

## God Revealed My Husband Was Leaving

**Lewisa DeBlake**

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*The spiritual novel God Revealed My Husband Was Leaving traces the faith-based dissolution of a marriage.*

*God Revealed My Husband Was Leaving* is Lewisa DeBlake's passionate semiautobiographical novel. It follows the breakdown of a marriage, drawing faith-based lessons from that and other events.

Lewisa meets her husband in 1991 while working in a bookstore in Charleston, South Carolina. During the fifteenth year of their marriage, she has a dream in which he declares that he is leaving her. Later, she leaves her family and moves to Dallas, believing that she is following God's instructions in doing so. The tension in her marriage increases, leading to divorce.

The narrative is character-driven, covering its cast's personalities, beliefs, and physical attributes with clarity: Lewisa's mother is described as a strict disciplinarian whose opinions of society were tainted by racial discrimination; her husband, Yury, is portrayed as a quiet, lanky man whose strained relationship with his Christian father affects his perspective. The negative effects of colorism are apparent in their lives, too. Lewisa has a powerful emotional reaction to discrimination, saying that she feels like a purple alien from outer space because of how her classmates treat her, questioning her paternity and making derogatory remarks. Meanwhile, Lewisa's sisters react in anger and try to fight back against their attackers.

But these narratives are complicated in frustrating ways by the interjections of others, including the several pastors whose misguided instructions impact Lewisa's life, as with the pastor who encourages Lewisa's move, for which she leaves her family. Another pastor asserts that Lewisa's disobedience has closed her off to destiny forever; it's a discouraging moment in her tale. Indeed, though the text includes biblical quotes about how God rewards sorrow with joy, and though it asserts that God is loving, these perceptions are belied by Lewisa's story, which shows faith-based decisions leading to personal turmoil.

Throughout, Lewisa struggles because of her beliefs, including to support herself after the move to Texas, after which she is forced to move home; a sense of futility is established, despite the book's inspirational aims. Later, she feels instructed by God to marry a Christian guitarist, but is again disappointed. The story doesn't manage to bridge the contradictions between its scriptural references and its development often, undermining the impact of its intended lessons.

Though the story foreshadows successes, they're unfulfilled promises, too: Lewisa starts seeing someone whom she believes is God's answer to her prayers, a perception that her pastor supports, but the outcome of the relationship is a mystery by the book's end, muddying the story's sense of conviction.

Encouraging others to maintain hope and to trust in the power of prayer, the spiritual novel *God Revealed My Husband Was Leaving* traces the faith-based dissolution of a marriage.

EDITH WAIRIMU (March 9, 2022)

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