cutting for Stone*.

Nestled in the Smoky Mountains of eastern Tennessee, the town of Johnson City had always seemed exempt from the anxieties of modern American life. But when the local hospital treated its first AIDS patient, a crisis that had once seemed an “urban problem” had arrived in the town to stay.

Working in Johnson City was Abraham Verghese, a young Indian doctor specializing in infectious diseases. Dr. Verghese became by necessity the local AIDS expert, soon besieged by a shocking number of male and female patients whose stories came to occupy his mind, and even take over his life. Verghese brought a singular perspective to Johnson City: as a doctor unique in his abilities; as an outsider who could talk to people suspicious of local practitioners; above all, as a writer of grace and compassion who saw that what was happening in this conservative community was both a medical and a spiritual emergency.

Out of his experience comes a startling but ultimately uplifting portrait of the American heartland as it confronts—and surmounts—its deepest prejudices and fears.

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