



Standing By: The Making of an American Military Family in a Time of War

Alison Buckholtz

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Alison Buckholtz never dreamed she would marry a military man, but when she met her husband, an active-duty Navy pilot, nothing could stop her from building a life with him—not even his repeated attempts to talk her out of marriage. He didn't want her to have to make the kinds of sacrifices long required of the spouses of military personnel. They wed shortly after September 11, 2001 and, since then, their life together has been marked by long separations and unforeseen challenges, but also unexpected rewards.

Standing By is Buckholtz's candid and moving account of her family's experiences during her husband's seven-month deployment on an aircraft carrier in the Persian Gulf. With insight and humor she describes living near a military base in Washington State, far from home and in the midst of great upheaval, while trying to keep life as normal as possible for the couple's two young children. But she is not alone in her struggle. In Standing By, Buckholtz portrays her friendships with other military wives and the ways in which this supportive community of women helps one another to endure—to even thrive—during difficult times.

Throughout Standing By, Buckholtz speaks honestly about the culture shock she experienced transitioning into the role of a military wife. Because she had been raised to conquer the world on her own terms rather than be a more traditional wife and mother supporting her husband's career, the world of the Armed Forces was at first as unfamiliar as a foreign land. But a remarkable and surprising series of events has challenged her long-held assumptions about the military, motherhood, and even the nature of American citizenship.

A rare and intimate portrait of one of the tens of thousands of families who now wait patiently for their service member to return home safely, Standing By is a window into what matters most for families everywhere.

Alison Buckholtz's articles and essays have appeared in the New York Times, Washington Post and Washington Post Magazine, Real Simple, Forbes Global, Salon.com and many other publications. She was a resident of Washington, D.C. before she married into the military and now lives in Washington State with her husband and two children. This is her first book.

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