

# Complete Strangers, Miracle Face Transplant: Two Lives Transformed

On a cold winter day in 2013, two strangers were brought together by a life-changing event. James Maki, a 53-year-old man from Minnesota, had been living with severe facial deformities for years. He had lost his nose, upper lip, and most of his teeth in a farming accident when he was just 16 years old. Despite multiple surgeries, his face was still severely disfigured.

Melissa Coggins, a 41-year-old mother of three from Ohio, had been diagnosed with an aggressive form of cancer called adenoid cystic carcinoma. The tumor had spread to her face, and she had lost her right eye and most of her right cheekbone. She was facing a grim prognosis and was told that she would likely die within a year.



## The Match: Complete Strangers, a Miracle Face

**Transplant, Two Lives Transformed** by Susan Whitman Helfgot

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 1340 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 277 pages

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In a remarkable twist of fate, James and Melissa became candidates for a face transplant at the Cleveland Clinic. The surgery was a groundbreaking

procedure that had only been performed a handful of times before. The team of surgeons led by Dr. Maria Siemionow spent 22 hours meticulously transferring Melissa's face onto James's skull.

The surgery was a success, and James and Melissa both made remarkable recoveries. James was able to breathe, eat, and speak normally for the first time in decades. Melissa's cancer was gone, and she was able to spend precious time with her family.

The face transplant transformed both James and Melissa's lives. James regained his confidence and was able to return to a normal life. Melissa was grateful for the second chance she had been given and dedicated her life to helping others.

In their new book, "Complete Strangers: Miracle Face Transplant, Two Lives Transformed," James and Melissa share their inspiring stories with the world. They hope that their journey will give hope to others who are facing challenges and show that anything is possible with a little help from strangers.

## **James's Story**

James Maki was born with a cleft lip and palate. He had multiple surgeries to repair his face, but he was still left with severe facial deformities. He was often bullied and teased by other children, and he eventually dropped out of school.

As an adult, James worked as a farmhand. In 1979, he was in a farming accident that nearly killed him. He lost his nose, upper lip, and most of his

teeth. He underwent multiple reconstructive surgeries, but his face was still severely disfigured.

James lived with his facial deformities for years. He was ashamed of his appearance and he avoided social interactions. He rarely left his house, and he never dated or married.

In 2013, James heard about the face transplant program at the Cleveland Clinic. He applied for the program and was accepted as a candidate. He underwent a rigorous screening process, and he was eventually approved for the surgery.

The face transplant surgery was a success. James was able to breathe, eat, and speak normally for the first time in decades. He was finally able to live a normal life.

James is grateful for the second chance he has been given. He is now an advocate for face transplant patients, and he speaks to groups about his experience. He is also a volunteer at the Cleveland Clinic, where he helps other patients who are going through the face transplant process.

## **Melissa's Story**

Melissa Coggins was diagnosed with adenoid cystic carcinoma in 2012. The tumor was located on her face, and it was growing rapidly. She underwent radiation therapy and chemotherapy, but the tumor continued to grow.

In 2013, Melissa was told that she had less than a year to live. She was devastated by the news, but she was determined to make the most of the

time she had left.

Melissa spent time with her family and friends. She also wrote a blog about her experience with cancer. She wanted to share her story with others in the hope that it would give them hope.

In 2014, Melissa heard about the face transplant program at the Cleveland Clinic. She applied for the program and was accepted as a candidate. She underwent a rigorous screening process, and she was eventually approved for the surgery.

The face transplant surgery was a success. Melissa's cancer was gone, and she was able to spend precious time with her family.

Melissa is grateful for the second chance she has been given. She is now an advocate for cancer patients, and she speaks to groups about her experience. She is also a volunteer at the Cleveland Clinic, where she helps other patients who are going through the face transplant process.

## **The Miracle of the Face Transplant**

The face transplant surgery that James and Melissa underwent was a groundbreaking procedure. It was the first time that a face transplant had been performed on someone who had lost their face in an accident.

The surgery was performed by a team of surgeons led by Dr. Maria Siemionow. The team spent 22 hours meticulously transferring Melissa's face onto James's skull.

The surgery was a success, and both James and Melissa made remarkable recoveries. James was able to breathe, eat, and speak

normally for the first time in decades. Melissa's cancer was gone, and she was able to spend precious time with her family.

The face transplant transformed both James and Melissa's lives. James regained his confidence and was able to return to a normal life. Melissa was grateful for the second chance she had been given and dedicated her life to helping others.

The face transplant surgery is a testament to the power of modern medicine. It is a life-changing procedure that can give new hope to people who have lost their faces through injury or disease.

## **The Power of Hope**

James and Melissa's story is an inspiring reminder of the power of hope. Even in the darkest of times, hope can give us the strength to keep going.

James and Melissa never gave up hope. They both faced long odds, but they never gave up on their dreams. They believed that anything was possible, and they never stopped fighting for their lives.

James and Melissa's story is a testament to the power of the human spirit. It is a reminder that anything is possible if we never give up hope.

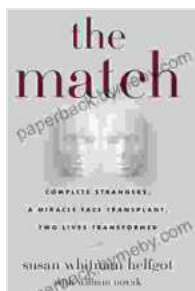
James and Melissa's story is an incredible journey of hope, transformation, and the power of the human spirit. Their story is a reminder that anything is possible if we never give up on our dreams.

The face transplant surgery that James and Melissa underwent was a groundbreaking achievement. It is a testament to the power of modern

medicine and the dedication of the medical professionals who made it possible.

James and Melissa are both grateful for the second chance they have been given. They are both living their lives to the fullest, and they are both dedicated to helping others.

James and Melissa's story is an inspiration to us all. It is a reminder that even in the darkest of times, hope can give us the strength to keep going. Anything is possible if we never give up.



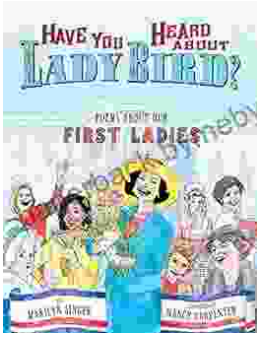
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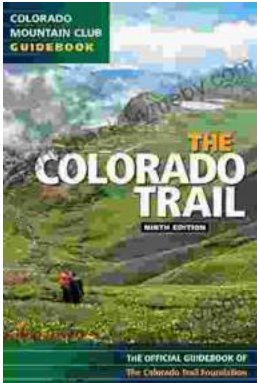
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