Preface

As anesthesiologists we are confronted, from time to time, with difficult decisions in “near miss” situations. Fortunately, “near misses” occur rarely, but it is important to be aware that they can occur. This book is a companion to my previous book Clinical Anesthesia: Near Misses and Lessons Learned, published by Springer in 2008. That book also described “near misses.” The cases in this book are all new. Together these books relate to my 41 years of clinical anesthesia experience in Scandinavia, South Africa, and the United States.

Each of the 80 cases gives the reader, on the first page, all the information necessary to diagnose/treat a potential disaster. The next page provides solution(s) and a discussion of the problem(s), makes recommendations, and provides references, where appropriate, for further reading.

The suggested management of these cases may be controversial. If so, they may form the basis for a teaching discussion between faculty members and residents/fellows-in-training in anesthesiaology. But most of all, this book is designed to alert the reader to various precarious situations that can arise in anesthesia practice in both sophisticated and rural anesthetic environments and how to best prevent or deal with them. To paraphrase Goethe:

The art is long,
Life is short;
Experiment perilous,
Decisions difficult.

After all these years in anesthesia, I can honestly say Goethe was right.

Stanford, CA, USA

John G. Brock-Utne, MD, PhD, FFA(SA)
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Brock-Utne, MD, PhD, FFA(SA), J.G.
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