**Press Kit**

***Change of Heart by Dr. Cristina LePort***

*A gripping medical thriller where the life-saving promise of organ donation collides with dark ethical dilemmas. Who decides who lives or dies? No feel-good story about such donations, CHANGE OF HEART is a gritty, thought-provoking thriller.*

“Once again, Cristina LePort pens an excellent thriller, enlivened with vivid medical details and startling twists. She gets better with every novel!”

**—Tess Gerritsen, New York Times Bestselling Author of THE SPY COAST**

“*Change of Heart* is a fast-paced, dark, and twisty medical thriller that dives into the high-stakes world of transplants, hospital politics, and moral dilemmas. Packed with vivid medical details and unexpected turns, this story will keep you hooked from start to finish. If you’re into stories that keep you guessing and turning pages well past midnight, this one’s for you.”

**—Freida McFadden, #1 New York Times Bestselling Thriller Writer**

“*Change of Heart* is a dark and twisted medical thriller that moves at breakneck speed. Reading it will keep you up well past midnight but, if you’re like me, you’ll love it.”

**―DP Lyle, Award-Winning author of the Jake Longly and Cain/Harper Thriller Series and Co-Creator of the Outliers Writing University**

“*Change of Heart* is a visceral and exhilarating journey into the underworld of organ donation and murder, set against the gritty pulse of New York City. LePort's medical expertise deepens the suspense, weaving intricate details of the heart and its perilous path to donation with relentless investigative thrills. Fans of Patricia Cornwell and Tess Gerritsen will be riveted as former NYPD detective Kirk Miner and FBI rookie Charlotte Bloom navigate dark secrets, unexpected alliances, and a refreshing partner dynamic, making this high-stakes medical drama a must-read for lovers of thought-provoking thrillers. Each twist and revelation sharpens the stakes, keeping readers hooked until the very last page."

**—BookLife-Publishers Weekly**

“Medical thriller enthusiasts will find Cristina LePort’s CHANGE OF HEARTthe perfect ticket for a thoroughly absorbing read. The action is solid and nonstop, characters are believable and well-drawn, and the supporting underlying moral and ethical quandaries lend excellent tension to the story, which develops many twists and turns readers won’t see coming. Libraries seeking medical thrillers more than a cut above the usual will find CHANGE OF HEART an outstanding exploration of hospital politics, medical challenges, and mystery that lends equally well to book club recommendations and discussion groups.”

**—Midwest Book Review**

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*Publisher Info*

* Been a top-ten indie since its start in 1992
* Profiled by Publishers Weekly
* Publishes 4-6 books a year
* Distributed nationally by Baker & Taylor Publisher Services
* Frontlist and backlist titles frequently optioned or bought by Hollywood producers
* Publishes almost all types of books, from memoirs to mysteries, young adult novels to history and biography
* Bancroft books have received numerous starred reviews—four, in fact, for two 2018 summer books—and have won numerous awards
* *The Missing Kennedy,* a NYT ebook bestseller, was on the cover of *People Magazine* when published in 2015
* Published the books of four Pulitzer Prize winners (Alice Steinbach, Stephen Hunter, Elizabeth McGowan, and Mark S. Johnson)
* Operated internship program with colleges and universities around the country each semester (and summer) since 1992

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Bancroft Press Announces the Release of "CHANGE OF HEART," a Groundbreaking Medical Thriller by Dr. Cristina LePort**

*Los Angeles, CA – [February 4, 2025]* – Bancroft Press, a leading independent publisher since 1992, is thrilled to announce the release of "CHANGE OF HEART," the latest medical thriller from celebrated cardiologist and bestselling author Dr. Cristina LePort. Slated for publication in January 2025, this gripping narrative intertwines murder mystery, medical intrigue, and intense personal drama in the bustling setting of modern-day New York City.

"CHANGE OF HEART" follows former police detective Kirk Miner and FBI rookie Charlotte Bloom as they uncover a sinister plot disguised as a suicide in the heart of Manhattan. This meticulously crafted novel challenges the boundaries of the genre by merging thrilling medical scenarios, complex character development, and a deep exploration of ethical dilemmas.

"Dr. LePort brings an authenticity that only someone of her medical stature could offer to the genre of medical thrillers," said Bruce Bortz, founder of Bancroft Press. "Her unique ability to blend factual medical knowledge with riveting narrative fiction offers readers an unforgettable experience."

**Key Features of "CHANGE OF HEART":**

* **Blend of Genres:** A unique mix of crime drama, medical thriller, and romance.
* **Authentic Medical Insight:** Authored by Dr. Cristina LePort, whose real-life experiences as a cardiologist provide depth and realism to the narrative.
* **Complex Characters:** Rich character development that adds emotional depth and drives the suspenseful plot.
* **Engaging Plot Lines:** Themes of conspiracy, cybercrime, and forbidden romance enhance the compelling narrative.

Dr. LePort's personal journey from a cardiologist to a novelist enriches her storytelling, making her books resonate deeply with readers fascinated by the ethical questions within the medical field. Her novels are not only page-turners but also provoke thoughtful consideration of the moral complexities faced by medical professionals.

**About the Author:** Dr. Cristina LePort is a renowned cardiologist and a respected author, known for her compelling medical thrillers that explore the high stakes of medical crises and moral conflicts. Born in Bologna, Italy, and now residing in Southern California, Dr. LePort combines her medical expertise with her narrative prowess to craft stories that are both informative and engaging.

"CHANGE OF HEART" is available at major booksellers, including Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and through independent bookstores. The book is available in hardcover, ebook, and audiobook formats.

For media inquiries, interviews, or more information, please contact:

Bruce L. Bortz, Founder & Publisher

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***Bancroft Press – Books that enlighten, educate, and entertain – since 1992.***

**Overview**

*Change of Heart*, by Cristina LePort, M.D., weaves an intricate tale that thrusts a former police detective, Kirk Miner, and an FBI newcomer, Charlotte Bloom, into a complex murder investigation masquerading as a suicide. The narrative unfolds in present-day New York City, merging elements of crime, mystery, and romance against the backdrop of Manhattan and Brooklyn. The story kicks off with the mysterious A fake heart and an object

Description automatically generateddeath of a young medical student, Amy Winter, whose demise is initially deemed a suicide until a deeper conspiracy unravels, involving a sinister organ donation chain.

Kirk, struggling with his passion for criminal investigation and its toll on his family life, finds himself pulled deeper into the case, questioning his priorities and what he's willing to die for. Charlotte, on the other hand, grapples with her own secret—a life-threatening heart condition—as she navigates the perilous waters of cybercrime and mob conspiracy, pushing her career and life to the brink.

As Kirk and Charlotte delve into the murky depths of this case, they encounter a cast of compelling characters, from the empathetic heart surgeon Dr. Zayne Wilder to the formidable Sicilian mobster Santo Montepulciano. Their journey through a tangled web of secrets, family drama, and forbidden love shatters crime drama clichés, offering a riveting exploration of love's power and the sacrifices made in its name.

**Elevator Pitch**

In CHANGE OF HEART, a former detective and an FBI rookie unravel a dark, transplant-related conspiracy masquerading as suicide in a gripping medical thriller set in NYC.

**Slightly Longer Logline**

*Change of Heart* is a gripping narrative set in contemporary New York City, where former detective Kirk Miner and FBI agent Charlotte Bloom uncover a chilling murder plot disguised as a suicide. The investigation reveals a dark conspiracy surrounding an organ donation chain, entangling them in a web of mob intrigue, cybercrime, and personal demons. Kirk faces a personal crisis, torn between his detective work and family, while Charlotte battles a secret heart condition threatening her career and life. Together, they navigate through layers of deception, testing their resolve, uncovering shocking truths, and exploring the profound impacts of love and sacrifice.

