

YOU MIGHT FEEL A LITTLE PRICK

BY: Reuben Leder

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A funny, irreverent sendup of medical professionals.

Mysterious deaths and disappearances beset an Ohio hospital in Leder's darkly humorous debut novel.

On Christmas Eve, a surgeon drops from a balcony at Cleveland Mercy Hospital. No one immediately reports anything; a blizzard covers the man's body. But a missing person case becomes a homicide months later when melted snow exposes an apparent murder. But who would want to kill the surgeon? He'd just performed a spinal fusion on former baseball star Nick Glass. It was decidedly unpleasant for Nick, particularly since he doesn't recall signing the form allowing a TV news crew to film the procedure. Around the same time, Nick's fiancée, Julie Toffoli, an intern at Cleveland Mercy, loses her job over a grave error that was unmistakably her boss's fault. Readers know that the couple has some link to the surgeon's fatal plummet. This death furthermore ignites a series of startling events, from attempted blackmail to possible insurance fraud. Nearly retired Lt. Artemas Sikorski begins investigating a single homicide, which may soon spin off to other crimes and involve quite a few more deaths. Leder's novel is a scathing look at the medical industry. For example, greed fuels many of the doctors' choices and takes precedence over patients' care. Still, the author delivers the story with comic panache; one indifferent physician begins a surgery, which he knows won't have much effect, by saying to the nurse, "*Sharp metal thing, please.*" Numerous unsavory characters, some of whom wind up deceased, turn this humor bleak at times. The pace, however, is a whirlwind, and surprises abound. The ending, like the story overall, is a delightful surprise. A funny, irreverent sendup of medical professionals.

Reviewed by **Kirkus Indie Program**