



## How to Knock a Bravebird from Her Perch

*D. Bryant Simmons*

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**How to Knock a Bravebird from Her Perch** D. Bryant Simmons

**This award-winning tale is a fan favorite and the perfect start to a family saga that will have you riveted.**

*Simmons brings this African American family to life! Once you start reading, you won't want to put it down. Perfect for book clubs!*

In the wake of her father's sudden death Pecan marries the up-and-coming boxing sensation Ricky Morrow. When she begins to doubt that desperate decision she finds herself on the receiving end of Ricky's violent temper. Scared for her life, she hunkers down in this marriage of convenience as the babies and fists keep coming. Will the abuse ever stop? Will Pecan and her girls live happily ever after?

**Literary fiction that packs a punch and plenty of surprises.**

It's not the typical domestic abuse storyline. In *How to Knock a Bravebird from Her Perch*, you will find the story of a girl who grows into a woman before your very eyes.

**A story so moving, it will stay with you long after you put it down.**

This true to life story walks a careful line between fiction and reality. With characters as real as you and me, it will break and mend your heart a hundred time because it has just the right amount of honesty and love. And anyone who wants a true underdog story will be captivated until the very end!

**DON'T WAIT! ADD IT TO YOUR SHELF TODAY.**

## How to Knock a Bravebird from Her Perch Details

Date : Published January 2nd 2014 by Bravebird Publishing

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Author : D. Bryant Simmons

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Genre : Fiction, Contemporary

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## From Reader Review How to Knock a Bravebird from Her Perch for online ebook

### Peggy says

This is the first book in the Morrow girl series. A story of domestic abuse, a story of a women's courage and survival.

Belinda, or Pecan as she is known, is born in Hattiesburg, Mississippi in 1953 and lovingly brought up by her father after her mother disappears. Her father's love for Pecan is simple and deep, but he can't be there for her any more when she marries the first man who showed any kind of interest in her. Ricky Morrow is a professional boxer and the young couple move to Chicago as Ricky needs his boxing career to take off.

Right from their first meeting, Ricky shows very little respect for Pecan, but she doesn't know any better and only looking back, realised that the first signs had always been there that he is not a very loving man. When their first child, Nikki, can just about walk, and in her naiveness, Pecan tries to leave Ricky as she realises she doesn't really love him. So she just packs all her stuff in all bags she can find and walks out. But Ricky sees them walking down the road. And even though Pecan tries to play it down and tries to lie to him, he has been set off. He hits her, and again, and again, and again. From than on, she becomes his punching bag whenever he sees fit, whenever he thinks she might not be doing what she is supposed to be doing.

In time, the couple will have 4 girls, born shortly one after the other. Peacan's saving grace comes in the form of Ricky's aunt, Clara who more than once saves Pecan from her husband's fists by swinging the iron skillet. And than Peacan meets another man. Is she going to make the classic mistake of hurling herself into another relationship to escape from the horrific one she has? Isn't it too much to put on any man to 'rescue' her from an abusive relationship?

But Pecan is not only a weak and defenceless woman. Initially, for me she is just naive and as she has never known another relationship, just doesn't know any better. Later and with some life experience, she realised that it is very wrong but that doesn't help with the terrible fear he has instilled in her. And her children will always be her main concern. When Pecan says in her desperation that, from the bottom of her heart, she wishes Ricky would be dead, I did not only believe her and wished with her, heck, I wanted to go there myself and do the deed.

Yes, your emotions will lie raw. I've never experienced the things Pecan / Belinda went through and as horrific as the violence from Ricky was, sometimes I was also deeply shocked by the treatment she received from Social Services. Something tells me that those things are not entirely fictional and I can truly imagine that woman had to go through this. Luckily, there is now more awareness and help available with domestic violence. But still, the first step has to come from the victim.

Coming back to the book, the story is told with Pecan/Belinda as the narrator. The writing in her (slight) accent made her come alive for me. I also understand that the author will continue the story with the Morrow girls (Pecan's daughters). All of them are drawn to be very different characters, so I can't wait to see what's going to happen to them.

Invest in some time with Pecan and you'll find a friend  
<http://thepegsterreads.blogspot.co.uk...>

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### **Amiee says**

Such a good book! Read it in 1 day!

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### **Perusing Princesses says**

This is the life story of Belinda (Pecan) born in the 50's in Mississippi...

She is raised by her loving and doting father, her mother just wasn't around... She is a happy girl, living in a trying time, nonetheless.. she is a good girl...