**Eight Compelling Reasons to Read & Review *Change of Heart***

1. **Blend of Genres**: "Change of Heart" is not just a murder mystery; it's a thrilling blend of crime drama, medical intrigue, and romance. This multifaceted approach ensures a unique reading experience that engages a wide range of interests.
2. **Medical Authenticity**: Authored by a seasoned cardiologist, Dr. Cristina LePort, the novel promises an authentic depiction of medical scenarios and ethical dilemmas. Her firsthand experience adds depth and realism to the medical aspects of the story​​.
3. **Complex Characters**: The narrative is driven by complex and sympathetic characters who grapple with personal and ethical issues, adding a rich layer of human drama to the suspenseful plot​​.
4. **Conspiracy and Cybercrime Themes**: The story weaves together elements of mob conspiracy, corruption, and cybercrime, echoing the tension and intrigue found in popular shows like "Breaking Bad" and "Mr. Robot"​​.
5. **Forbidden Romance**: Amidst the high-stakes environment, the novel sizzles with forbidden romance, adding an emotional depth and a personal stake for the characters involved​​.
6. **Narrative Depth**: The story explores themes of family drama, love, secrecy, and the moral complexities of the medical profession, promising a narrative that’s both intellectually and emotionally engaging​​.
7. **Cinematic Potential**: "Change of Heart" possesses cinematic qualities that could appeal to fans of visually rich and narratively complex television series like "True Detective" and "Grey’s Anatomy"​​.
8. **Author’s Journey**: Dr. LePort's fascinating journey from a cardiologist to a novelist adds an inspiring backdrop to the novel. Her transition from saving lives in the operating room to exploring ethical questions through fiction offers a compelling reason to delve into her work​​.

**Eight Engaging Topics the Author Could Discuss in Media Interviews**

1. **Ethical Dilemmas in Transplantation**: Dive into the controversial issues such as organ allocation, consent, and the manipulation of transplant waiting lists, inspired by real-world scandals like the one involving Dr. Bynon in Texas.
2. **Technological Advances in Transplant Medicine**: Explore how recent advancements are changing the landscape of heart transplants, from organ preservation techniques to innovations that could be future possibilities, mirroring the novel’s depiction.
3. **Psychological Impact on Transplant Recipients and Donors**: Discuss the emotional and psychological challenges faced by organ donors and recipients, which are often a core theme in transplant narratives.
4. **Transplant Tourism and the Black Market**: Analyze the ethical and legal implications of transplant tourism and the black market for organs, which can be tied into the more thrilling elements of the novel.
5. **Impact of Fiction on Public Perception of Transplants**: Consider how fictional representations impact real-world understanding and attitudes towards heart transplants and organ donation.
6. **Virtual Tours of Transplant Hospitals**: The author could talk about the significance of specific cities and hospitals known for their transplant programs, perhaps relating these to settings within the book.
7. **Survivor Stories**: Share compelling stories of real transplant survivors, reflecting the novel's narrative and adding a human element to the discussion.
8. **Future of Transplant Medicine**: Speculate on the future of transplant medicine, discussing potential revolutionary changes in the field and how they might solve current ethical and logistical challenges.

**Detailed Summary of the Book’s Views on Transplants**

Cristina LePort’s *Change of Heart* offers a complex and multifaceted portrayal of organ transplants, encapsulating the following perspectives:

* **Life-Saving Potential**: The book underscores the transformative, life-saving impact of transplants through characters like Dr. Zayne Wilder, who passionately advocates for organ donation as a solution for critically ill patients. The narrative delves into the medical advancements in transplantation, such as the use of "heart boxes" that allow hearts to continue beating outside the body, extending their viability and enabling better matches across wider geographic areas.
* **Ethical and Emotional Dilemmas**: The story highlights the emotional turmoil faced by families of donors, particularly Amy Winter's parents, who are thrust into a position of making a swift and agonizing decision about their daughter’s organs. This reflects the tension between honoring the donor’s wishes and the family’s grief, compounded by the time-sensitive nature of organ procurement.
* **Systemic Challenges and Exploitation**: Through its exploration of cybercrime linked to organ allocation systems, the novel critiques vulnerabilities in the transplantation process. For example, it suggests that these systems could be exploited for profit or manipulated, as evidenced by the hospital hacking subplot and the potential misuse of donor data.
* **Chain Donations**: The book introduces the concept of "heart chains," a novel adaptation of kidney chain donations, which prioritizes patients who enroll with a linked donor. This system increases compatibility rates but raises questions about fairness, as patients in chains receive priority over potentially more urgent cases outside the chain.
* **Pragmatic Urgency vs. Ethical Boundaries**: The medical professionals in the story, such as Dr. Wilder, embody the urgency of procuring organs to save lives but must navigate moral boundaries, like respecting the autonomy of grieving families and ensuring no coercion in the decision-making process.
* **Philosophical Underpinnings**: By contrasting the medical perspective (seeing donors as “living cadavers”) with the emotional perspectives of families, the book provokes a deeper philosophical reflection on what it means to die and the ethics of using a person’s body posthumously for the greater good.

**Divergence of Those Views from Conventional Wisdom**

The author’s views on transplants diverge from conventional wisdom in several notable ways:

* **Highlighting Vulnerabilities in the System**: While the mainstream narrative around organ transplants often focuses on their miraculous nature, the book casts a critical light on systemic flaws, including susceptibility to hacking, ethical lapses, and the potential for exploitation by criminal elements.
* **Questioning Priority Systems**: The chain donation model, though effective in maximizing matches, challenges the traditional principle of prioritizing the sickest patients first. By presenting this system as both innovative and controversial, the author introduces a critique of utilitarian approaches to organ allocation.
* **Complex Depiction of Medical Professionals**: Conventional portrayals often lionize surgeons and transplant teams as heroic figures. In contrast, Dr. Wilder’s character embodies both dedication and moral ambiguity. He is portrayed as empathetic yet driven by practical concerns that sometimes clash with emotional considerations.
* **Exploration of Coercion**: The narrative critiques the subtle coercion that families might feel during their grief, as medical teams stress the urgency of donation. This contrasts with the conventional depiction of donation as a purely altruistic act unburdened by external pressures.
* **Cybercrime Integration**: The book's inclusion of hacking and mob involvement in the organ transplant process is a significant divergence from typical discussions, which focus more on medical and ethical challenges than criminal exploitation.

In essence, *Change of Heart* balances its admiration for medical advancements with a critical lens on systemic and ethical issues, pushing the reader to reconsider some of the unexamined assumptions surrounding organ transplants.

