

# [PDF] Walking On Eggshells: Discovering Strength And Courage Amid Chaos

Lisa Wysocky, Lyssa Chapman - pdf download free book

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## Books Details:

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## Description:

**About the Author Lyssa Chapman**, ninth child of the world famous bounty hunter Duane “Dog” Chapman, was, at eighteen years old, the youngest licensed bail bondsperson in Hawaii. Lyssa bounty hunted with her family for eight seasons on A&E’s hit TV show *Dog the Bounty Hunter*. She is a small business owner in Honolulu and founder of the nonprofit organization Proper Choices, Inc. Lyssa spends her time with her daughters, Abbie and Madalynn, and gives positive direction to teen moms.

Lisa Wysocky is a bestselling fiction and nonfiction author who splits her time between Minnesota and Tennessee. From the mystery *The Opium Equation*, which garnered four awards, to the award-

winning *Front of the Class*, coauthored with Brad Cohen and aired as a Hallmark Hall of Fame TV movie, Lisa's many books empower readers.

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**One**

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## **A Fairy Tale**

*Friday, February 20, 2009*, was the most perfect day of my life. Not everyone gets to be married on national television on a beach in front of a beautiful Hawai'ian sunset. But I did. I was head over heels in love with my new husband, Brahman (Bo) Galanti, and more than two hundred friends and members of my extended family were there to support me.

On that day my family showered me with all the love I ever could have wished for. More than two hundred people showed up to celebrate as Bo and I exchanged the vows we had written. My wedding gown felt like something a princess would wear, and I was as giddy with excitement as any bride could be. When our family pastor, Tim Storey, pronounced us man and wife I was probably the happiest girl in the world.

Nothing could dampen my exuberant mood on my wedding day, not even the fact that I had made none of the decisions a bride usually makes. Choosing the flowers, invitations, and color scheme, even deciding on the kind of cake that was served—all of those decisions were made by my stepmother, Beth, and the production crew of my dad's reality TV series, *Dog the Bounty Hunter*. Normally I would have strong opinions about the details of my own wedding, but I was just so happy to marry the love of my life that I allowed Beth and A&E to make all of the decisions. They arranged for the wedding to be at Lanikohonua, a historical beachfront site in Ko Olina on the Hawai'ian island of Oahu.

My bouquet was a large fragrant mix of calla lilies and cascading blue flowers, and my dress was a gorgeous ivory silk by Demetrios with a plunging V-neck. Viewers of the show were probably unaware that I was fourteen weeks pregnant with my second child, as my dress was so well designed that it hid my small baby bump. I have made many mistakes in my life, and unmarried and unprotected sex were just two of them.

On my wedding day, however, I was thrilled about the idea of Bo and me parenting our new child together. All in all, I felt like I was in a fairy tale.

Fairy tales, however, are not all sweetness and light. They are riddled with darkness, just as my life has been. Snow White had to outsmart the evil queen. Little Red Riding Hood had to stand up to the big bad wolf, and Cinderella lived her formative years submitting to her oh so wicked stepsisters.

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I was born Lyssa Rae Chapman II at General Hospital in Denver, Colorado, on June 10, 1987, a petite, blond-haired, green-eyed girl. I arrived at four forty-one A.M. and was named after my mother, Lyssa Rae Worthington Chapman. Lyssa, by the way, is pronounced as if it were spelled "Lisa." In her youth, my mother looked very much like a curly-haired Barbra Streisand. When she met Dad, she had graduated from Rama Bible College and was newly separated from her husband, who was a preacher. Apparently she and my dad fell in love immediately. They were married after

my mother's first divorce was final in Estes Park, Colorado, on June 22, 1982, by an Indian chief who was also a judge.

My dad is Duane Lee Chapman, but you most likely know him as Dog the Bounty Hunter. There's not much in his life that has not been told. From the *Dog the Bounty Hunter* television show, which has aired internationally in more than twenty countries, to his bestselling books, to the hundreds of interviews and media reports, much of Dad's life is well known. Even though this is my story and not his, as Dog's daughter much of his story affected me, especially when I was living with him when I was a child.

My perspective, however, may not be what you expect.

I love my dad, but he is not perfect. No one is. We all do the best we can, and Dad has had his own challenges. In addition to fathering a dozen children, he has served time in prison for a murder he didn't commit, been a boxer, and been shot at more times than any of us can count. Now, as the "World's Most Famous Bounty Hunter," Dad has new hurdles in dealing with fame, a large family and staff, and in running several businesses.

Our relationship is beyond complicated, as is my relationship with my mother, but I love both of my parents more than words can say.

