

It Was Out of Love
A True Love Story of Deception, Grace, and Forgiveness
by James S. Marr
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In the 1993 film *Shadowlands*, a C. S. Lewis biopic that centers on his relationship with Joy Davidman Gresham, Lewis (Anthony Hopkins) tells a student who is skeptical about the value of reading, “We read to know that we are not alone.”

A memoir often serves a related purpose. One of the values of reading a memoir is a new connectedness that the reader can feel with someone he or she was not acquainted with before.

It Was Out of Love: A True Love Story of Deception, Grace, and Forgiveness (WinePress Publishing Group, 2010) is such a memoir. The author is James S. Marr, computer systems engineer, former Air Force officer and instructor at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. It tells the true story of his long-term, complicated marriage with a woman he thought he knew, yet in reality he did not. Only as his wife Melissa lay dying did she reveal to him the elaborate series of falsehoods about her past that she had misled him with for more than three decades.

Marr’s style is straightforward. He takes off the rose-colored glasses often worn by surviving spouses and portrays his wife and himself in the clear light of day as imperfect human beings who nonetheless have their redeeming qualities. As he reveals the truth about his wife’s fabricated identity, he spells out the facts, fabrications, and fictions that Melissa successfully presented to him and others for years. Through the book runs a consistent theme of a strong faith in God that allowed Jim to accept and forgive Melissa, and that allowed Melissa to find forgiveness for her deception.