**15 Questions for a Transplant-Themed Interview with Dr. Cristina LePort**

1. What inspired you to write a medical thriller centered on organ transplants?
2. Your book introduces the concept of heart chains, which adapt kidney chain donations for heart transplants. Can you explain how this system works and its potential impact in the real world?
3. What ethical dilemmas do organ transplants present, and how did you incorporate these into *Change of Heart*?
4. In your experience as a cardiologist, what is the most challenging part of the organ transplant process?
5. The book highlights the emotional toll on families of donors. Why was it important for you to focus on their perspective?
6. *Change of Heart* explores cybercrime in the context of transplants. How realistic is the idea that hacking or criminal activity could intersect with organ donation?
7. What are some of the vulnerabilities in the current organ transplantation system that you’d like to see addressed?
8. Dr. Wilder, a key character in your book, faces moral and professional dilemmas in his role. How does his character reflect the pressures faced by real-life transplant surgeons?
9. The book critiques the subtle pressure families might feel to consent to organ donation. How can medical teams better navigate this sensitive process?
10. In the novel, priority systems for organ allocation come into question. Do you think the current systems are fair, or do they need reform?
11. You explore the concept of “living cadavers” and brain death in the book. How do you approach explaining these medical terms to a general audience?
12. How has your medical background influenced your storytelling? Are there aspects of the transplant process you wanted to demystify for readers?
13. Your book raises the question: Should the sickest patients always get priority, or should we optimize for the greatest number of lives saved? What’s your take on this ethical debate?
14. Cybersecurity is a recurring theme in your novel. What lessons can the medical field learn from other industries to better protect patient data?
15. What do you hope readers will take away from *Change of Heart*? Are there specific changes in how we view or handle transplants that you’d like to inspire?

**TV/Radio Interview**

**Exploring the Complexities of Transplants with Dr. Cristina LePort**

**Anchor:** Good evening, everyone, and welcome to today’s special interview segment. We’re thrilled to have with us Dr. Cristina LePort, author of the gripping medical thriller *Change of Heart*. Dr. LePort not only delivers a page-turning narrative but also delves into the intricate and often controversial world of organ transplants. Dr. LePort, thank you for joining us today.

**Dr. LePort:** Thank you for having me. It’s a pleasure to be here.

**Anchor:** Dr. LePort, your book *Change of Heart* paints a vivid and complex picture of the world of organ transplants. Let’s start with the basics. Why did you choose this topic as the focal point of your novel?

**Dr. LePort:** Organ transplantation is one of the most extraordinary achievements in modern medicine. It saves countless lives every year, but it’s also fraught with ethical dilemmas, emotional challenges, and logistical hurdles. As a cardiologist, I’ve seen these issues firsthand. I wanted to capture not only the life-saving potential but also the human and systemic complexities that make transplantation a compelling subject for a thriller.

**Anchor:** You certainly succeeded. The story is gripping and thought-provoking. Let’s dive deeper into some of the themes you explore. One of the standout elements in your book is the introduction of “heart chains,” a concept that adapts kidney chain donations for heart transplants. Can you explain how this works and why you included it?

**Dr. LePort:** Of course. In kidney chains, a donor’s kidney might not be a match for their intended recipient but could match someone else. This creates a domino effect of matched donor-recipient pairs. In *Change of Heart*, I introduced a similar concept for hearts, where patients and their linked donors enter a database. When a donor dies, their heart is allocated within the chain. This system increases compatibility and saves more lives but raises ethical questions because it prioritizes patients in the chain over others who might be more critically ill.

**Anchor:** That’s fascinating. But as you said, it’s also controversial. In the book, there’s a sense of tension around who gets prioritized. How does this reflect real-world debates about organ allocation?

**Dr. LePort:** Absolutely. In real life, organ allocation is guided by principles like urgency and compatibility. But prioritizing chain participants, as in the book, adds another layer of complexity. It highlights a broader debate: Should we focus solely on the sickest patients, or should we optimize systems to help the greatest number? It’s a utilitarian versus egalitarian dilemma that challenges our sense of fairness.

**Anchor:** Another standout theme in your book is the emotional and ethical toll on families of donors. For example, Amy Winter’s parents face immense pressure to approve the donation. Why was it important to you to explore their perspective?

**Dr. LePort:** Families are often asked to make decisions about organ donation during their darkest moments. They’re grieving, shocked, and trying to process the loss. I wanted to portray the raw humanity of these situations—the doubts, the reluctance, and the hope that their loved one’s death might bring life to others. It’s a powerful and heartbreaking aspect of transplantation that’s often overlooked in clinical discussions.

**Anchor:** It’s true; the emotional weight is palpable in your writing. But you don’t stop there. *Change of Heart* also explores systemic vulnerabilities in the organ transplant process, like hacking and mob involvement. That’s a surprising twist. What inspired you to tackle this angle?

**Dr. LePort:** In reality, medical systems are not immune to cyberattacks. Hospitals have been hacked, and sensitive patient data has been held for ransom. I wanted to show how these vulnerabilities could intersect with transplantation—a field where time, ethics, and technology are already under immense pressure. The idea of criminal exploitation adds a layer of suspense and underscores the need for better safeguards.

**Anchor:** It’s a sobering thought. Speaking of suspense, your book raises questions about how far medical professionals should go to save lives. For instance, Dr. Wilder is portrayed as both compassionate and pragmatic. How does his character reflect the real-world dilemmas faced by transplant teams?

**Dr. LePort:** Transplant teams work under incredible pressure. They’re balancing the needs of critically ill patients against the rights of donors and their families. Dr. Wilder’s character embodies this tension. He’s driven by his duty to save lives but must navigate the fine line between advocacy and coercion. His internal conflict reflects the broader ethical challenges in medicine.

**Anchor:** Let’s talk about those ethical challenges. Your book critiques the subtle coercion families might feel to consent to donation. Is this something that happens in real life?

**Dr. LePort:** It can. Medical teams are trained to approach families with sensitivity, but the urgency of organ procurement can sometimes come across as pressure. Families might feel they have no choice but to agree, especially if they believe it aligns with their loved one’s wishes. This is why transparency, empathy, and proper support are so critical in these conversations.

**Anchor:** Transparency—and trust—seem vital, especially given the cybercrime subplot in your book. How realistic is the idea that criminal elements could exploit transplant systems?

**Dr. LePort:** Sadly, it’s not far-fetched. While the scenarios in *Change of Heart* are fictional, they’re inspired by real vulnerabilities. Cybersecurity in healthcare is a growing concern. If hackers can access patient records, they could theoretically manipulate allocation systems or sell donor data. It’s a reminder that even life-saving systems aren’t immune to exploitation.

**Anchor:** It’s certainly food for thought. Now, let’s shift gears slightly. How does *Change of Heart* challenge conventional wisdom about organ transplants?

**Dr. LePort:** Conventional wisdom often presents organ transplants as unambiguously positive—a gift of life. While this is true, my book aims to show the complexities behind that narrative. It questions the fairness of allocation systems, highlights the emotional toll on families, and exposes systemic vulnerabilities. By doing so, I hope readers will see transplants not just as miracles but as deeply human endeavors with all the messiness that entails.

**Anchor:** That’s a powerful message. Before we wrap up, what do you hope readers take away from your book?

**Dr. LePort:** I hope they gain a greater appreciation for the medical and emotional challenges of organ transplants. I want readers to think critically about the ethical dilemmas, the need for robust systems, and the humanity of everyone involved—from donors and families to recipients and medical professionals. Ultimately, I hope *Change of Heart* inspires empathy and a deeper understanding of what it means to give and receive the gift of life.

**Anchor:** Empathy and understanding—two things we could all use more of. Dr. Cristina LePort, thank you so much for sharing your insights with us today. *Change of Heart* is available now, and I encourage everyone to pick up a copy. You won’t just be entertained; you’ll be enlightened.

**Dr. LePort:** Thank you for having me. It’s been a pleasure.

**Anchor:** That’s it for today’s interview segment. Stay tuned for more after this short break.

**Praise for Dr. Cristina LePort’s**

***Change of Heart,***

**Second Book in the Series**

“Once again, Cristina LePort pens an excellent thriller, enlivened with vivid medical details and startling twists. She gets better with every novel!”

