



# Resident On Call: A Doctor's Reflections on His First Years at Mass General

*Scott Rivkees*

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## **Resident On Call: A Doctor's Reflections on His First Years at Mass General** Scott Rivkees

In turn heartbreaking, irreverent, moving—and at times raucously humorous—one of the nation's leading pediatric researchers recounts his first years as a newly minted, struggling, and insecure doctor at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. A graduate of a state university medical school, Scott Rivkees was competing with elite students from some of the most prestigious schools in the country. Nervous and uncertain, he worked unholy hours with patients ranging from indigent street people to celebrity guests drawn to the reputation and care offered by Mass General.

Along the way he learned what medical school textbooks don't teach: how to deal with immense pressure, exhaustion, unruly patients, mysterious conditions, the joy of saving a life, and the wrenching suddenness of losing a patient, more often than not a young child. His resident education did not prevent him from losing his sense of irony and humor as he recounts bleary nights on the town, the allure of young nurses, substandard housing, and the value of pricking an inflated ego.

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