



Conquering Darkness: Memoir of the Serial Killer's Wife

Alice M. Swafford , Crystal Choyce-Lige

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From conqueringdarkness.com: This memoir, written by Alice and her daughter, Crystal Choyce-Lige, provides an up close and honest retrospective account of what life was like with a budding serial rapist and serial murderer who flew under the radar of his family and law enforcement for decades. How? He was very, very clever and cunning. All the while he was playing the part of husband and father; he was also leaving the house every night for his well thought out and stakeouts to lure and prey upon the most vulnerable people in our society. The essential questions asked and then answered are: How and why could this nightmare happen and then last for so long? Why couldn't Alice see what was right in front of her? The answers will enlighten as well as surprise those who embark upon the riveting adventure of reading this book

Conquering Darkness: Memoir of the Serial Killer's Wife Details

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From Reader Review Conquering Darkness: Memoir of the Serial Killer's Wife for online ebook

♥ Marlene♥ says

What a weird book. It felt like it was written by an teenager.

The OMG!!!'s and the crossed words were kind of weird.I am so glad I did not spend my money on this one. I would have been pissed off!

For me this book was very confusing. From the now she jumped to the past but not in a very good way. While in the past she then told us her husband had raped women. You know me, I prefer my books in chronological order although there are some authors that can pull it of. Not this author alas.

I also felt the author was constantly defending why she married this guy. He must have done something nice cause she kept taking him back, but I could not find that in her writing. She was constantly telling us how bad he was how he never spoke a word.

What was funny that she wrote the word penis like this pe*is something like that. Come on. There is no need for that.You come from a world where people consider that a nice word and use much harsher words.Penis is a very normal word. It felt to me like she tried to act she was very prudish or something.

There were also good things though. If the things I'd mentioned above were not there she would be a good writer. She does have some talent.

Some notes I made: The author decided to sit at the side of the defense tables during trial because out of respect for the family of the victims.

Hmm. Okay.. Oh well.

I also felt a little bit of racism towards white people. She gave some white people names. One was POWMD Plain old white male doctor and another one was NPAA. (No personality at all, referring to another white doctor.

She was very aware of race that is for sure but maybe that is because where she grew up.

I am going to give it 2 stars because I am in a good mood.

Lauren Nicole says

I had the privilege of discussing this book with the author at my March book club meeting so my review has the benefit of asking the author all my "but wait, what about THIS? And why did you do THAT?" questions. To not be a professional author, I think Swafford fearlessly wrote an incredibly engaging piece. She opened herself up to other people's opinions of her decisions, her life, her story... And for that, I applaud her. A few areas could have been more developed, but overall, it was a decent work worth reading.

E. says

Wow, this book was so good. The authors set the scene so well that I felt I was seeing the sights and hearing the sounds from West Oakland, CA in the 60's and 70's. I got to know serial killer William Choyce in a way one can only know a violent rapist and murderer...through those closest to him. Choyce's ex-wife Alice and daughter Crystal co-authored this book and I was truly mesmerized. Despite a few grammatical errors, the writing was solid and at times, soulful. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in hearing the spouse's side of the story and how they're often kept in the dark about homicidal tendencies. You will not be disappointed.

Sara says

Just seeing the title of this memoir had me eager to buy it and read it, but as I read through some of the reviews I was slightly concerned about the distractions of grammar/random capitalization/mixed up words/etc. All in all, it is a truly amazing story, and readers should keep in mind that the authors are not professional and simply felt the need to share their story. Later publications may be slightly edited but the story will remain the same, and that's what we, as readers, are here for.

It took a lot of courage and strength for these women to dig through their pasts and see this man as the monster that he was; I cannot imagine for one minute what they went through, but I am glad I had the opportunity to read their story.

Sharon says

This will be a review of both the book and the author. First off, Alice needs an editor. There were WAY too many grammatical errors or words that didn't make sense or acronyms that shouldn't be. There is no reason to cross a word out and then replace with a different choice right after. While some acronyms are interpretable, if you have to explain what the letters stand for, just type it out....you did it anyway. There was also a lot of formatting changes that left a lot to be desired. I don't need small italic text followed by all capital letters.

And for all that her daughter Crystal is also credited with authoring the book, I did not hear, not even once, a second voice telling the story.

Moving on...

Alice tries to come across as a strong empowered woman throughout the story. But she fails miserably, partly from what I've already mentioned before. How many reasons does she need to stay away from the guy in the first place? There are constantly signs that he's not a normal man and she chooses to see what she believes him to be. And then wanting a baby and choosing him as the father while barely having what any normal person would consider a relationship, much less a healthy relationship.

What Alice should have tried from the beginning instead of 20 some years later was seeking out therapy. She clearly needed it.

Em says

If you like books with RANDOM CAPITALISATION, unnecessary */italics/*, abbreviations like "IDK" and "OMG" scattered throughout the text, a non-coherent chronology, and, most importantly, spelling, grammatical and typographical errors, then this is the book for you.

Holly says

I have complex and very strong feelings about this book, which I guess it means it was a good book, because it got to me and it really made me think.

I have to admit, the subject matter is what pulled me in. Here was a unique perspective that cannot be duplicated. When else will you ever be able to read a first-hand account of what it was like to live with a budding psychopath? I am very curious about the developmental aspect of life – what things shape us, form us and make us the person we are today? How does a person become a serial killer? What goes on in their head? I figured I might learn a little bit about that. It didn't take me long to see the factors that cultivated the mindset, and from there it got a little cringy.