**—Tess Gerritsen, New York Times Bestselling Author of THE SPY COAST**

“CHANGE OF HEART is a dark and twisted medical thriller that moves at breakneck speed. Reading it will keep you up well past midnight but, if you’re like me, you’ll love it.”

**A fake heart and an object

Description automatically generated―DP Lyle, Award-Winning author of the Jake Longly and Cain/Harper Thriller Series and Co-Creator of the Outliers Writing University**

“*Change of Heart* is a fast-paced, dark, and twisty medical thriller that dives into the high-stakes world of transplants, hospital politics, and moral dilemmas. Packed with vivid medical details and unexpected turns, this story will keep you hooked from start to finish. If you’re into stories that keep you guessing and turning pages well past midnight, this one’s for you.”

**—Freida McFadden, #1 New York Times Bestselling Thriller Writer**

“An expertly crafted medical thriller where hearts are stolen—both literally and figuratively. LePort’s *Change of Heart* delivers a gripping tale filled with unexpected twists that remain grounded in reality. With a fast-paced detective story, complex characters, and a captivating romance, this novel will keep readers on the edge of their seats. The relationship between FBI Agent Charlotte Bloom and heart surgeon Zayne Wilder is a standout, while Private Detective Kirk Miner proves to be a compelling and easy-to-root-for protagonist. A classic murder mystery that will keep readers guessing until the very end."

**—Kirkus Reviews**

“*Change of Heart* is a visceral and exhilarating journey into the underworld of organ donation and murder, set against the gritty pulse of New York City. LePort's medical expertise deepens the suspense, weaving intricate details of the heart and its perilous path to donation with relentless investigative thrills. Fans of Patricia Cornwell and Tess Gerritsen will be riveted as former NYPD detective Kirk Miner and FBI rookie Charlotte Bloom navigate dark secrets, unexpected alliances, and a refreshing partner dynamic, making this high-stakes medical drama a must-read for lovers of thought-provoking thrillers. Each twist and revelation sharpens the stakes, keeping readers hooked until the very last page."

**—BookLife-Publishers Weekly**

“LePort's talent lies in weaving deep medical knowledge with a pace that will keep you up way past your bedtime. No spoilers here, but her propulsive narrative and jaw-dropping twists will leave your heart racing.”

**—Joshua Spanogle, Distinguished California Physician Known for his Gripping Medical Thrillers**

“Medical thriller enthusiasts will find Cristina LePort’s CHANGE OF HEARTthe perfect ticket for a thoroughly absorbing read. The action is solid and nonstop, characters are believable and well-drawn, and the supporting underlying moral and ethical quandaries lend excellent tension to the story, which develops many twists and turns readers won’t see coming. Libraries seeking medical thrillers more than a cut above the usual will find CHANGE OF HEART an outstanding exploration of hospital politics, medical challenges, and mystery that lends equally well to book club recommendations and discussion groups.”

**—Midwest Book Review**

“This is possibly my favorite read of 2024! I loved the plot; it was so well thought-out. For the majority of the book, t was sitting on the edge of my seat, questioning what was going to happen next. The multiple plot twists were so unexpected but made so much sense! I can't wait for this book to come out so I can start recommending it!”

**— Jessica Eslick, TikTok Influencer with Nearly 5,000 Followers**

“An organ transplant chain has some suspiciously weak links. To the rescue: the brilliant, hard-charging professionals who saved the world in Dr. Cristina LePort’s *Dissection: A Medical & Political Thriller*. This time, the focus is intensely personal: one life at a time.  A shocking revelation changes the stakes, escalates the pace, and makes you want to skip ahead. The unexpected ending is just what the doctor ordered.”

**—Shoshana Milgram, Scholar-Teacher, Virginia Tech University, Where She Specializes in Narrative Fiction and Film**

“Dr. Cristina LePort's new medical suspense thriller, *Change of Heart,* is a gripping page-turner that rivals Scott Turow’s best legal cliff-hangers. This fast-paced ride cements LePort as a contemporary scribe who packs adrenaline into every chapter.”

**—Jonathan Hoenig, Fox News Contributor, and Professional Investor at Capitalistpig.com**

“Another heart-stopping medical thriller from cardiologist Cristina Leport that brilliantly balances medical, personal, and moral decisions having life and death consequences. My diagnosis: a great story!”

**—Steven L. Lansman, MD, PhD, Director of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Westchester Medical Center, and Professor of Surgery, New York Medical College**

“An excellent detective/FBI thriller involving heart transplant recipients and criminal tampering with the transplant database.”

**—Hit The Spot Books Blog**

"*Change of Heart* is a gripping medical thriller that intertwines the intricacies of modern medicine with the relentless pursuit of justice. Cristina LePort, M.D., masterfully combines her medical expertise with edge-of-your-seat storytelling, delivering a novel that will keep you turning pages long into the night. Dr. LePort is an accomplished physician with a passion for weaving medical knowledge into thrilling narratives. Her extensive background in medicine lends authenticity and depth to her stories, making the Miner & Mulville series a unique blend of fact and fiction.”

**—Fresh Fiction**

"A fast-paced, well-written medical thriller, *Change of Heart* by Dr. Cristina LePort follows private eye Kirk Miner and FBI agent-in-training Charlotte Bloom as they uncover a deadly conspiracy tied to organ transplants. A gripping blend of mystery, crime, and medicine.Yeah, folks, a good one!"

**— Jordan Rich, *WBZ-AM* Book Club, Boston, MA**

“In *Change of Heart: A Miner & Mulville Medical Thriller*, former police detective turned private investigator Kirk Miner is drawn into a chilling FBI case alongside Special Agent-in-Training Charlotte Bloom. What appears to be a tragic but routine suicide—a young medical student who inexplicably shoots herself in a way that preserves her heart for donation—quickly unravels into something far more sinister. As Kirk and Charlotte dig deeper, they uncover a disturbing pattern of manipulated organ transplants, with a powerful mob boss pulling the strings to ensure a secret recipient gets a second chance—no matter the cost. Meanwhile, Charlotte faces a battle of her own: a life-threatening heart condition that she must conceal to finish her probationary period with the FBI. With each revelation, the stakes intensify—Kirk’s wife is shot, Charlotte is running out of time, and an intricate web of cybercrime, assassinations, and black-market deals threatens to consume them both. With her expertise as a cardiologist, Cristina LePort delivers a tense, high-stakes thriller where every heartbeat matters—and where survival means outmaneuvering those who control the system.”

**—BookBytes**

“Another compelling entry in the medical thriller genre, this story delves into the lucrative and shadowy organ donor-harvesting-transplant industry. Detectives uncover crucial details while questioning whether the death was accidental or coincidental. With a well-designed plot and excellent characters, this thriller is both informative and engaging.”  
—**Doug Younce, Educator**

“A multi-faceted, gripping medical thriller that cleverly and authentically intertwines the intricacies of modern medicine with the relentless pursuit of justice. With multiple jaw-dropping twists and turns, fast-paced action, and well-defined characters, *Change of Heart* is a compelling blend of fact and fiction, reminiscent of the storytelling mastery of Robin Cook and Tess Gerritsen."

**— Fiction Books Blog**

“The sheer depth of the book’s descriptions made me feel like I was watching a movie on TV. The conversations felt so real. The characters, the locations, the emotions, and even the smells were cleverly depicted. I enjoyed the way the chapters were laid out, jumping from one character's perspective to another. This not only kept the writing exciting, but I could literally see the camera panning from one character to another as a film director would do. The story itself is very original. The plot made sense even though it was clear the author has medical knowledge. Even a reader with no such knowledge could follow along without a problem. Because so much was going on in this book, I not only remained interested but wanted to read on. There were a number of twists and turns that I hadn’t expected. A really good read (five stars), with a good combination of crime, mystery, and a little teeny bit of romance, CHANGE OF HEART would make an excellent film!”

