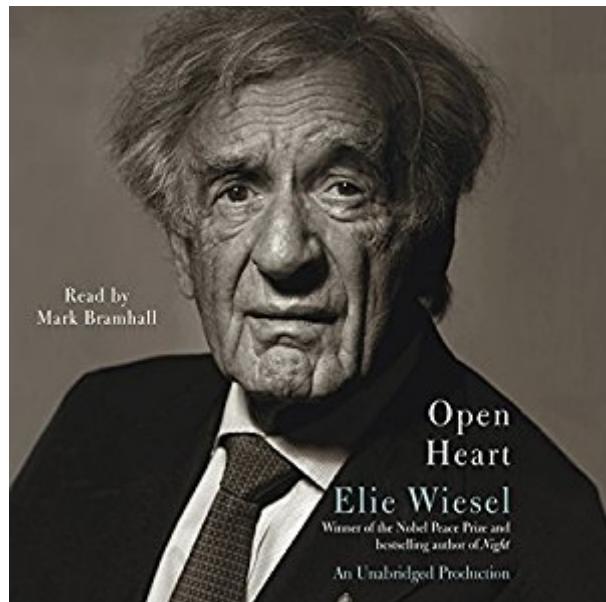


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# Open Heart



## **Synopsis**

A profoundly and unexpectedly intimate, deeply affecting summing up of his life so far, from one of the most cherished moral voices of our time. Eighty-two years old, facing emergency heart surgery and his own mortality, Elie Wiesel reflects back on his life. Emotions, images, faces, and questions flash through his mind. His family before and during the unspeakable Event. The gifts of marriage and children and grandchildren that followed. In his writing, in his teaching, in his public life, has he done enough for memory and the survivors? His ongoing questioning of God - where has it led? Is there hope for mankind? The world's tireless ambassador of tolerance and justice has given us this luminous account of hope and despair, an exploration of the love, regrets, and abiding faith of a remarkable man.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Elie Wiesel has produced many excellent works of fiction and nonfiction. Most of them are in whole or in part related to his experiences as a Holocaust survivor. Open Heart is very different. This book is equal parts memoir, treatise, and affirmation of faith as Mr. Wiesel faces sudden death from cardiovascular disease and open heart surgery. At age 82, in June of 2011, Wiesel is rushed to a hospital with severe coronary artery disease. He has several blocked arteries that only open-heart surgery can resolve. Suddenly faced with the prospect of death, Mr. Wiesel reflects upon his life, his experiences during the Holocaust, and his life since the Shoah. As he is wheeled into the operating room, he reminisces about the terrifying agony of his imprisonment in the Holocaust, his survival,

and the glorious wonders of life, love, family, and work left undone. Mr. Wiesel comprehends the gravity of his abruptly serious health issue, which frightens his wife and son as much as himself. He gazes into his past, filled with trepidation, gloom, and death. Virtually everyone he loved as a young man had been murdered by Nazi Germany during the Holocaust. It was the darkest portion of his life and of humanity's existence. Unexpectedly he is once more threatened with losing everyone he loved. A devout Jew, Mr. Wiesel wonders how God could allow millions of His children to become Holocaust victims. He considers, as had so many of his peers in Nazi death camps, how God could have turned away. Where is God, Elie Wiesel wonders? How could He abandon us? How could He allow so many generations of devout families to be murdered? Admitting that there are no easy or swift answers to such questions, Mr.

This short work opens with Elie Wiesel's description of a sudden medical crisis, and his need for Open Heart Surgery. It seems at first as if the whole book will be about this particular episode but after several pages this 'crisis' is resolved by successful surgery. Wiesel then engages in a reflection on his work and life, and on their meaning. In this reflection I believe he underestimates his own historical importance and the enormous contribution he has made to the Jewish people and to humanity. After all more than any other writer he is the one who made the world aware of the horrifying dimensions of the Shoah. (The Holocaust). His book 'Night' is one of the most powerful documents about human suffering ever written. It tells the story of his own experience in the death camps and on the death marches, of the loss of his family and his world. It is a poetic book of questioning and argument with God and at the same time a narrative of events overwhelming in their horror. After this book Wiesel became known throughout the world and worked tirelessly for years to diminish human suffering, to oppose racism, and genocide. His actions in regard to the freeing of Soviet Jewry were heroic, and he gave the people of Silence a voice which helped lead to their rescue. In this work he writes in a summary fashion about a few of his more than fifty books. He writes too lovingly about his wife Marion, who has shared his life for over forty years and contributed so much to his well-being. He writes with love of his son and grandchildren and of what they mean to him. Wiesel is a writer whose every perception seems charged with feeling. He is a legend in his own time and certainly one of the great voices for Humanity of the past half - century.

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