

BRIAN DURSKI



A CRIME NOVEL



**BRING ME
A
BLUE BIRD**

Bring Me a Bluebird

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Consultation and editing - By Catherine Durski

Cover photography (Bluebird) - By Jason F. Hubbell

Special thanks to - Michele Hinton. An individual that is passionate about helping new authors. I can attest to that fact!

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*This book is dedicated
to my son -
Scott Durski*

**BRING ME
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**BY:
BRIAN DURSKI**

~FORWARD~

The morning's milking was over and Harry Borski was sitting at the picnic table. He got up to go inside for the day's first meal and paused when he saw a child coming up the long asphalt driveway. The boy walked straight up to him and swallowed hard as he looked up at the huge man standing before him. Harry just stared down at the kid and said, "You're trespassing. This is the Borski Farm and what do you want?"

"Sir, I'm looking for a Mr. Harry Borski. I want to ask him about a job."

"I'm Harry Borski. Did you say you wanted a job?" He was a little stunned as he studied the small boy closely.

"Yes Sir, I'm pretty strong and willing to work," Scott said and put out his right hand.

"What's your name? Wait, you're Hazel's kid, aren't you?" Harry shook his hand and tried not to smile.

"Scott Lawford, Sir. I live about two miles away with my grandmother on Miller Road."

“You are Hazel Lawford’s grandson, right?”

“Yes Sir, I am,” the boy nodded.

“Well, two miles is a good walk. Come on in for breakfast, Scott Lawford,” he pointed toward the house.

“Sir, I already had breakfast, thank you just the same.”

“I said come in, have a glass of milk and we’ll talk.” Mr. Borski led the way into the kitchen and Scott followed a couple steps behind. Harry almost laughed as he said, “Young Scott Lawford, this is my wife, Gretta, and my sons, Tommy and Tyler.”

The woman smiled at him and shook his hand. The two young men rose from their chairs and shook his hand also. They were almost as tall as their father, but leaner in build. Scott was extremely nervous and he looked at the kitchen table.

“Sit down here and drink this glass of milk,” Harry pulled a kitchen table chair out and Scott sat.

The boy took a drink and looked at him. The milk was delicious and not cold. It tasted almost like it had been filled with cream. “This is great milk and it tastes different from store milk.”

“You’re damn right it does, Boy! That milk is fresh from our dairy cows!” Mr. Borski took a drink from his own glass.

“It’s really good,” Scott took another sip.

Mrs. Borski set a large platter of pancakes and fried eggs in front of him, “Here little Scottie, this will make you grow.” Gretta evaluated the boy's size and patted his head gently, prior to turning back to the stove.

“Mrs. Borski, I don't think ah, I can eat all that. My grandma already gave me breakfast.” He glanced at the huge amount of food stacked on the plate.

“Nonsense, you look half starved.” Gretta sat with the rest of her family.

Harry motioned toward Scott with his hand and spoke to his sons. “Boys, this young gentleman is applying for a job as a farm hand. What do you think?” He turned slightly away from the child as he chuckled softly.

Tyler studied him closely and asked, “How much do you weigh, Scott?”

“I'm about a hundred twenty pounds and very strong for my size,” he answered confidently and nodded at the large man across the table.

Tommy asked, “Kid, how old are you?”

“Thirteen, almost fourteen, I'm out of school for the summer and need to find some work.”

Tyler laughed now. “You ought to be out playing baseball, or having some fun like the other kids. Farm work isn't a lark you know, young Scott.”

“Yes Sir, I figured it would be pretty hard work.” He was worrying as they seemed to be sizing him up very

carefully.

“My name is Tyler, call me that. Dad, I don’t think he’s old enough, or big enough. No offense Scott, but it’s hell in the summer. I’m not kidding and especially, in those barns.”

Harry chewed a mouthful of pancakes. He swallowed and looked thoughtful prior to asking, “Tell me about this desire for employment. For goodness sake, why do you want a job here of all places?”

