

Preface

Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together.

—Vincent van Gogh (*Letter to Theo*, October 1882)

I began writing this book while I was a categorical general surgery resident. Encouraged to pursue what deeply riveted me by my wife, family, and friends, I made the bold leap into a truly inspiring field, Ophthalmology. After becoming friendly with the OR staff, it always made me smile when they asked something to the effect of “why are you leaving surgery, you know, *real* surgery?” Instead of countering with “Ophthalmology is *real* surgery,” I simply answered that general surgery was not for me—and that was the truth. Instead, I was entering a field reserved for the select elite. Not only are we surgeons, clinicians, medical and surgical diagnosticians, and solo comprehensive practitioners, but we are enigmatic, furtive, perfectionists. If someone cannot figure out why this field is the quintessence of medicine, then what else can you do but smile.

We would like to take this special opportunity to thank our friends, colleagues, and mentors who helped make this script a reality and dedicate it to those of you who may have taken the nontraditional route. Learn as much as you can, acquire patience, and develop precision, because it is you who will be the only real surgeon that ever maintains and reserves the privilege to operate on the eye.

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