



CRISIS

BY YOUR SIDE

TEAM

CANDACE  
CALVERT

HOLT

DEPUTY  
SHERIFF

# Praise for Candace Calvert

“Wow. Calvert really captures the intensity of the drama that our crisis volunteers face out on the streets with cops and firefighters every day. *By Your Side* will be my standard gift this year for every occasion, and even for no occasion.”

—DAVID VINCENT, DIRECTOR OF US CRISIS CARE

“Candace Calvert has created the perfect recipe for medical romance. A tenacious but vulnerable heroine. A dashing but troubled hero. A pulse-pounding story. But most importantly, a generous helping of hope.”

—JORDYN REDWOOD, AUTHOR OF THE BLOODLINE TRILOGY

“[*By Your Side*] is a wonderful love story, a super tribute to emergency workers in general, to chaplains specifically, and an honest portrayal of faith in the lives of hurting people.”

—JANICE CANTORE, AUTHOR OF *CRITICAL PURSUIT AND ACCUSED*

“*Life Support* is a fast-moving novel that explores the dynamics of family and faith. Believable and endearing characters alongside family disputes and critical medical crises make this book hard to put down.”

—ROMANTIC TIMES

“In *Life Support*, Candace Calvert provides authentic medical thrills from characters so real you miss them when you turn the last page.”

—RICHARD L. MABRY, MD, AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR OF  
*HEART FAILURE AND STRESS TEST*

“Calvert’s adventuresome story of romance and drama infuses faith into her characters’ motivations and makes readers eager for more.”

—BOOKLIST ON *RESCUE TEAM*

“Candace Calvert makes hearts race, raises anxiety levels, and heightens emotions—all against doctor’s orders—but it seems to be an ultimate cure for anyone in need of their reading fix!”

—RELZ REVIEWZ

“Just like an outstanding episode of *Grey’s Anatomy*, *Trauma Plan* weaves medical, community, and personal issues with blossoming romance and strands of mystery.”

—BOOKLIST

“*Trauma Plan* is a humor-filled romance, woven throughout with suspense, medical intrigue, and faith. Readers will look forward to the rest of the Grace Medical series.”

—ROMANTIC TIMES, 4½ STAR REVIEW

“Calvert . . . infuses her story with detailed medical procedures and terminology along with honest questions

about faith that anyone might ask in the face of difficulties. The characters are likable and receive rich and thorough development in this enjoyable ‘hope opera’ page-turner.”

—*PUBLISHERS WEEKLY ON TRAUMA PLAN*

“Candace Calvert has crafted another gut-grabbing medical thriller. *Trauma Plan* kept me engrossed from beginning to end. . . . The faith message was clear, the medical traumas heart-stopping, and the romance heart melting.”

—LYNETTE EASON, AWARD-WINNING, BESTSELLING  
AUTHOR OF THE WOMEN OF JUSTICE SERIES

“If you need an infusion of hospital drama, *Code Triage* is just the prescription.”

—IRENE HANNON, BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF THE  
HEROES OF QUANTICO SERIES

“[*Critical Care*] flows well and keeps the reader’s attention. . . . Characters find not only psychological healing, but also spiritual renewal.”

—*CHRISTIAN RETAILING*

“If you like *ER* and *House*, you’ll love Logan and Claire and their friends at Sierra Mercy [in *Critical Care*]. Give me another dose, and soon!”

—SUSAN MAY WARREN, AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR OF  
*HAPPILY EVER AFTER* AND *TAKE A CHANCE ON ME*



CANDACE CALVERT

# BY YOUR SIDE



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*By Your Side* is a work of fiction. Where real people, events, establishments, organizations, or locales appear, they are used fictitiously. All other elements of the novel are drawn from the author's imagination.

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Summary: ER nurse Macy Wynn learned essential, gritty lessons in the California foster care system: Land on your feet and trust no one. She's finally located the fellow foster child she loves like a sister, but the girl's in deep trouble. Macy's determined to help, no matter what it takes. Her motto is to "make it happen" in any situation life throws at her—even when she butts heads with an idealistic cop. Deputy Fletcher Holt believes in a higher plan, the fair outcome—and his ability to handle that by himself if necessary. Now he's been yanked from Houston, his mother is battling cancer, and he's attracted to a strong-willed nurse who could be the target of a brutal sniper. When everything goes wrong, where do they put their trust?

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# 1

“OFFICER, *HELP!*”

Deputy Fletcher Holt spotted a woman waving her arms overhead, a frantic flash of purple in the crush of idling cars. Sacramento’s afternoon rush hour had been brought to a tire-squealing halt by an overturned gravel truck blocking all four southbound lanes. He’d seen it happen in his rearview mirror.

“We need you . . .” The woman’s voice strained over a continual, indignant barrage of car horns. “Over here!”

Fletcher signaled back, then broke into a jog, sucking in a breath made acrid by asphalt, car exhaust, and burnt rubber. Sweat trickled beneath his protective vest despite the mild, early June weather. He’d been headed to the Florin substation, end of watch, when the dump truck did its kamikaze dive across the freeway, causing at least a dozen

vehicles to skid on gravel and bounce against each other like a Six Flags bumper car ride. It was Highway Patrol's jurisdiction, but there was no way he'd drive on and not help. In the last ten minutes, he'd set out flares, offered his assistance to the arriving CHP officers, and now—

A horn blared: vintage M-class BMW, its driver wearing a business suit, sunglasses, and an openly belligerent look. "What's the deal? When can we get out of here?"

"Hang on. . . . They're working on it," Fletcher huffed, the edge in his voice coming from more than physical exertion. *You're not the only one who's got someplace else to be, buddy.* "Stay with your car—be patient, okay?"

He pushed his stride and covered the last dozen yards, coming to a halt beside the vehicle of the woman who'd waved to him.

"Yes, ma'am," he said, noting that she appeared unharmed. "You called for help?"

"Not for me," she explained, turning to point toward the far lane. "Over there, that van. I think someone's hurt."

Fletcher spotted a clutch of people, phone cameras held aloft. No surprise social media was getting a look before first responders. Tweet-a-wreck.

"Thank you. Stay with your car," Fletcher told the woman, relieved to hear sirens in the distance. Paramedics. Amazingly, the truck driver had climbed from the cab without a scratch. And as far as Fletcher knew, there had been no serious injuries. Hopefully that mercy would continue.

"Cop's here!" someone announced as Fletcher approached the vehicle. Even from several yards away, he saw the shattered window and crumpled side panel. It

was an older-model minivan with a faded business stencil.  
Balloons, kites . . . *kids?*

Yes.

Little faces pressed against the remaining windows. And another child was on the ground beside the van. A young woman knelt alongside, offering aid. A teacher? Probably not, the way she was dressed. Black hair, sort of pulled up in a loose knot, a short blue skirt . . . long stretch of bare leg, high heels. None of it meant for herding kids or crawling around on a gritty freeway.

The young woman turned for a second to gaze across the lanes. Her white top was smeared with blood.