Enter Ricky Morrow... a seemingly "good" man who sets his eyes on Pecan... he pursues, and fate steps in, and with the abrupt death of her father.. she is wed within a week...

Here begins her new life with a possessive man... Her life as a young mother... her life alone, with a very aggressive man. Then her life does a 180 as this man who professes his love for her... beats her...

Through many years, she goes through life as a battered woman, a mother who has no experience with anything, let alone any type of support system.

It's a very real life for many women, regardless of the era you are born in... D.Bryant Simmons, portrayed the reality of this life Pecan has very well. She speaks volumes into her character, an uneducated and a truly clueless lost soul. Her journey is a difficult one, yet you walk hand in hand with Pecan... and amazingly even though you may not agree with her decisions... you are right there with her.

I read this book straight through. I could not put it down... it made me sad, it made me angry, it made me hopeful.

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### **Jane says**

Very good book about a young woman who feels trapped in an abusive marriage, and her journey toward escape. The story kept me interested from beginning to end. Although it is touched upon throughout the story, I think the victim's mindset and why she stayed in this marriage could have been explored more fully.

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### **Melanie Page says**

*How to Knock a Bravebird from Her Perch* is set mostly in the 1970s and is about Belinda ("Pecan"), a girl with a daddy who raised her right and loved her so, but when a Ricky comes into her town, things get messy. Pecan's daddy doesn't really seem to like Ricky, but he can't say too much about it, as he has a heart attack and dies within the first few pages. Ricky and Pecan get married and move to Chicago where Ricky trains as a boxer and Pecan starts having babies. Girl after girl is born, and Ricky really wants a boy. He appears to hold this against Pecan, but that's not surprising; Ricky has a temper on him and fists trained to hit. For several years, Ricky's Aunt Clara lives with the family, and she is often able to keep Ricky from knocking the crap out of Pecan by threatening him with a cast iron skillet. But one night, when Pecan goes dancing with her girlfriends after Aunt Clara tells her she has to, Pecan meets an honorable man.

It's not 100% clear to me what would be considered a spoiler, so I'll stop there. There are two distinct

aspects of this novel that stand out: the way Simmons challenges the reader to face their preconceived notions about domestic abuse, and the pacing.

It's fairly early in the story that the reader learns that Ricky hits. Pecan tries to use her voice for the first time, but is silenced: "That's all I could get out before he hit me again. And again. And again. I just couldn't believe it. Not me. Other girls might have that happen to them but not me. My man was not doing that to me."

There are a series of thoughts that I had as a reader that made me feel horrible, and I believe Simmons was doing this to me on purpose. First, I paid attention to why Ricky hit Pecan the first time. Shortly after their first baby is born, Pecan packs up the baby and as much food as she can carry and tries to run away. She says that she has been lying to him to tell him what he wants to hear, but if I think back on the timeline, they haven't been together that long. Why did she marry the first guy to talk to her, I ask, if she's just going to lie to him? When I think about Ricky finding Pecan standing on the sidewalk with his baby and her guilt, I realize that I would be mad, too. Then comes the hitting. It's that moment that Simmons makes readers tie together poor logic: Pecan was being a horrible person, and Ricky was just reacting. Of course, people make these logical leaps in the real world all the time. We excuse the hitters and blame the victims—and are quick to do so. When Pecan spends years and years and years getting hit by Ricky, readers are forced to wonder why she doesn't call the police. Why she doesn't try to run away again. Why she doesn't ask for help. We think, Oh, she's probably thinking he doesn't hit the kids, so it's okay, but once he does she'll leave (how stupid; of course he'll eventually hit the kids). This is where we must all stop; why are we asking questions of what Pecan does and doesn't do and not of what Ricky does? This is one of the triumphs of Simmons's novel: she makes readers go to these uncomfortable places and face their own judgments.

The pacing becomes very important to making the novel realistic. The children growing are great time indicators, and part of their growth is not just age, but in cognitive function. They begin to realize what's going on, to speak to their mother differently than their father, to realize what makes them afraid. Watching the four daughters grow into their personalities gives the book a slow, steady pace that demonstrates just how long the domestic abuse goes on. We don't need to read about every punch and every cut, black eye, and broken bone (I remember reading these details in Roddy Doyle's *The Woman Who Walked Into Doors* and feeling sick over and over) because there are other ways Simmons shows how time progresses. When child protective services gets involved, it seems like the whole CPS agent/home visits is a waste of time to the point where I felt myself getting angry with an agency designed to help children be with their parents and be properly cared for. It feels like Pecan will never be with her family and happy and unafraid because someone will always be a barrier.