The story is incredibly tragic, actually. The relationship between the author and her ex-husband/serial killer/serial rapist reminded me a lot of the relationship between the two inmates in Truman Capote's "In Cold Blood." There are just some people who, when put together, bring out the absolute worst in each other. The one person's flaws and weaknesses play on the other's and no good ever comes of that.

The one thing I really took away from this book is something I would like to tell every mother and daughter I know. Mothers, have conversations with your daughters about the difference between "real life" and "idealism." Idealism breeds denial and makes you ill-prepared for reality. Idealism forces people into unrealistic situations, unrealistic relationships, and makes unrealistic demands upon others. I feel like idealism is a form of denial that women in particular are fond of, and if it's not nipped in the bud, it can have dire consequences down the road. Okay, someone take the soapbox away from me! See, I told you this book brought out strong feelings in me!

The story itself has a diary-like feel to it. I felt like I was reading something that wasn't exactly supposed to be read by the public, and I have mixed feelings about that. On one hand, it allowed the author to record her thoughts in as real and as raw form as possible. On the other hand, it felt too much like it was a private journal. Sometimes I was confused by who was speaking or I felt like pieces of conversations were missing. I didn't always get a full portrait of the characters, so I didn't have a frame of reference at times. It didn't flow from Point A to Point B – it skipped around a bit, so be forewarned about that. I really got the feeling that she wrote this for herself and maybe it was never meant to be published, but maybe someone told her "You should turn this into a book!" and then rushed it to publication. It is in need of a serious edit before it can be considered ready for prime-time. I feel weird about even writing a review, knowing this is a memoir and not fiction, but I can't not say something. The bottom line: I can't imagine someone reading this and not having a strong reaction one way or another about it. It is a very disturbing book.

Steve Center says

I would probably rate this 3.5 stars. It was interesting and she did a good job conveying the horror of being married to a serial killer and not knowing it. Editing was an issue.

Joanne says

Alice really must have been so alarmed to find that her ex-husband, William Jennings Choyce, had raped and murdered numerous women while she was married to him.

Their marriage was not the most solid, we learn. William always seemed to have some strange desires and doings, but Alice thought that they were just strange things. To learn that William was actually doing the horrendous things that he was doing must have been so devastating to her.

Kudos to Alice for giving us her story, as I am sure that she would have been forgotten in all of the history about her husband.

Eleanor says

I was really interested in the subject of this book and I really wanted to like it. Sadly the author's writing style made that hard for me. She jumps back and forth through time, and never establishes a clear flow of events for the book. One moment we are in her childhood and the next it is 40yrs later and her former husband is on trial. It just didn't work for me. There were also numerous grammatical errors (at least in the kindle version) and she also would write passages and then cross them out and write additional words next to it. Just never felt like a cohesive polished novel to me. That being said, I am sure that this subject matter was extremely hard to write about... I mean not everyone has an ex-husband who raped and tortured multiple women. All in all it is an interesting book if you can get past the writing style and I would recommend it for anyone who has an interest in serial murderers.

Elizabeth says

A woman learns after her divorce that the man she had loved and been married to was a rapist during the marriage and after the divorce becomes both a killer and a rapist. She is brutally honest trying to figure out if she could have somehow known about this secret life of her husband and if she could somehow have prevented these women from dying. And the answer is no, she could not have known or done anything different.

This book had its share of grammar and editing mistakes, which seems to be true of so many books written as e-books.

Fishface says

The author describes what it was like for her to be married to an unsuitable man, and then -- years after they split up -- to find out just how unsuitable he was. The level of overwhelm she describes in here -- well, her writing is very purple, and I just feel as if she were squeezing her vocabulary dry in the attempt to describe the indescribable. She had her own issues even before she married a future serial killer, and finding out what he'd done really opened Pandora's box. It will be a long time before I can shake the image of her in front of the bathroom mirror, holding a gun to her head.

Jess says

I found this book really fascinating, and that is hard to say considering the subject of the book is the rape and murder of women. I find it so fascinating because I ask myself the question (as Alice does also throughout the book) "How could she not know?", and "Why did she stay with him so long?" Although she touches on her answer to these questions throughout the book, particularly towards the ending, I would have liked to see more of their normal day-to-day lives so I could understand the answers myself. I know she says he was charismatic and a chameleon, but I felt we were given so much information of his abusive and erratic side that I sometimes found it a little hard to swallow that anyone could actually stay with him for so long.

The story itself is an inspiration and I would recommend it to all women to read. It is an uncomfortable topic but thankfully we are spared from too much graphic detail - especially when compared to the graphic nature of some of the modern movies anyway.

The book reads well, and I have seen some reviews saying that it could use with some tidying up from an editor, but I honestly think that it is fine just the way it is, and the fact that it is so raw and comes across as their own personal diary adds to its authenticity.

I sincerely hope that Alice and Crystal have found the peace they so deserve. I will be recommending this book to all my girlfriends.

Deedee says

There were some grammatical errors, but overall was a good book. We never know about the victims that are family to the serial killers. Glad to know she can have some peace now.

Jean says

Certainly presents an in-depth look at how lives are affected by a serial killer--not only the families of the victims, but also the families of the killer. Alice Choyce and her daughter, Crystal, live under the same roof with William Choyce, later convicted as a serial killer. Alice details her married life with William and the fact that she did not know he was a murderer while living with him. It seems rather hard to understand why she appeared to be so naive, but when you read the book, you are able to get a clearer picture of what her life was like.