“I need to help out my grandma. I’m almost a man now and I want to pay my share.” Scott realized he wasn't making a good impression and was suddenly positive he was going to be turned down.

Tommy shook his head. “Kid, you have a ways to go yet before you’re a man. I think you best run on home.”

“I’ll work for free, ah...” Scott looked directly at Harry. "...if you give me a tryout. If after a week, you don’t want me, I won’t bother you again.”

Harry looked at Gretta who smiled at him from across the table and shook her head in the negative as the young boy looked down at his plate.

Tyler grinned at his father and Tommy chuckled a little. Both of them were well aware that it would be irresistible to their dad, who squeezed every penny like it was a golden treasure. Harry eyes widened a bit. “Free huh, you will work for one week free, if we give you a try?”

“Yes Sir, whatever chores you want to give me,” Scott answered quickly. “I’m ready to work today!”

“I have to think about this offer. You go out after this meal with Tyler and get a feel for pitching cow manure. We will decide by noon, if we accept your offer. No matter what, you’ll get lunch. Is that proposition fair enough?”

“Thank you, Mr. Borski. That is more than fair, Sir.” Scott smiled at his prospective employer.

As soon as they’d finished eating, Scott walked out with Tommy and Tyler. Harry watched from the kitchen window and turned to his wife. “Gretta, I’m driving over to Hazel Lawford’s house to see make sure she approves of this, before I do anything else. He’ll be busy in the barn with our boys.”

“Oh good! I’ll go along with you and take her this Danish Coffee Cake. I just baked it.”

“Dear, I was going to eat that,” he glanced at the pan on the counter and back at her.

“Harry, I’ll make you another one.”

“Oh, of course, Gretta. It’s just that I really like that Danish Coffee Cake,” he quickly looked over it again and sighed. “My Love, I’ve got some damn kid walking up our driveway and asking for employment. Your thoughts?”

“Well, let’s see what Hazel has to say about that little child having a job here. Most importantly, if you decide

to hire him one thing, Harry. I'm being serious; you can't adopt him like all those darn dogs running all over this farm!"

"Gretta, I've never adopted anything! Those dogs guard the farm!" He looked shocked at her accusation.

She wrapped the coffee cake in tin foil and looked back at him. "I MEAN IT!!! No more taking in strays and that includes kids!"

"Sweetheart, you have my word. As you know, I really dislike children!" He nodded to himself after he said it and glanced out the kitchen window again.

Gretta spun from the counter and pointed at him. "Harry, it will be your decision! However, that tiny child couldn't even pick up a hay bale! He's so small and I'm afraid he might hurt himself!"

"Yeah, I absolutely agree that he is kind of little!" He turned back to his wife and chuckled for a few seconds. "The kid seems determined. I can't believe he said he'd work for free. Nobody ever said that to me before. I mean, a tryout, he said to give him a tryout. What the hell, Gretta. This ain't the damn New York Yankees!" Harry burst out in laughter.

"We need to talk with Hazel," Gretta moved to his side and glanced out the kitchen window at the barn. "Harry, you think Hazel needs money this badly? We could help her out, if she does. I mean, you think she sent him over here, 'cause she's desperate?"

"Somehow, I don't think Hazel sent him. When he starts shoveling, I doubt he'll even last until noon. Whatever, we'll still feed him lunch. Let's go see Scott Lawford's grandma," he took the truck keys from their hook. Harry Borski had already made up his mind. If, Hazel gave her approval and the boy could handle shoveling manure, he was going to hire the little kid. Harry held the door open for Gretta and chuckled to himself as he followed her out.

CHAPTER 1

It had been fourteen years, since he'd first walked up the driveway to the Borski farm. Scott was sitting quietly on his own front porch. He watched the gray sky while a gentle rain fell softly on the grass. It seemed as if all of heaven wept. His grandmother had told him many years ago that when rain fell, it meant that a child told a lie and angels would weep. Scott Lawford wondered how many tears had to fall before that child's lie could be forgiven.

