



# Blue Collar, Blue Scrubs: The Making of a Surgeon

By Michael J. Collins

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## Blue Collar, Blue Scrubs: The Making of a Surgeon By Michael J. Collins

It looked for a while like Michael Collins would spend his life breaking concrete and throwing rocks for the Vittorio Scalese Construction Company. He liked the work and he liked the pay. But a chance remark by one of his coworkers made him realize that he wanted to involve himself in something bigger, something more meaningful than crushing rocks and drinking beer.

In his acclaimed first memoir, *Hot Lights, Cold Steel*, Collins wrote passionately about his four-year surgical residency at the prestigious Mayo Clinic. *Blue Collar, Blue Scrubs* turns back the clock, taking readers from his days as a construction worker to his entry into medical school, expertly infusing his journey to become a doctor with humanity, compassion and humor. From the first time he delivers a baby to being surrounded by death and pain on a daily basis, Collins compellingly writes about how medicine makes him confront, in a very deep and personal way, the nature of God and suffering—and how delicate life can be.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

An orthopedic surgeon whose Mayo Clinic residency he recalled in *Hot Lights, Cold Steel*, Collins reaches further back to tell of his days as a Chicago construction worker and, later, medical student. For a few years after college, Collins enjoyed the physicality of constructing curbs and gutters and drinking beer with his pals. But Collins, the oldest of eight boys in a close-knit Irish Catholic family, felt a vague yearning for something more meaningful, which finally coalesced into the dream of becoming a doctor. The Notre Dame graduate went back to college for two years of pre-med courses and entered Loyola at the ripe old age of 26. The next few years were a reality check: the rote memorization in medical school, the petty tasks assigned to an on-call med student and the shock, in his last year of medical school, of finding his intern had committed suicide. Collins received a battlefield promotion to intern. He eventually found himself right at home with the orthopods, who lack the pretension of the other surgical specialists. This is a perceptive, no-frills memoir of a surgeon who succeeded by dint of hard work and brains. (June)

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### Review

"Collins has a poet's soul, whether describing the sunrise through a laborer's eyes or what it means to be human through a physician's...Literary talent produces this fast-paced memoir filled with easy, unforced dialogue and authentic characters from all walks of life." --*Booklist*

"Collins has a superb ear for dialogue, and his breezy style makes his world spring to life." --*Kirkus Reviews*

"This is a perceptive, no-frills memoir of a surgeon who succeeded by dint of hard work and brains." --*Publishers Weekly*

### About the Author

MICHAEL J. COLLINS, M.D., served as the Chief Resident in Orthopedic Surgery at the prestigious Mayo Clinic and is now a successful orthopedic surgeon. He is the author of the acclaimed medical memoir *Hot Lights, Cold Steel*. He lives in Hinsdale, Illinois.

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