Took my time going down the stairs. One step at a time. Holding onto the banister and the wall. Had to come up with new reasons to get outta bed every night. Wasn't no sense in having both of us worry. I flicked on the lights and checked each window on the main floor. Had to wait until bedtime because Heziah was in the habit of opening a window every time he went into a room, but most of the time he forgot to close and lock it. Wasn't his fault. He just ain't know like I did. I knew better than to leave anything open or unlocked. We'd gotten the locks changed, but Ricky Morrow wasn't the type to let a locked door stop him.

And it is this slow pacing that gives the book its realistic feel; separation, violence, legal issues, and parents' rights are not easy topics to summarize and stuff in the closet. It's a long, drawn-out process that affects so many individuals, and Simmons captures that reality in her book.

Overall, *How to Knock a Bravebird from Her Perch* is a novel that is able to capture many characters and render them in a realistic tone that makes it pleasurable to read in addition to the challenging topics readers will face.

**This review was originally published at [Grab the Lapels](#).**

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### **Laurie says**

I liked parts of it, the middle really dragged. The story of a woman living through abuse and raising her kids, it's frustrating to read because I know there are places to help, however a lot of women truly don't and this tells their story.

I wasn't going to get book two but it's about the kids growing up, AND most important it didn't end on a cliffhanger! I won't read books anymore that use that cheap ploy to hook me.

All in all worth the free download. ;)

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### **Heather L says**

The very beginning of this book read like a light fun filler book. This is NOT one of those books. The subject matter hit a little too close to home with me. However, I managed to finish this because I wanted to see if the ending was satisfying. It was satisfying, enough. I have very mixed feelings about what Pecan did and didn't do. I did relate to her in the same way in regards to feeling trapped and lonely. I think a lot of things in this story may or may not have happened if she would have spoken up a few times. But there was definitely love and sweetness that pops up throughout this. I'm not sure if I'll read the next book. I kind of want to keep the ending to myself.

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### **Elsbeth says**

Very good, even if not really nice, story. About a young woman, living a life she does not want to live. It sometimes frustrated me a bit, the way Pecan handles everything. In some ways she is more like a child than her daughters are. The daughters are wonderful. Sometimes they say and do the things Pecan should. I like Pecan better when she finally tries to take her life into her own hands.  
Thank you, D. Bryant Simmons, for giving me the chance to read this!

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### **Elizabeth (Perusing Princesses) says**

This is the life story of Belinda (Pecan) born in the 50's in Mississippi...

She is raised by her loving and doting father, her mother just wasn't around... She is a happy girl, living in a trying time, nonetheless.. she is a good girl...

Enter Ricky Morrow... a seemingly "good" man who sets his eyes on Pecan... he pursues, and fate steps in, and with the abrupt death of her father.. she is wed within a week...

Here begins her new life with a possessive man... Her life as a young mother... her life alone, with a very aggressive man. Then her life does a 180 as this man who professes his love for her... beats her...

Through many years, she goes through life as a battered woman, a mother who has no experience with anything, let alone any type of support system.

It's a very real life for many women, regardless of the era you are born in... D.Bryant Simmons, portrayed the reality of this life Pecan has very well. She speaks volumes into her character, an uneducated and a truly clueless lost soul. Her journey is a difficult one, yet you walk hand in hand with Pecan... and amazingly even though you may not agree with her decisions... you are right there with her.

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### **Melanie says**

This is a powerful read that sort of sneaks up on you if you aren't paying attention. I say that because you know going in that it's pretty much involving domestic violence but it's not overtly descriptive in the occurrences of that until the latter half of the book. This book is mostly about the struggle the victim goes through making the decisions they have to make to allow themselves, & those they love, to be survivors.

Belinda, affectionately called 'Pecan', is a Mississippi daddy's girl & was lacking in a woman's touch in her upbringing. Fairly naïve, she falls for Ricky Morrow, an out of town visitor & the first guy that really overlooks her friends for her. Pecan's father puts a stop to things fairly quickly since Ricky is older and for the most part the 2 abide by those rules. Fate then steps in, Pecan's dad dies & she feels lost in the world. Ricky steps back into her life & promises to take care of her so they end up getting married & moving to Chicago, where he plans to become a fighter.