The funeral had been over a week ago. Now, he had nothing left and slowly stood up to grip the porch railing. Behind him, the inside of the house was silent. The only sound was rain hitting the driveway and front lawn. He sighed and sat back on the bench.

Scott glanced to his right at the sound of a vehicle coming down the road. It appeared to be moving very fast and he saw a large black pickup truck brake abruptly, before pulling into his driveway. When it stopped, Harry Borski exited the driver's side door and Scott felt his eyes fill with tears. He watched the large man come up the

steps and onto the porch.

“Scottie.”

“Mr. Borski,” he hesitated for a few seconds. “Thank you and all of your family for attending the funeral. Please, tell Juan and Maria...” Scott held his hand over his mouth for a couple of seconds. “...Ralph, and all the others, I said thanks again.”

His old friend took a seat next to him on the bench. Both were quiet for a short moment until, Harry turned to him. “I had to get away from the damn kids. They drive me crazy with them wanting me to play with them all the time. Thought I’d take a little drive and visit.”

“A little drive! It’s a hundred miles to your farm.” Scott looked down and felt a tear fall from his eye.

“I ah, oh hell...” Harry cleared his throat and pointed at the truck. “...walk in the park for that big bastard. Gretta and the boys bought it for my Christmas present. I made it here in an hour and twenty minutes flat!”

“That’s a nice looking truck, Mr. Borski.” Scott looked closely at the vehicle. “Are those flames painted on the side?”

“Yeah, I didn’t want them on there. Tommy had them put on the sides, ‘cause he thought it was real funny. I’ll tell you though, the grandkids love that truck. Sometimes, I let them ride in the pickup bed. Of course, I go real slowly. Damn tractor pulling a plow, could beat me.”

“How’s the family doing, Mr. Borski?”

“Real good. However, Karen still has a problem with her hearing. Evita says it’s some residual thing from when she had mumps. That girl is strong as a horse and twice as feisty. I pity the poor man that marries her.” Harry shook his head and quickly glanced at his friend.

“Yeah Karen, she’s just a little thing. I hope she’s okay.”

“Scottie, she’s not a little girl anymore. Did I tell you she and Maggie blew up my old ale house a long time ago?”

“Yes Sir. You told me that and many other things. I still remember mobility, chasing the ball and all your other lessons of life. I’m still a...” Scott’s voice broke. “...damn republican.”

“Scott, I want to ask you a question. You don’t have to answer immediately. Gretta and I want to make a proposal. Of course, as CEO of Borski Enterprises...” Harry cleared his throat. “...I decided to consult with the board of directors. As you know, it was just a courtesy. The vote was the first ever -unanimous. Gretta, our boys, my oldest grandson, Stan and everyone else participated. We want to offer you a job helping run the corporation. Come home to us.”

Scott put his hands over his eyes and cried. Harry rested his huge hand on the young man’s shoulder and was very quiet. He just sat there as his friend shed tears.

Mr. Borski wiped his own eyes and blew his nose loudly into a red handkerchief. “Whatever you make at your job, we’ll double. I could use your help, Scottie. You let us know.”

Harry stood up and took a step away from the man. He quickly wiped his eyes again and moved back. “You were Hazel’s damn kid, but you’re ours too.” Harry lost his fragile composure for a few seconds and hesitated, before he stood up a bit straighter and used his most official voice. “Of all of them, even my own boys. Hell Scottie, you always reminded me the most of our little dog, Otto. You never - once in your life - stopped chasing that damn ball.”

Scott never looked up, instead he just sobbed. He again felt the reassuring hand of Mr. Borski on his shoulder. Scott heard him say, “Short drive back. I guess all those damn kids are waiting for me to play with them. Hell of a thing, when the CEO of Borski Enterprises has to babysit.”

Yeah, it’s not right and...” Scott cried harder. “...in my opinion, you need to set things straight on that farm.” He felt the man’s huge hand squeeze his shoulder for a couple seconds.

