



The Art of Breathing

Janie DeVos

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From author Janie DeVos comes a poignant and richly detailed novel set in 1950s North Carolina, where one young woman struggles to save her own life—and finds the strength to truly live it.

When Kathryn Cavanaugh steps over the threshold of the Pelham Sanatorium in 1954, she has no idea when, or if, she will ever leave it again. Despite the rise of promising new treatments, Tuberculosis is still feared and often fatal. But twenty-four-year-old Kate has proven her resilience before, leaving her Blue Ridge Mountain home for a very different life in the city with her ambitious attorney husband, Geoffrey. For the sake of her family, especially her young son, she's determined to get healthy again.

The sanatorium is a strange battlefield, with every patient fighting for survival amidst a numbing routine of tests, treatment, and enforced rest. Kate quickly finds camaraderie among the women on her ward—and a growing kinship with fellow patient Philip McAllister. As weeks pass, the hospital's confines come to offer more independence than Geoffrey's preoccupation with status ever allowed. And with this surprising new discovery comes the courage to contemplate the choices she has made—and, perhaps, the chance to breathe freely at last...

The Art of Breathing Details

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From Reader Review The Art of Breathing for online ebook

Debra Dahlgren Rowand says

Fantastic! I was really looking forward to this companion book to Beneath a Thousand Apple Trees and it did not disappoint. The characters are well developed and very likeable (except for a few needed "villians"). I enjoyed learning about a part of history that I knew little about which was the tuberculosis outbreak and how it was dealt with. I could really immerse myself in the characters and that pocket of history. I'm looking forward to Janie DeVos' next series which is based in historic Florida. Keep these great reads coming!

Rena Ackley says

Having TB in the 1950s and being separated from your family and child would be difficult at best. To be in a sanatorium that was once only for TB patients but is being used as a mental hospital on one side and TB area on the other makes for quite a different type of story. The author bring out the needs of patients to support each other and how difficult it is to maintain a relationship that was already strained to begin with. This novel is both heartbreak and tender.

Shelby Gabbard says

Amazing easy read with a deep moving plot. Truly relatable on many levels.

Michelle Buck says

I liked it until the end. The description of life in a TB sanitarium was interesting.

Connie says

This book was an interesting and well-written look at life in the fifties in general, and how it felt to have a disease that in many cases was deadly. The main character, Kathryn, a young wife and mother is placed in a sanatorium because she has tuberculosis.

For the most part, Kathryn is a good wife and mother; her husband, Geoffrey, makes the decisions for his household. He comes from a background of money and high society. On the other hand, she is the daughter of a man who owns an orchard, and Geoffrey looks down on her family calling them hillbillies. The differences in their lifestyles are brought out in this story, and I couldn't help but think her family had the better life. Theirs' was a life of openly caring and enjoying the small things. Geoffrey's was a life of making money by working 6 or 7 days a week so his family could have the best. But as Kathryn so often points out, the best would be having a husband who spends more time with her family.

As the book progresses, Kathryn forges friendships with the people she meets in the sanatorium. And like so much of life, there are hard times ahead with losses, but also times to rejoice over. I appreciated how the author showed Kathryn growing and becoming more willing to stand for what she wanted.

Nicole Overmoyer says

(I received a copy of THE ART OF BREATHING through NetGalley and the publisher in exchange for an honest and original review.)

Ann says

When you're my age it's hard to think of a story from the early 50's as historic but with the subject matter this is truly an historic book. Set in 1954, Kathryn Cavanaugh is heading to the Pelham Sanatorium with Tuberculosis, a deadly disease back then. She goes to a facility near her family's home much to her husband's dismay. He also lets Kathryn's parents keep their young son Donnie so he can devote himself to his career as a lawyer. Kathryn makes friends during her confinement but over time, her husband takes young Donnie back to the city to start school and eventually the boy is in a military boarding school. Luckily Kathryn is about to be discharged and is able to retrieve her son with the help of her family. This story also hints at women becoming more educated and not stuck under their husband's thumbs. Well written and very true to life in its time frame. I loved everything about this story, including Kathryn's growing awareness of education and putting herself first. Family ties are explored as well as the 50's way of life in rural America.

Kristine says

The Art of Breathing by Janie DeVos is a free NetGalley ebook that I read in late January.

The Art of Breathing is a tale of tuberculosis told in a very comforting, supportive tone and DeVos speaks plainly and simply of Kate, her strong familial bonds, the public hospital care of TB, and love amid personal crisis.

Cathie Schumaker says

3.5

Carolyn says

I didn't expect to like this book as much as I did. In the 1950's a young wife and mother enters a sanitorium for treatment of TB. I didn't realize that in the mid 20th century it was the threat it was. Totally liked the characters (except for one) and I liked the way the author let the reader know why each person was brought

into the story with complete closure.

Rita Marie says

Interesting and well written. If you like Fannie Flagg, you'll enjoy this book.

Bj Travis Thomas says

Easy read in but kind of a "yawn" story. I did enjoy reading about TB treatment.

Nativegurl says

3.5 stars, I enjoyed reading this book. was a little apprehensive at first, but as I read, the pages flew by. DeVos has a way of writing that captures your attention and never lets go. jd kept me entranced to the end, of course the ending was a little too mushy for me. would I recommend this book? most definitely!

Mary Johnson says

I received this book through a Goodreads Giveaway

This was a sweet, elegant book, full of loveable characters. I admired Kathryn from the beginning, and more so as she became assertive towards the end, and felt for her difficult situation. The author's style was flowing and easy, always holding my attention.

I think maybe the biggest downfall of this novel was simply a lack of suspense. It's the sort of story in which everything works out in the end, and although I've got nothing against that, it did make some of the subplots feel a bit bland. It was clear who would and wouldn't survive at Pelham from the beginning, and equally as clear that Philip and Kate would end up together.

Still, I did enjoy this book. The subject matter was fascinating, and I'd definitely read more from this author.

Marsha Rau says

Richly rewarding

Love the thread through generations of families. The lure, beauty and difficulties of life as people are born live and die leaving an enduring legacy on generations to come
