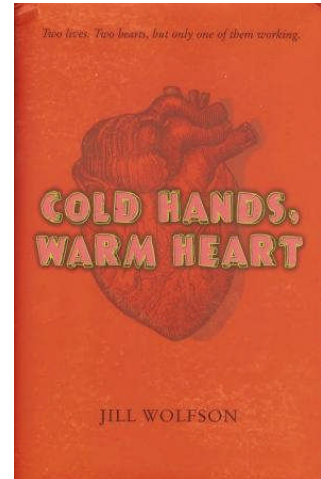


A Review of
Cold Hands, Warm Heart (a novel)
Two lives, Two hearts, but only one of them working (2009)
Author: Jill Wolfson



In a smaller format novel written for a teenage audience we have a fast paced gem of a story that captures the full donor/recipient emotions in a way young audiences can easily relate. The dynamics of family and patient – both the donor and recipient sides – come alive in the words of this gifted author as she ventures into a very different world than her earlier works with this telling based on much real-life research and patient interviews. In capturing the true sense of the teenage heart – or hearts in this case where both liver and heart transplant lives are at stake – Jill Wolfson has already gotten feedback from teenage readers who have shared how this book caused them to make positive decisions to become organ donors as they face such questions in applying for a driver’s license, as one example.

The book takes us very quickly through Amanda’s heart breaking teen sports accident all too familiar in the news, a family decision about organ donation brought about by the influence of a younger sibling, and the far reaching life saving impacts that decision has on the lives of other teens facing their own mortality much too early in life. A relationship between Milo, a teen with guilt and a failed liver waiting for his second transplant, and Dani, 15 years old and waiting for her own heart transplant, comes alive in our witness to their sometimes humorous emotional insecurities as the relationship takes hold and grows, all while facing their own mortality within the confines of the hospital transplant unit.

The entertaining read is not without its educational merits as medical procedures are clearly described within the storyline without interrupting the flow of the story; rather they become an integral part, as they should when so well written. The realities of the donation process and the waiting recipient also bring out some of the challenging ethics involved in this complex real-life scenario our world faces today. This book is an excellent resource for young adults, both for its captivating reading and its educational merit, but families (and medical staff) dealing with the younger generation facing transplant issues will certainly enjoy and benefit from its reading. I would love to see this book added to every school library and every children’s hospital reading cart across the country, but that’s another project looking for support and interest. If you feel inclined to help make that happen by buying a book for your hospital or school, contact the author, Jill Wolfson, via e-mail at jill@jillwolfson.com and she will be happy to mail you an autographed book plate to paste into the copy.

Additional resource: Meet and read the author discussing her life and book at <http://www.gtweekly.com/20090513423109/good-times/covers/matters-of-the-heart>

Note: **Cold Hands, Warm Heart** is available in hard cover on Amazon.com

Reviewer bio: Jim Gleason, receiving his own heart transplant Oct. ’94, retired after 37 years with Unisys Corporation in 2005, is a volunteer with NKF, UNOS and the Gift of Life Donor Program in Philadelphia, as well as a nationally recognized speaker and author. His own book, **A Gift from the Heart**, is offered in thanks to his donor family and can be obtained on a CD without cost by contacting him at GleasonJim@aol.com