



Doc's Codicil

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When Wisconsin veterinarian Doc dies, his family learns that to inherit his fortune, they must decipher the cryptic codicil he added to his will—"Take Doofus squirrel-fishing"—and they can only do that by talking to Doc's friends, reading the memoir Doc wrote of a Christmas season decades earlier, searching through Doc's correspondence, and discovering clues around them. Humor abounds as this mismatched lot tries to find time in their hectic lives to work together to solve the puzzle. In the end, will they realize that fortune comes in many guises? Doc's Codicil is a mystery told with gentle humor. It tells the story of a veterinarian who teaches his heirs a lesson from the grave.

Doc's Codicil Details

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Author : Gary F. Jones

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From Reader Review Doc's Codicil for online ebook

Reading Fury says

To anyone who has had an unspoken dream to create or accomplish something that seems too chancey or likely to fail, Doc's Codicil is a wonderfully relatable book in which personal insecurities and lack of courage battle with opening oneself up to the possibility of failure and realizing a dream. The novel offers readers a story of fun mystery with riddles and clues, a late-blooming coming of age story, and a life lesson that most of us could benefit from regardless of whether we are 20 or 70 years old. In short, it is a thoroughly charming and enjoyable read that will change the way you consider your life choices, and may even make you face your inner "Doofus."

We all can manifest a Doofus if we allow ourselves to be imaginative and hopeful. The Doofus character anchors the book by appearing in both plot time frames and affecting character actions. Initially Doofus is a sort of Ghost of Bad Advice past, present, and future. He is behind the mystery that Doc's heirs (his adult children and their cousin) must solve by acting upon the directive to "take Doofus squirrel fishing." Both plots/time frames neatly twine to build the overall theme and advance our understanding.

The first plot is set in 2014 and involves the heirs' attempts to solve the mystery in Doc's codicil while trying to live their own lives. Doc's manuscript is the second plot, set in winter 1987-88, and involves Doc's first meeting Doofus during a troubled time when he is trying to meet the needs of his family, his dairy animal veteran practice, and his desire to go into research. He doesn't feel he is living up to anyone's expectations, including his own. Enter Doofus to play upon Doc's fears and spur him into action. The problem is that Doc has evidence that Doofus' "help" to others has led to some hysterical but disastrous results. Without giving away too much plot, Doofus' help with a Nativity Pageant leads to the Jesus character being lowered into the scene via a crane and bungee cord, resulting in the second through eighth coming of Christ on stage. Over time, Doc is able to understand what he needs to do: open up to risk and the possibility of failure. Given how long it took him to learn this lesson and find real satisfaction in life causes him to write the codicil for his family.

One subtle goal of the codicil is for his children and future generations to commit to the family and remain close, even when economics require that the offshoots be spread across the country. This is a real issue for many of us. Jobs and economics have fractured our familial support system and all but destroyed the joyous intimacy of shared history and companionship unique to family members. The codicil openly advises the heirs, and by extension the reader, to "laugh and sing, loudly and often. Be kind to others, help your fellow man, love those close to you, study for the sheer joy of learning, seek out difficult tasks, and go at them. Do not fear failure; it happens." The intertwined plots show us how it can be done, not easily, but it can be done. In the end, materialism via the inheritance takes a back seat to the shared experience of trying to make sense of the codicil and re-evaluating what makes one truly happy. Listening to our inner Doofus may be scary but worth the risk. The book is not tediously moralistic. The author builds an engaging plot, while the reader builds a belief in dreams.

Naturalbri (Bri Wignall) says

If you are looking for something humorous, with a touch of sweetness, kindness and love, then this is your winter read. It was one that I found fun to cuddle up, on a cold day (not to mention our oil had run out, so it was deathly cold) and really have a good laugh. It is the kind of read that can warm your heart and really make you enjoy all the subtle things in life.

As we travel through the life and times of the good vet, we come to find out that there is so much more to him than his family gave him credit for and that he wasn't senile when he set the task for acquiring his fortune. In fact, he was likely the most sane of the lot, as he taught them so much about life and themselves, from beyond the grave.

I liked the light-hearted nature this read took, from soft topics right through to some that are hard for many to approach. Hidden under the doc's rules and memoirs, this book has a great message, and one portrayed in an excellent way.

I truly enjoyed reading this book and look forward to recommending it to friends and even gifting it to a few, for a good holiday read.

**I received this book for free and voluntarily provided my honest and unbiased review.

Riddhi says

This is a very funny and relatable book. The stories narrated by Doc are humorous and show things in a different perspective. I loved reading it and the characters are great. I definitely learned many things in the end. The mystery about the clues and the codicil makes you want to know what happens next. The book is really enjoyable and humorous.

