



Out There: The In-Depth Story of the Astronaut Love Triangle Case that Shocked America

By Diane Fanning

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Lisa Nowak was dedicated, smart, and courageous—one of the first astronauts to fly a space shuttle mission after the horrific 2003 Columbia disaster. But that was before a fit of pure, primal jealousy landed her in an airport parking lot in Florida, where Lisa had a fateful, near-fatal confrontation with the woman believed to be her romantic rival.

Did Lisa intend to kidnap—or kill? Air Force captain Colleen Shipman because she was involved with fellow astronaut William Oefelein? What was the nature of Lisa's connection with William: True love or dangerous obsession? As the details of Lisa's news-making journey unfolded—she donned a disguise, even wore a diaper during her 900-mile car ride to find Colleen—Americans couldn't help but wonder: Why?

In this captivating account, master crime journalist Diane Fanning goes straight to the heart of the case. Through interviews with key family members, friends, and colleagues, the author reveals for the first time the *real* story behind the headlines—and casts a light on Lisa's groundbreaking fall from grace.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

SHE HAD ALL THE RIGHT STUFF.

Lisa Nowak was dedicated, smart, and courageous—one of the first astronauts to fly a space shuttle mission after the horrific 2003 Columbia disaster. But that was before a fit of pure, primal jealousy landed her in an airport parking lot in Florida, where Lisa had a fateful, near-fatal confrontation with the woman believed to be her romantic rival.

Until it all went very wrong...

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*** With 8 pages of stunning photographs ***

About the Author

Diane Fanning is the author of the Edgar Award finalist *Written in Blood: A True Story of Murder and a Deadly 16-Year-Old Secret That Tore a Family Apart*. Her other works of true crime include the best-selling *Mommy's Little Girl*, *A Poisoned Passion*, *The Pastor's Wife*, *Gone Forever* and *Through the Window*. She has been featured on *48 Hours*, *20/20*, Court TV and the Discovery Channel, and has been interviewed on dozens of radio stations coast to coast. Before becoming a nonfiction writer, Fanning worked in advertising, and she earned more than 70 Addy Awards. She lives in New Braunfels, Texas.

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Chapter 1

Just after 3 a.m., on February 6, 2007, United States Air Force Captain Colleen Shipman rolled her luggage behind her as she walked in a light drizzle across the C section of the Blue Satellite parking area at the Orlando International Airport. It was the last leg of her journey. All she wanted to do was go home. As she reached row 33, the sense of relief she expected to feel at this point in her travels shattered when she realized that the strange woman from the shuttle was following her.

Colleen picked up her pace. The footsteps behind her slapped the wet pavement at an increased speed. She cut across to row 31, moving even faster toward her car. Now the sound of her pursuer's running footsteps echoed in her ears. Don't be paranoid, she thought as she tried to calm herself. The woman is probably just

going to her own car and is in a hurry.

Despite the self-assurances, anxiety clutched Colleen's body in its tight grip. Relieved to reach her car, she jerked open the rear door and tossed her bag onto the back seat. She slammed it shut and opened the one in front. Sliding behind the steering wheel, Colleen pulled the door shut and locked the doors in one swift move.

Two hands slapped on the window beside her. She flinched. Hearing a jerk on the door handle, she jabbed her key into the ignition.

The sight of the woman outside of her car did nothing to still Colleen's fears. Beneath the raised hood of a khaki trench coat, bushy black hair framed a pinched face. The dark glasses the woman wore in the dead of night obscured her eyes. She looked so much like an inept spy from a low-budget film that it would have been laughable if it were not so frightening. Colleen's fear for her personal safety ratcheted up yet another notch.

With a hand pressed against the closed window, the woman shouted "Can you help me, please? My boyfriend was supposed to pick me up and he's not here. I've been traveling, and it's late. Can you give me a ride to the parking office?"

The woman's obvious distress touched Colleen's heart—but not her head. "No, if you need help, I'll send someone to you." Colleen started the engine.

"Can I use your cell phone?"

Colleen wanted to help another woman traveling alone, but she didn't dare. So she lied. "The battery is dead."

Crying and sobbing, the woman begged, "Please roll down your window. I can't hear you. Please roll down your window."

Colleen's sympathy conquered her common sense. She hit the button to lower the window. She only wanted to drop it down two inches—she thought that would be safe—but it went into automatic full roll-down. She stabbed the button to raise the window up.

Colleen realized her helpful impulse was a mistake when the pepper spray made contact with her skin, and a hot, angry burning spread across her face. Her eyes automatically slammed shut. "You bitch!" Colleen shouted.

For a moment, the agony was so intense, Colleen could not think. Then, she turned her head away and felt for the window control and rolled up the pane of glass. Despite the burning, tearing and swelling of her eyes, she forced them open. She held her breath as she slammed her car into reverse and backed out of her parking space.

She looked back, saw no one, put her car into drive and headed for the parking lot exit. The oddly dressed woman swung her black duffle bag at the retreating vehicle as it sped away from her. Inside the fleeing car, the smell was horrendous. Colleen hit the buttons in the door panel to roll down the two rear windows and the passenger window in the front to let in fresh air. Her nose, throat and sinuses were on fire. She gasped for breath as she drove toward the gate.

The only exit with a green light was the one reserved for holders of an E-Pass, but Colleen did not have one so she pulled up to a shuttle bus, told the driver about the attack and asked, "How do I get out of here?"

"Pull into the E-Pass lane. There's someone in the booth. She'll help you."

Colleen backed up, pulled in and told her story again. The tollbooth attendant called the police. Colleen cried in reaction to the chemicals and rubbed at her eyes. The woman in the booth handed her two wet paper towels. "Here, use this. Don't rub your eyes. It'll only make it worse."

Colleen dabbed at her eyes, getting some measure of relief from the burning. It didn't help her nose, though, which was now running profusely.

When responding airport police officers Tim Ryan and Wendell Reeve arrived less than five minutes after the attack, they instructed her to pull forward and out of the E-Pass lane. She described the dark-haired lady in the tan trench coat and cuffed blue jeans. Officer Ryan escorted Colleen into the tollbooth to get out of the rain. Officer Reeve began a search for her assailant in the parking lot. Copyright © 2007 by Diane Fanning.

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Users Review

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