My early years were spent in Colorado, in a gang-infested neighborhood near Denver. I lived with my mother and dad in a run-down house that had been passed down through the family. There was graffiti on the cracked sidewalk and empty, burned-out houses across the street. With us lived my older sister and brother, Barbara and Tucker; my mother's son by her earlier marriage, Jason; and two of Dad's boys by one of his earlier marriages, Duane Lee and Leland. With six kids and a tiny house, we were often running wild out on the street. Everyone in the neighborhood knew we were Dog's kids, however, so the gang members who loitered on our street didn't mess with us. Even then, Dad was tough.

As the youngest child in this unusual household, I don't remember much. I know I was carried a lot, and being held in the arms of my family members went a long way toward making me feel safe in a drug-infested neighborhood. I have been told that my mother and dad fought a lot. Tensions in our family ran high when bills came due and there was no money to pay. Plus, Dad was often out doing bail bonds or bounty hunting, so care for all six of us was mostly left to our mother.

With half a dozen children and not enough money to go around, anyone would be overwhelmed. That was my mother. She loved to party, and from the time I was very young I knew she drank. I learned very early in life that there is a huge difference between partying and actually going to a party. My mother had a lot to escape from, and during this time in her life alcohol was her diversion. Today she might have joined a support group, gone to counseling, or taken a yoga class, but back then she must have felt that alcohol was her only choice. Either that or the pull toward substance abuse overcame the need to find a healthier alternative.

When I was small I adored my older siblings, especially my sister, Barbara. She was almost exactly five years older than I was—her birthday was June 8 and mine was June 10, and we used to have combined birthday parties on the ninth that I looked forward to for months. Everyone came: family, neighbors, and friends. And though a lot of kids were there, I knew I was Daddy's girl. Even through the roughest of times, I have always felt a special bond with my dad. I was his Baby Lyssa.

Dad wasn't always there, however. Work kept him away a lot, and to be honest, tension at home

probably did, too. Because of that, and because my mother was so overwhelmed, Barbara became a surrogate mom to me. As far back as I can remember I looked to Barbara for help and guidance. When we were still living with both of our parents, Barbara was often the one who made sure I had something to eat, who made sure I wore clothes that were at least somewhat clean, who comforted me at night when I'd had a nightmare. We were inseparable and I loved her with all my heart.

When I think about it I am amazed. Barbara at the time was just seven or eight. I look at my daughters, especially my older daughter, Abbie, who is nine as of this writing, and shudder to think of this beautiful little girl having to shoulder the responsibility that Barbara had at the same age. An old adage says that adversity makes you stronger, but sometimes I feel that too much of it just wears you down. Despite Dad's best efforts, the Chapman family in the late 1980s and early 1990s was just that: worn down.

A marriage is hard to hold together in the best of circumstances. Eventually the constant poverty—and the fighting it caused—drove my parents apart. I can now also speculate on the effects of alcohol and drug use, and of marital infidelity. From what I can see, everything stemmed from the choices of whether to use drugs and alcohol, and whether to fight. I also sometimes wonder how many different kinds of mental illness, such as depression or bipolar disorder, have affected various members of my family and how much they have contributed toward our dysfunction and addiction.

Today I see my parents as two different people with different goals and aspirations. But all I knew then was that “Mom and Dad” had come to the end of their marriage. When I was two, my mother left us to move in with her mother and care for her ailing stepdad. Barbara, Tucker, and I stayed with Dad. Barbara and Tucker cried a lot for our mother after she left but I'd always had so many people around that I didn't understand the concept of *mother*. I also didn't understand the idea that a permanent split between two adults meant that one of them wasn't coming back.

It wasn't long before Dad moved Tawny Marie, his secretary and new girlfriend, into the house with all of us. I remember only bits and pieces of the separation and eventual divorce, but I remember liking Tawny, who eventually married my dad. Tawny was the one who served my mother divorce papers from my dad, even though I am not sure why my mother was at our house. It could be that she had dropped us off after a visitation. I'm also not sure what my dad was thinking, especially as I can't imagine Dad doing it to deliberately hurt my mother. Maybe Tawny took it upon herself to fulfill the service so as to speed Dad's divorce along. Or Dad may have been thinking of Tawny in her role as his secretary. Since Dad was in the business of bail bonds and knew how our intricate legal system works, he might have decided to have Tawny serve the papers so he could save money on a process server. Something like the plumber fixing his own sink. Do it yourself so you know it has been done right. My parents were divorced on November 20, 1991. I was four years old.

My strongest memory of that time, however, was the day my mother and Tawny got into a terrible brawl and knocked each other around as if they were bowling pins. A...

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