Thomas Garvey says

I, for one, like my humour to be served cold and preferably to be laced with arsenic, so the subtle humorisms planted here should not have moved me the way they did, and yet somehow this was managed. One great disadvantage of American letters pertains to the lack of any great purveyors of soft comedy in fiction form - there are great humorists to be found in Non-Fiction, from Dorothy Parker to David Sedaris, and Christopher Buckley has been steadily drawing on the unhinged, dark excesses of Capitol Hill, but there are few, if any, comparisons from the US to, say, PG Wodehouse. Gary F. Jones still does not reach the level of the Dulwich Maestro, but he comes fairly close. An intimate and often gut-snarlingly funny account of family life and Will Politics, this will generate an easy glow for any happy visitor to bask in.

Cats of Ulthar February Weird Fiction says

If you want a warm-hearted, family-oriented, feel-good during and after your reading, novel, suffused with puzzles and a pair of minds (Doc and his sister Linda) who just won't quit, then by all means I suggest you take up DOC'S CODICIL by Gary Jones. A subtle story, gently told, this novel commences with the reading of the will of the late veterinarian, with his children and nephew present. Remember, these are all adults, not youngsters. So they should know how to behave and how to act and think. Clearly Doc and his sister Linda

think so, as did their own parents. Doc's estate is fairly substantial, although not in the billionaire category so desired today; but among seven heirs, not as much. Especially if these heirs quibble and complain. Instead of a straightforward "I bequeath," Doc set the codicil up so that they all have to think and ponder, and especially, they all have to work as a team to puzzle it out.

Rodney Carlson says

The crazy ideas people come up with have to come from somewhere! Doc invented a tale to explain the dumb decisions and bad behavior his kids saw on the evening news.

Doc is intent on leaving a legacy to his children. Lessons learned from a life of adventure with an apparition that appeared to be plucked straight out of his imagination, complete with soiled pink tutu. Meet Doofus the cow flop fairy. Doofus is here to help, and he has plenty of ideas that you can run with.

Take a chance and follow along as Doc's kids try to figure out what their dad was trying to teach them. It's good for a few laughs and there have certainly been worse ideas.

Wacky situations and slapstick fun are what you will find in this book.

Nanette Tredoux says

This book took me longer to read than the average book, and there were moments when I didn't feel like persevering. However, I finished it and I am glad I did, in several ways. I experienced the book as an uneasy mix between a slapstick comedy (all that excrement all over the place), and morality take of sorts. I found the background about veterinary science and farming fascinating, but I don't expect all readers will. The author certainly did his homework there in the form of background research. There were times in my reading of the book where the writing flowed and I engaged with the characters, enjoying the humour. But those were not the slapstick bits. I rolled my eyes at those. I liked it best when the author, through the character of Doc, made gentle fun of human foibles and priorities. The chapters seen through the eyes of the heirs do not read so comfortably and are not so funny or endearing.

Angie says

Originally posted @ <http://readaholiczone.blogspot.com>

It has been a long time since I read a book that made me laugh as hard as this one did. Slap-stick comedy plays a big role in the plot as does riddles and mystery. The plot jumps back and forth between 1987-88 and 2014 and this is not hard to follow as the plot flows perfectly throughout the book. There are a lot of characters involved in the story making it slightly difficult in the beginning to keep track of who everyone is yet I found everyone falls into place after a couple chapters. This is because the story revolves around a large family with many friends. Whereas, the book has a great sense of humor it also makes you think about your life and the dreams and ideas you have for it. What would you risk to follow through on an idea that keeps nagging at you? You know what I mean that little voice in your head that keeps telling you to take a chance. I would like to tell you a little bit about my favorite part, but there are too many. This is no doubt a great read

for anyone. I would hands down, take Doofus squirrel-fishing!

I would like to thank the author for letting me give an honest review

J.P. Willson says

Review to follow...

Laura Reading says

Set up to appeal to readers of allegorical fiction, in the vein of J.P. Kotter, Spencer Johnson, Ken Blanchard and others, I would call this more fictional memoir than mystery.

People who are interested in large animal veterinary medicine themed memoirs will also appreciate sections. In truth, I really have no other book to compare this to.

Set between a 1987 Christmas Nativity event (worst pagaent ever) and the 2013 reading of Doc's will, and the mentioned codicil, the underlying idea of each story is to keep family together and build a stronger connection.

Told via a memoir type manuscript written by Doc shortly before his death to describe ill conceived dreams and unprepared plans and by the narrative of Doc and Linda's heirs attempting to solve riddles required to gain their sizable inheritance, this is a book from which I believe each reader will take away something different.

I did accept a copy of this book for review purposes.

Rajalakshmi Prithviraj says

Sometimes, there is a need to introspect and listen to our inner child. Doc's Codicil is a book that lays emphasis on doing just that.

