Claire Boehning is about to launch her medical career when she meets Addison, a biochemist with blazing genius and big dreams. But a complicated pregnancy deflects Claire’s professional path and she is forced to drop out of her residency. A few years later, Addison invents a simple blood test to diagnose ovarian cancer, and his biotech start-up lands a fortune. Overnight the Boehnings are catapulted into a financial and social tier they had never anticipated or sought, and over time they grow unconsciously complacent with wealth and security: they move into a gracious Seattle home and buy an old ranch in the high desert mountains of eastern Washington; Claire drifts away from medicine to become a full time wife and mother.

Then Addison gambles everything on a cutting edge cancer drug and the studies go awry under clouded circumstances. With their comfortable life swept away, Claire and her daughter Jory move to the dilapidated ranch house in rural Hallum, where Claire has to resurrect her medical skills and find a job until Addison can salvage his discredited lab. Her only offer for employment comes from a struggling public health clinic—a world away from the medical career Claire had once envisioned. But life in Hallum brings Claire more than a second chance at medicine when she meets Miguela, a bright Nicaraguan immigrant, an orphan of the contra war, who has come to the United States with a secret quest to find the family she has lost. As their friendship develops, a new mystery unfolds that threatens to destroy Claire’s stressed family and forces her to question what it truly means to heal.