**—Caron Williams, Netgalley Reviewer from the UK**

“I love a good suspenseful mystery, and this book delivered. The plot was compelling, keeping me eager to know what happened next. Though I guessed some twists, it didn’t lessen my enjoyment. The writing was clear, and the medical information was well-handled, neither overwhelming nor dumbed down. As a healthcare worker, I appreciated the balance. I’d read more from LePort for a fun, easy read.”

**—StoryGraph**

“In *Change of Heart*, Cristina LePort delivers another gripping medical thriller, this time plunging readers into the dark world of organ trafficking. With its pulse-racing suspense and authentic medical detail, *Change of Heart* masterfully blends modern medicine with relentless investigative action. LePort’s expertise as a cardiologist brings chilling realism to this high-stakes thriller, making it an unmissable read for fans of Robin Cook, Michael Palmer, and Tess Gerritsen.”

**— SA Examiner, a Dedicated Thriller Reviewer and Avid fan of Medical Suspense**

**“A gripping medical thriller that dives deep into the dark world of organ trafficking. LePort masterfully blends medical expertise with high-stakes suspense, crafting a fast-paced story filled with moral dilemmas, relentless investigations, and a criminal network willing to kill to protect its secrets.”  
— TheReadingCornerforAll*​* Blog**

**“Fantastic and unputdownable! LePort’s immersive writing pulls you straight into the story, making you feel like you’re part of the investigation. Her medical knowledge adds urgency and depth, while unexpected twists keep you guessing. The ending? Sheer perfection.”**  
**— Lisa Albright, booksloveandunderstanding*​* Blog**

“An absorbing medical mystery addressing organ donation and ethics, *Change of Heart* dives into suspicious suicides near hospitals. With cybercrime and a rigged donor database at its core, this thriller merges well-researched medical knowledge with suspense, delivering thought-provoking twists on humanity’s darker side.”  
—**Sheri, Reviewing on Goodreads**

“This was a really well-thought-out book: Great characters to become attached to. A story that revolves around who’s going to get heart transplants. Some very good surprises. Nice combination of medicine and mystery. I highly recommend *Change of Heart*.”

**— Dan Q, Reviewing on Netgalley**

“‘Change of Heart,’ written by medical doctor Cristina LePort, is a heart-pounding, hard-to-put-down medical thriller. With a hacked transplant chain, rising suicides, and reckless rookie Charlotte Bloom teaming with FBI and private consultants, this fast-paced, authentic novel delivers suspense and intrigue. A must-read for fans of medical thrillers.”  
—**Paula K, Librarian, Reviewing on Netgalley**

“Kirk Miner, “The Medical Detective,” partners with FBI agent Charlotte Bloom to unravel cybercrime linked to organ trafficking. This compelling thriller explores hacked medical records, suspicious donor deaths, and ethical dilemmas, delivering a fast-paced, adrenaline-filled story blending mystery, romance, and medical expertise.”  
—**Fran, Reviewing on Goodreads**

“From a medical student’s staged suicide to dangerous conspiracies, *Change of Heart* captivates. Detective Miner and FBI agents Bloom and Mulville uncover murders staged for organ harvesting. This shocking, gripping thriller delivers suspense, ethical dilemmas, and a storyline impossible to put down.”  
—**Anne Wolters, Reviewing on Goodreads**

“Gripping from start to finish, *Change of Heart* explores cybercrime, organ trafficking, and ethics. PI Kirk Miner and FBI rookie Charlotte Bloom collaborate in a fast-paced medical thriller. With engaging characters and surprising twists, this adrenaline-packed story demands attention, leaving readers eager for more.”  
—**Kirsten, Reviewing on Goodreads**

“I LOVED THIS BOOK—the details. the plot. the characters, the twists…all of it. Probably one of my favorite reads of the year. Five out of five stars!”

**—Ashleigh Cowles, Avid Reader from Milton, FL**

“Believable characters in plausible situations populate this medical thriller. Anchored by a strong sense of place and a clever, inventive plot, the unfolding narrative pulls readers into the telling of the tale from the outset. The medical details add depth to the telling of the tale and the fast pace keeps the story moving. Moral and ethical questions, the inevitable politics, and the challenges faced by doctors all work together to make this tale both captivating and thought-provoking. Filled with surprising twists, this medical murder mystery keeps those pages turning as fast as possible. With readers on the edge of their seats, the revelations keep readers guessing right up to the satisfying denouement. Readers who enjoy mysteries with a medical twist will find much to appreciate here, as will those who are looking for a good mystery. Highly recommended.”

**—Joan, Reviewing the Book on LibraryThing.com**

"An intense and interesting medical mystery/thriller with high stakes and compelling characters. The story is fast-paced, with enough tension that you don’t want to stop reading, and the twists ensure you can’t always be sure what’s going to happen next."

**— Liliyana S., Reviewing on NetGalley**

“With medical authenticity that enhances this twisty page-turner, LePort has crafted a gripping medical thriller. It explores the terrifying possibilities of cyber-hacking in hospitals, particularly the heart transplant list, while telling a tale of found family and reconnecting with those taken for granted. The secondary story question—whether our jobs are worth jeopardizing our health—resonates deeply, especially in healthcare. With likable characters and satisfying plot twists, CHANGE OF HEART will have you questioning: What would you sacrifice for your family, and would it be enough?”

**—JL Lycette, MD, Author of *The Algorithm Will See You Now***

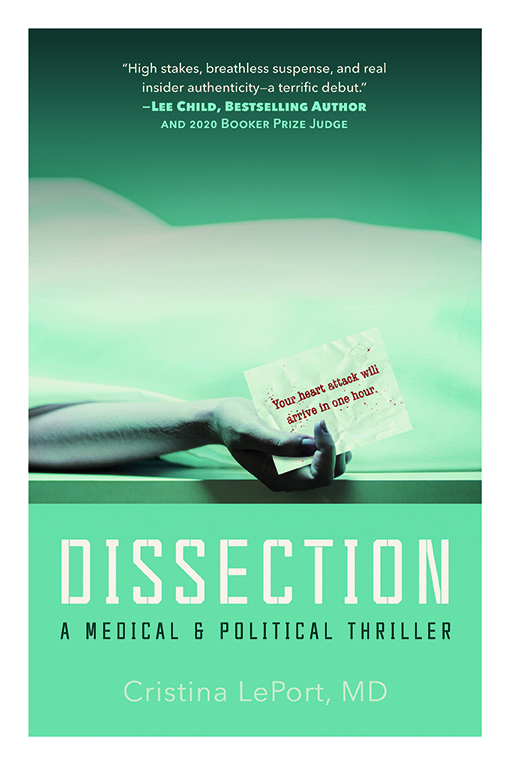
**Praise for Dr. Cristina LePort’s**

***Dissection,***

**First Book in the Series**

"High stakes, breathless suspense, and real insider authenticity—a terrific debut."

**—Lee Child, Bestselling Author and 2020 Booker Prize Judge**



“With a terrifying premise and riveting medical details, *Dissection* moves at a frantic pace.”

**—Tess Gerritsen, New York Times Bestselling Author**

“This is a breakthrough novel—suspenseful, fast, and furious. It takes you into the real lived world of a cardiac physician because Dr. LePort has long been one. Don’t start DISSECTION at night—its pace never lets up and you need your sleep.”