What the Doc had learnt in his life, he wanted to pass on to his children, especially after his death. Hence, he wrote a codicil to his will.

The story has a great plot and ensures frequent yet meaningful transitions in time frames (past, present and future to be precise!!!). The narrative is fast paced and ensures that a reader looks forward to what is in store next.

Gary has a great sense of humour which he aptly projects through this story. There are many portions that you would love to read again and again in order to re-live through the funny moments narrated. In fact, the descriptions have the power to trigger vivid visual imageries. However, there is too many details regarding animal sciences which I have little knowledge of. Since I couldn't appreciate these portions due to lack of understanding, I am forced to give this book a four star rating. But yes, I do look forward to read more of Gary's work, because, I am sure, his next book will take care of such minor issues.

Characterization is interesting. Each of the Doc's children, his lawyer friend, Doofus and even the nondescript ones have a well etched role to play in this story.

Coming back to the concept of introspection, I too agree with the author that there is a need to bond more with family members. To tell the truth, it is vital that more and frequent investments are required in relationships. Quality time spent on family relationship is the best investment that can ever be made. And yes, there is also a need to take risks. Sometimes, one has to risk it all in order to be happy.

To sum up, but for few technicalities and nuances I couldn't comprehend, the book is definitely a must read for all the humour it has to offer along with a wonderful plot.

P.S- I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest opinion. Thank you Legitlit Book Tours.

Catherine says

I received this book from the Publisher in exchange for an honest unbiased review. However I have to say that I have had to DNF it as although I enjoyed the authors writing style I didn't connect to any of the characters at all so I was finding I simply wasn't wanting to pick it and read it.

Karen says

I received this book from Net Galley in return for an honest review.

Although this isn't generally the sort of book I would read, the synopsis intrigued me enough to give it a go. Doc, a Wisconsin vet, has left, as part of his will, a mysterious codicil that his family must solve in order to inherit his fortune. This leads the reunited family to undertake a quest whereby they must speak to his friends, hack into his computer to find email evidence and read a book that Doc had been writing.

At times, this book was 'laugh out loud' funny and also poignant as the siblings work together to discover what was happening in Doc's life before he died. However, I did find myself spending a lot of time skipping through sections of text as parts of the story seemed to serve little purpose. I could not warm to the character of 'Doofus' and admit that, even by the end of the book, I was a bit confused as to who he actually was.

The book is well-researched and clearly shows the author's understanding of bovine matters!

Paul Franco says

This is one of those stories where the recently deceased leaves the descendants some puzzles to solve before they can receive the inheritance goodies. There's the good girl, the guy who thinks it's a waste of time, and other stock characters, though their interactions and thought processes as they try to solve the puzzles are stimulating enough. But most of the story is taken up by two historical threads, which are described in a book that is where the characters most look for clues. One concerns the dead man's life as a veterinarian, while the other involves a Christmas pageant where everything that can go wrong does.

I will say that I learned far too much about veterinary medicine than could possibly be good for me. The

humor sneaks up on you, especially with the character—if you can call him that—of Doofus (drawn faithfully and hilariously on the cover), although the crown of best individual goes to Gladys the camel. Though it seems to meander at times, in the end it does lead exactly to where the inheritance hunters need to go, if they can figure it out.

If nothing else, whenever I need to get away from someone I can't stand, I can say that I'm taking Doofus squirrel fishing...

3.5 rounded up to 4/5

Jennifer Kirkwood (Levac) says

I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. You can find the original review on Genuine Jenn

This is a fun light humorous read. There are a lot of characters in this book and takes a bit of time to figure everyone out but once you do, you will get to love them. The story takes place in 1987/88 and 2014. We flash back a lot to learn about Doc, Linda, Mark & Doofus. Doofus wants to go squirrel fishing and the heirs needs to figure out what this means. Doc's puts his children and nephew through a series of riddles, almost on a wild goose chase to decipher the codicil. There are many Laugh Out Loud chapters in this book and times that you will shake your head at things that are done. I read a few out to my husband as he wanted to know what I was laughing/chuckling about. I love the Nativity scene! It is way too funny and had me almost in tears. Yes, I have a weird sense of humor so this book was right up my alley. I am also a small town girl who spent many summers on a friends farm. I get all the talk of getting up to do chores and working on a dairy farm as that is what my friends had. The author did a very good job with the story line and it flowed well even though we were taken on flashbacks in time and had many characters to follow. Life lessons are a main theme of this book and imaginary friends helping us get through the times. Doc wants to bring the family closer together and keep them interacting after he is gone. I think it is a great thing to do.

I give it a 4 out of 5 stars and look forward to reading more from Gary F. Jones.