Living in a new place, where she has no one but her husband that she barely knows, Pecan has to now learn how to become a wife. It's not too long before she also has to learn to become a mother. Ricky's temper and abusive nature doesn't take too long to begin showing & about 2 years into the marriage Pecan begins to try to get out. This is where the story gets frustrating, irritating, heartbreak, & so much more. Not due to the

writer's ways mind you, due to the content, the truth of it all, and the fact that the victims of domestic violence aren't only victimized by their abuser but everyone (or most everyone) around them & in turn themselves. As a lot of these stories go, Pecan endures many years with Ricky & ends up having a few more children & a miscarriage before she finally gets somewhere & divorces him. Now I don't want to give away all the guts of the story because you need to read it & be in the moment of it all too really feel it. I will just say that one would think that the divorce would have made things better for her but it's all in the eye of the beholder really. While she didn't have to live with Ricky any longer, he was still out there living his life like nothing happened & she was dealing with all the repercussions of everything that did & continued to happen. Again, there was some good & she found a power within herself from all that she had been through but she continued to be penalized for things that she, as the victim, should have been helped with right to the end. It really just makes you have compassion for the struggles that the victims go through and empathize with the choices they make so that they can make it out alive.

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I was provided with an ARC from Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

### **D. Simmons says**

Haha! I'm reviewing my own book! Let's see how objective I can be, shall we?

I'm giving it 4 stars but I really want to give it 4.5 because it succeeds for what it attempts to do but I wish it attempted to do more.

The subject matter has been done before but never like this. No gratuitous violence, there's just enough so that the reader must live with the threat of it. The characters and dialogue are well placed and well thought out, insuring that the story jumps off the page. And here's the major test for me...I can start reading at any point in the novel and I'm immediately transported to that point in time and I feel the same relentless tug to continue reading even though I hate reruns and I've read the passage a million (really a million) times before.

However, so much happens between the covers—so much time is covered that the story feels rushed. Very little down time between episodes. Feels like the author was trying to fit everything into a certain number of pages.

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And last but not least, I wish Ricky was a more complex character.

### **Sojourner says**

Inspired and influenced by family and friends who have been victims of abuse, D. Bryant Simmons – a firm believer in female empowerment and children's rights, writes a hard-hitting story on the issue hoping to inspire women they don't have to take it anymore. If you feel strongly about domestic violence, then *How To Knock A Bravebird From Her Perch* is a must read for you.

The book takes the reader through the life of a battered woman. The author explores how it all began, what led to her breaking point and the toll it takes on her family to survive.

Belinda Morrow (Pecan) is a humble girl from Mississippi who migrates north with her husband to start a life in Chicago. Pecan isn't up on the latest fashions and isn't the best cook but she brings southern hospitality and an endearing vulnerability.

After a short-lived courtship, Richard Elijah Morrow (Ricky) steps into the role of husband and quickly after that father. His first priority is providing for his family financially. As his boxing career takes off, Ricky becomes a local celebrity but Pecan can't stand the violence of the sport and wants nothing to do with that part of his life.

After two years of marriage, Belinda has a change of heart. She packs up, taking along her baby girl Nikki Morrow. When Ricky catches her, she was taught a lesson in boxing. Living in fear, and subjected to abuse of all kinds, Belinda did as best as she could. As the years rolled by, Belinda has three more daughters - Mya Ann, Jacqueline Belinda (Jackie) and Natalie (Nat). But there was no change, and when Ricky started focusing on their daughters, Belinda realizes it's time to put an end to it. But leaving Ricky didn't solve her problems. He stalks, threatens, and attacks her in his attempt to convince her to give him another chance. No matter how many times she says no, he persists until she is forced to find a permanent solution.

How to Knock a Bravebird From Her Perch is not only dramatic and heartbreakin, it also encourages women to accept the past but do whatever it takes to change the future. The story is a great reminder that we are responsible for our children, and that we need to speak up for them. It is a great lesson for all to strive to build a healthy relationship based on mutual respect, love and admiration. Like Belinda Morrow, the first step to ending the problem is to admit that there is a problem. Unless the first step is taken, there can never be another step. And the cycle will continue!

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### **Susan says**

I think that this book is a treasure to discover. It is a journey of Pecan trying to find her inner strength. It deals with domestic violence and the struggles to survive. Pecan accepts the past and changes her future. It shows her courageous dealing with Ricky's violent temper. This book is about Pecan's self discovery and will stay with you for a very long time.

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### **Perusing Princesses says**

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