**—New York Times Bestselling Author** **Gregory Benford, Author of *Timescape***

“What if catastrophic events such as heart attacks and strokes could be predicted, or caused? What if these events were part of a much larger conspiracy? These questions, and many more, fuel DISSECTION, a fast-paced and well-written medical thriller. Grab a copy and enjoy the ride.”

**—D.P. Lyle, MD, Award-winning Author of the Jake Longly and Cain/Harper Thriller Series**

“If you want to go to bed on time every night this week, don't start reading Cristina LePort's new thriller, *Dissection*—which begins with a string of deadly, unusual heart attacks that seem to have no conceivable explanation. LePort, who is not only a novelist but also a cardiologist, does a masterful job of incorporating ultra-clear explanations of medical science to develop a fascinating medical mystery. I was hooked from the beginning, and by the time I was halfway through, I found myself going to bed late and waking up early to see how it would end.”

**—Alex Epstein,** **New York Times Bestselling Author**

“LePort, a cardiologist, draws on her own experience to bring the medical crises in this debut to life, crafting a frightening plot while skillfully describing surgical processes alongside the political issues that all too often impact medical care … Although the emphasis is on action, LePort expertly crafts the key characters … LePort makes it clear that no technology is as frightening as the darkest parts of the human mind, and readers will be satisfied with the characters’ well-deserved fates as they travel to the nail-biting finish.”

**—BookLife (Offshoot of *Publishers Weekly*)**

“In LePort’s twisty tale of a debut thriller, someone is murdering people by triggering heart attacks and strokes, and an FBI agent and private eye are on the case… LePort’s story is not short on thrills, and it offers many twists and turns certain to keep readers engaged. The author’s prose will be accessible to readers with little medical knowledge, as the characters explain aortic and coronary dissections in ways that feel natural and that provide a basic but clear understanding of what’s happening to the victims. The blending of medical emergencies with political thriller tropes is relatively uncommon… LePort uses her own experience as a cardiovascular specialist to enhance an already engaging actioner.”

**―Kirkus Reviews**

“An action-packed medical thriller in which Dr. Steven Leeds, a renowned cardiac surgeon at a prestigious DC hospital, is caught in a plot to destabilize global diplomatic relations… The mystery behind a raft of cardiac assassinations he must deal with is built on a foundation of well-explained medical technology, while the story’s explosive pivot toward an intricate terrorist plot to destabilize the US government and kick off a nuclear war is captivating. And the efforts to prove the innocence of the surgeon’s girlfriend, a prominent medical researcher, lead to an additional and intriguing cat-and-mouse chase. Leeds’ determination to exonerate her while utilizing his medical expertise to thwart the terrorist plot leads to ultimate rewards as the story crescendos with a series of rapid-fire, dangerous actions. *Dissection* is a riveting medical thriller in which a shrouded cabal puts their villainous plans into motion—with only a heart surgeon to stop them.”

**—Foreword Clarion Reviews**

“DISSECTION is a remarkable novel by Dr. Cristina LePort, a cardiologist who combines medical knowledge with a deep understanding of how bad the Iranian dictatorship is and how easily medical terrorism could occur. It’s a great read!”

**—Newt Gingrich, Former Speaker of the House**

“Takes Robin Cook-style suspense to a whole new level…*Dissection*'s fast pace, believable progression and characters, and attention to detail makes it an outstanding recommendation for libraries seeing patron interest in medical thrillers. This audience will find *Dissection* a gripping story that proves hard to put down and thought-provoking to the end.”

**—Senior Reviewer Diane Donovan, Midwest Book Review**

“*Dissection* is a terrifying medical thriller that is not only frightening on paper, but truly blood-curdling to think about in a real-world application. It is a tense, tautly written, descriptive, electrifying, and formidable novel that makes you think, and most of all makes you feel every single thing that is happening as it occurs. I read this work like someone thirsting for water after days in the desert sun—voraciously ingesting the pages as quickly as I could to reach the stunning climax and marvelous ending. I cannot recommend Dr. Cristina LePort’s expertly written novel highly enough to all fans of medical and psychological thrillers. It’s a compelling, page-turning, exceptional book that will leave you breathless—both in written word and emotionally. A five out of five stars MUST READ!”

**―Reedsy Discovery**

"This debut medical thriller by Dr. Cristina LePort, a real-life cardiologist, would make an excellent gift for any thriller reader in your life. The high-stakes plot and political subplot will captivate and intrigue, and could make a great stocking stuffer for anyone (or yourself)!"

**—The Reading Lists, a Medium magazine collaboration between writers, publishing professionals, and students**

“As a practicing cardiologist for 45 years, I was attracted to DISSECTION by a new author, Dr. Cristina Leport, who happens to also be a well-established cardiologist. Little did I know that I would find myself entrapped in an emotional rollercoaster that was impossible to exit. The emergency room drama, the medical crises, the personality conflicts, and the medical politics were all too real to me as I felt each and every heart attack. I remain transfixed by the fact that the medical technology and deadly application at DISSECTION’s heart can actually now be used in some cardiac catheterization labs to treat clogged arteries. The character development was also a very strong component of this first-rate novel. The characters were so real that you might think you’ve met them in real life. I applaud Dr. Leport for her detailed research, her ability to create a thriller, and her ability to analyze diverse personalities, displaying both their strengths and weaknesses. My sincere hope is that her next novel is not far too far away.”

**—Robert S. Greenfield MD (FACC FAHA FNLA), Associate Professor of Medicine, University of California at Irvine**

“After receiving a review copy of *Dissection*, I decided to look at just a few pages, then read it all later, whenever I got the time. But soon, I found myself halfway through the book, turning pages with real interest. I was hooked. Cristina LePort has done a superb job of producing a suspenseful, ingenious, and well-written thriller, with a fully satisfying conclusion. I can't wait to read her next one.”

**---Leonard Peikoff, Philosopher and Author of *Objectivism: The Philosophy of Ayn Rand***

“Drawing from her real-life experience as a cardiologist, Dr. LePort has given us a fast-paced, suspenseful, and thoroughly impressive debut thriller that we’re honored to help launch.”

**— Terry Sanchez, Programs Specialist, Newport Beach (CA) Public Library**

"Dr. LePort demonstrates the disastrous potential of cutting-edge technology in the wrong hands. After all, how do you defend yourself against an invisible enemy? *Dissection* is a truly terrifying tale, featuring a never-before-seen weapon capable of unimaginable consequences."

**—Dr. Jenna Podjasek, Author of the Medical Thriller *Particles in the Air* (2023)**

“Dr. LePort surgically weaves romance, national political intrigue, international peril, a constitutional crisis, and an emergency medical catastrophe into a creative thriller whose gripping intensity lasts through the electrifying end.”

**—Steven L. Lansman, MD, PhD, Director of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Westchester Medical Center, and Professor of Surgery, New York Medical College**

*Dissection* is a fun and fast-paced medical thriller I gobbled down like candy. Weaving politics, ethics, and morality, it's a frenzied who-done-it that kept me glued until the end.”

**—Jonathan Hoenig, Hedge fund founder and regular contributor to and regular panelist on Fox News Channel's “Cashin' In,” “Your World with Neil Cavuto,” and “Red Eye w/ Greg Gutfeld”**

“Dr. LePort creates an exciting and complex story which includes romance, politics, and significant medical innovation. A first-class cardiologist and researcher, she employs an extraordinary depth of knowledge to create an outstanding novel.”

—**John Allison, Retired Chairman and CEO of BB&T Bank; Retired President and CEO of the Cato Institute**

“LePort masterfully leverages her scientific and medical knowledge to create an unforgettable, refreshingly ingenious thriller.”

**—Andrea Hernandez-Mendez, George Washington University**

“Dr. LePort’s *Dissection* has many things in common with Lee Child’s Jack Reacher thrillers. The suspenseful story is interwoven with national political intrigue and international peril, so you feel you must keep reading. Dr. LePort adds authentic medical crises and an insider’s view of hospital responses.”

**— Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons**

“A gripping page-turner fueled by a spine-chilling premise, LePort, a cardiologist with decades of clinical experience, delivers all the high drama of an emergency room heart attack, packed with hyper-realistic details and a cast of unforgettable characters.”

**—Jeff Oliver, Author, *The Two-Plate Solution* (A PW-Starred Thriller)**

“Fill Dr. LePort’s prescription for *Dissection*, then buckle up ’cause you’re in for a helluva heart-pounder.”

**—Harry Newman, World-Famous Architect Who’s Designed or Redone Houses for Many Hollywood Celebrities**

“*Dissection*sucked me into its whirlwind of intrigue and compelling characters and wouldn’t release me. Bravo, Dr. LePort!”

**—Laurel Anne Hill, award-winning author of *Plague of Flies: Revolt of the Spirits, 1846* and *The Engine Woman’s Light***

“Take Dr. LePort’s *Dissection* as directed—your heart-pounding awaits.”

**—Ruby Newman, California-based Fashion Designer**

“What an interesting premise—people receiving a card announcing they’re going to have a heart attack in the next hour… The author, a cardiologist, is uniquely qualified to write this story … She’s got a hit here.”

**—Paul Miller, Host, “WPHM-AM Morning Show” (Port Huron, MI)**

“*Dissection* starts as a chilling medical thriller, then propels into a terrifying political nightmare as it demonstrates just how vulnerable we would be if a medical device were used as a weapon. Because the author is a physician, the medical details are fine-tuned and precise. Yet she also does a stellar job of keeping the suspense alive. A heart-racing debut!”

—**[Subakka’s Bookstuff](https://subakkastuff.wordpress.com/)**

“This was a very interesting story right from the start. I loved that we jumped straight into the action. My favorite part of the story was definitely near the end when all of the action is taking place. I think this could make an amazing movie! I also enjoyed learning more about how heart attacks etc work and how the government handles the designated survivor. Overall, this is a great book if you want a lot of action and to learn some new things!”

**— Nissa the Bookworm**

“Dr. LePort had me at hello. Her novel is fast-paced and downright scary because you wonder if it could happen, and if so, if our FBI would be as good as the Mulville character. No spoilers, but I think the level of detail made the book engaging, and an altogether good reading experience. Can't wait for the movie.”

**—Kathryn Atkins, Freelance Writer, Southern California**

“𝘊𝘩𝘪𝘭𝘭𝘪𝘯𝘨, 𝘨𝘳𝘪𝘱𝘱𝘪𝘯𝘨 𝘢𝘯𝘥 𝘴𝘶𝘴𝘱𝘦𝘯𝘴𝘦𝘧𝘶𝘭! This one was a really wild ride. I don’t think I’ve read a lot of medical thrillers, and wow, it was simply fascinating. It was fast-paced, terrifying, thrilling, and impossible to put down. A fantastic read.”

**—Vero, Books and Coffee MX**

“This is an outstanding thriller that kept me up way past my bedtime. The medical and biophysical elements are fascinating and frightening and the characters are all believable and well-developed. The chapters flow seamlessly through the various characters and situations and give the story a tight organized feel that draws you in and doesn't let go. You don't want to miss this suspenseful novel!”

**—Books, Love, and Understanding**

“An exciting and gripping debut that I enjoyed so much! … The story went from fast to faster! I loved the trio of characters solving the mystery at the heart of the terrifying plot—heart surgeon Dr Leeds, brilliant detective Kirk Miner, and FBI agent Jack Mulville. This phenomenal thriller had everything – especially cutting-edge medical science that only a practicing cardiologist could so deftly write.”

**—** **Michelle AANHPI, "Nurse Bookie Blog”**

“I cannot believe this is the author’s debut because it is so good! It’s along the same lines as John Grisham or James Patterson. The story starts on a solid note, and halfway into the plot, it gets more gripping and shocking with each new twist and turn.”

**—Rajiv, Rajiv’s Reviews**

“I absolutely love medical thrillers and this is the best one I’ve ever read! I love the cover. The plot was original and creative, the characters so well-developed, and very well written. I really enjoyed learning about what a dissection is in cardiovascular and biophysicist terms. I was having heart palpitations just reading this in anticipation of what was to come! So incredibly good and realistic. Highly, highly recommend reading!”

**—Thrillers and Coffee**

"This was such a suspenseful ride! I had never thought about the idea that a heart attack could be intentionally inflicted. Such an interesting story with all the medical info that I didn’t know about. I could see this being a great action movie too. Pick this one up for a great, suspenseful medical thriller!”

**—Jill, Plains Reading**

"The tag line on the cover says a medical and political thriller and this book does not disappoint in either department...The writing is excellent and the progression of the story flows at a good pace. I also liked the layers involved and how they unfold during the book. The medical explanations were easy for a non- medical person like myself to understand."

**— Debbie Elkens Rozier, “Rozier Reads and Wine”**

“*Dissection* is a page-turning thriller based around a mother’s love for her daughter, that mother’s former lover and fellow Cardiologist, Dr. Steve Leeds, and ultimately, the world. Based in Washington DC, what starts as a mysterious and unexplainable health crisis explodes into the capital, as the unthinkable happens during a State of the Union address. At every step of the way, your keen interest in the well-developed characters and emotional roller-coaster nature of the story leave you waiting to see what they are confronted with next. In action reminiscent of the TV series *24* and *Designated Survivor*, Dr. Christina LePort leaves you wondering whether and how an FBI exec and a private investigator will find a medical solution that may very well prevent World War III.”

**—Chris Allen, World-Renowned Therapist, McDonough, GA**

“I've been a huge fan of Patricia Cornwell for years...This book, which is truly heart-stopping, can stand up to hers, which is a great compliment. I’m so glad I picked it up. Five out of five stars!”

**—Jean E. Smith, Reviewing Book on Amazon**

“A wild thrill ride from beginning to end. Its original high concept, relentless pace, and lively characters will captivate you right through the very last satisfying page.”

**―Kira Peikoff Author of such thrillers as *Living Proof, No Time to Die,* an*d Mother Knows Best.* Editor in Chief at**[**Leaps.Org**](http://leaps.org/)**.**

**Q&A with Author Cristina LePort, MD**

**What is the most difficult part of your writing process?**

Coming up with a good plot.

**What comes first for you — the plot or the characters — and why?**

The plot comes first, unless the book is part of a series featuring the same characters. I can only imagine my characters in action, in the story.

  
**Do you identify with any of your characters? If so, which one(s)?**

I always try to identify in turn with all the main characters, in order to feel their passions and speak for them. Most of the time, I feel more comfortable identifying with the male characters. I’m writing a book now in which I fully identify with the woman protagonist, a cardiologist.



**In addition to writing this sequel, do you plan to write a prequel?**

I have written a prequel, which is the story of how Kirk Miner acquired his strange medical knowledge: DYING TO REMEMBER. I also have one other book which follows, both with the same PI Kirk Miner and FBI guy Jack Mulville.

**Did you know you wanted the novel to be a thriller form the very beginning?**

Yes.

**Can you share a story about what brought you to this particular career path?**

During my years of elementary and high school, I hated writing. The days when we were assigned a “theme” to write about was a nightmare. After medical school, I specialized in Internal Medicine, but, after 17 years of practice, I needed something new. One day, while attempting to get into a Cardiology fellowship, I started to listen to Ayn Rand’s lectures “The Art of Fiction.” I decided to try writing a novel. Soon, I got addicted to the feeling of entering a world where I could make anything happen.

**Can you share the most interesting story that occurred to you in the course of your career?**

One day, I saw a commercial on TV about a medication used to treat heart attacks. A man opened a card while a voice said, “Wouldn’t it be nice if we got a notice when a heart attack is going to strike, so we can prevent it?” I thought that was a great idea for a medical thriller. That’s how my debut novel, DISSECTION, started.

**What was the biggest challenge you faced in your journey to becoming an author? How did you overcome it? Can you share a story about that soother aspiring writers can learn from it?**

Writing for me was the “easy” part. Getting my book published was the most difficult thing I have ever done in my life. One never gets used to rejections. There is always a gnawing pain paving the way for discouragement. The best way I found to overcome both is to make a new plan and never lose track of the goal: Polish the book; Submit new queries; Get help from editors and writing coaches. I definitely recommend getting a coach to find an agent. I found that simply reshuffling a query can get you noticed by an agent who previously rejected your submission and they might actually read your writing and offer you representation. It happened to me. Most of all, keep on writing. Your NEXT novel may be the best one yet.

**What is the main empowering lesson you want your readers to take away after finishing your books?**

Heroes are regular human beings who keep on fighting to overcome impossible obstacles, despite their fears and limitations.

**Based on your experience, what are the “Five Things You Need to Know to Become a Great Author”?**

Know what you write about. Write about a world you want to be in, and about a character you want to meet. The book about my present specialty, cardiology, was the first I got published, and it was great fun writing it.

Edit, correct, and polish. I got many requests for a full MS after editing a version that had received only rejections.

Get help. Not by friend or family, but from dispassionate experts. I worked with several editors and learned from each.

Don’t give up. DISSECTION was rejected hundreds of times.

Keep on writing. I wrote four more books while trying to publish my first one.

**What is the one habit you believe contributed the most to you becoming a great writer? (i.e. perseverance, discipline, play, craft study).**

Perseverance. Someone once told me I am like a tank. When I want something, no one can stop me. I took it as a compliment. The publication of DISSECTION is an example.

**Which literature do you draw inspiration from? And why?**

Masters of thrillers such as Lee Child, Michael Connelly, Robin Cook, and Tess Gerritsen are my favorite authors. They know how to create suspense and make readers turn the page.

**Assume you are a person of enormous influence. If you could start a movement that would bring the most amount of good to the most amount of people, what would that be?**

Reform education: Our future depends on children learning how to think. Teach conceptualization instead of memorization.

**How can readers follow you on social media?**

FaceBook: @cristinaleportauthor, Twitter: @LeportCristina, and Author Website: [**www.cristinaleport.com**](http://www.cristinaleport.com)

**20 Book Club Questions**

1. How does Dr. Cristina LePort use her medical expertise to enhance the authenticity of the medical scenes in "CHANGE OF HEART"?
2. Discuss the ethical dilemmas presented in the book. How do they reflect the complexities of the medical profession?
3. What role does family play in the lives of the main characters, Kirk and Charlotte? How do their familial relationships influence their decisions?
4. The story merges genres of crime, mystery, and romance. Which element did you find most compelling and why?
5. Discuss the representation of cybercrime in the novel. How does it add to the tension and progression of the plot?
6. The novel includes a sinister organ donation chain. Discuss how this plot element impacts your view of organ donation and the possible darker sides of it.
7. Charlotte has a secret heart condition that she hides to protect her career. Discuss how her condition and her secrecy impact her character development and relationships.
8. Kirk is drawn back into criminal investigation despite the risks to his family life. Discuss the internal and external conflicts he faces throughout the story.
9. The book is set in New York City. How does the setting influence the story? Do you think the story would change significantly if set in another location?
10. How does the relationship between Kirk and Charlotte evolve throughout the novel? What do you think draws them together?
11. Dr. Zayne Wilder is a significant character whose professional and personal lives intersect with the main plot. Discuss his role and how he affects the storyline.
12. Santo Montepulciano is portrayed with a complex background in organized crime and cybercrime. Discuss how he serves as both a character and a plot device.
13. The narrative includes themes of conspiracy and corruption. Which scenes were most effective in developing these themes?
14. How do the thriller elements of the novel affect the pacing and your engagement with the story?
15. Discuss the portrayal of women in the novel, particularly focusing on Charlotte and how she navigates her career and personal challenges.
16. The book includes a blend of professional and personal challenges for the characters. Which character's journey did you find most relatable or compelling?
17. How does the novel address the theme of sacrifice? Which character makes the greatest sacrifice, and what do they gain or lose as a result?
18. Forbidden romance is a recurring theme. How does this theme play out between the characters, and what consequences does it have on their lives?
19. Discuss the cinematic qualities of the book. Which scenes do you think would translate best to a film or TV series?
20. The author, Dr. Cristina LePort, includes many medical details in the book. How do these details contribute to the story's realism and your understanding of the characters' professions?



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**About the Author**

 Dr. Cristina LePort is a multi-faceted personality whose journey from a vibrant childhood in Bologna, Italy, to becoming a celebrated cardiologist and author in Southern California, encapsulates the essence of determination, intellect, and creative prowess. Born into a family where education and the American dream were revered, Cristina had early exposure to literature, and her father's admiration for the U.S. profoundly influenced her path.

Graduating summa cum laude from the University of Bologna School of Medicine, she embarked on a challenging yet rewarding medical career that led her to the shores of the United States, despite the hurdles of language and cultural transition.

After completing her residency in Internal Medicine at Long Island College Hospital/Downstate in Brooklyn, NY, Cristina's insatiable quest for knowledge and specialization in cardiology took her to the prestigious corridors of UCLA for cardiovascular research, culminating in a fellowship at the West Los Angeles VA/UCLA program. Her contributions to the medical field, particularly in aging and chronic diseases through her co-founded biotech company Genescient, underscore her commitment to advancing medical science.

However, it is Cristina's transition from a medical professional to a fiction writer that unveils the richness of her talents. Inspired by the medical world's inherent drama and complexity, she has penned gripping medical thrillers that not only entertain but also provoke thought about the ethical dimensions of medicine and science. Her debut novel, "Dissection," and its successor, "Change of Heart," are testaments to her ability to weave intricate plots that explore the high-stakes environment of medical crises and political intrigue.

Cristina's writing is infused with the authenticity of her medical expertise, drawing readers into the visceral realities of the operating room and the ethical dilemmas faced by those in the medical profession. Her narratives are a bridge between the worlds of medicine and literature, offering a unique perspective that challenges the boundaries of both fields.

Residing in Orange County, California, with her husband, Peter LePort, a general surgeon, and surrounded by a loving family, Cristina embodies the dual spirit of a dedicated physician and a storyteller. Her journey from an immigrant with dreams to a respected cardiologist and author is a compelling narrative of resilience, passion, and the pursuit of excellence.

Through her novels, Dr. LePort invites readers into the exhilarating and precarious world of medical thrillers, where the stakes are life itself. With each page, she reaffirms her place not only in the annals of medicine but also in the rich tradition of doctors who turn to writing to explore the moral and existential questions at the heart of human life.