“I damn well intend to. Scottie, I’ll say no more, except another lesson of life. One more, just for you. Listen closely to the last one. Friends are as important as family.” Harry leaned down and quickly kissed the top of Scott’s head. “Come home, Scottie!

He couldn't look up at his old friend and just sobbed into his hands. Mr. Borski's truck started a few minutes later and Scott heard it driving away into the rainy afternoon.

Two nights later, he rested his head against a down pillow as he stared at the bedroom's ceiling fan. It was on its lowest setting and the blades moved slowly. Scott tried to count the rotations. It sometimes helped him fall asleep. If he concentrated on the number and not the memory of his wife and child, he could drift off. "One hundred twenty three, four, five..." He glanced at the alarm clock on the nightstand. "...two in the morning."

Scott got up and moved from the bedroom into the dark living room. He pulled down on the cord to the venetian blinds and stared out into the moonlit night. "Damn you!" He moved from the room and out onto the front porch where he sat on a bench. For the hundredth time, he went over that Saturday morning in his mind. "It's my fault!" He put his hands over his eyes and was thinking about the events as they had transpired.

Rebecca had finished the breakfast dishes and turned to him from the kitchen sink. "Honey, you sure you don't want to go with me to Annie's house?" She had smiled just a fraction as she waited for the answer she knew she'd get.

“Becky, ah, you know I just don’t want to sit there with Annie while you two talk.” Scott hesitated for an instant. “Look, I’ll drive you over with Eric and drop you two off. I guess that I could visit the Borski farm for a couple hours.” He sighed and looked resolved to the long drive.

His wife chuckled for a few seconds, before she moved next to him at the table and put her hand on his. “Scott, I am quite capable of the trip to Millville. It’s only two hours.” She bent down to kiss his cheek. “I need to see Annie’s new baby girl and besides, I want to show off our Eric.”

She left a few minutes later and Scott waved from the driveway as they backed out.

Rebecca glanced in the rearview mirror at little Eric, who was sound asleep in his car seat. She smiled to herself and saw a mail truck halted on a side road at a stop sign, to her right. There were no cars at the side road’s stop sign, to her left.

Jimmy Flint saw the stop sign at the last second and braked hard as he swerved left onto the main road. From the back seat he heard, “LOOK OUT!” A blue car was just behind and he pulled the steering wheel left. The right back panel of his white sedan impacted the blue car, just behind its left front fender.

Rebecca had jerked her wheel right, in a desperate at-

tempt to avoid the collision. At forty miles an hour, her vehicle left the road and flipped into a deep ditch. The airbags deployed and the car lay on its roof in five feet of water. Rebecca was upside down in the driver's seat and struggled to find the seatbelt's release. Her right arm was numb and she couldn't move it. The airbag prevented her from reaching the seatbelt's release with her left. Rebecca saw the water rushing in the broken passenger side window. "My baby!"

The white car swerved from side to side after the impact and Jimmy managed to control it, after a few hundred feet. He braked hard and stopped. "Lord, it rolled in that ditch full of water. We got to help them!" He reversed and they started to back up.

"WAIT! STOP!" he heard from the backseat. "A mail truck is pulling up right behind them. Get us the hell out of here!"

Tom Jenkins stopped the postal vehicle and ran as fast as his tender hip would allow. He slipped on the side of the ditch and went down hard. The old man moaned and slid further down. He managed to turn and went under the water with his eyes open. The swirling mud made it impossible to see and Tom felt for the door's handle. He gripped it firmly and tried to pull it open. It was locked from the inside and he beat his fist against the driver's side window. Tom surfaced and took a deep breath. He turned and kicked against the window below the muddy water's surface. His hip was on fire. Still he kicked with

one leg, despite the agonizing pain in his side.

It was several minutes until, a pickup with two young men in it screeched to a halt a few feet ahead. Both ran toward the ditch and Tom Jenkins yelled from the muddy water. “The driver is trapped inside; get something to break out the windows!”

Seth Adumenson pulled the mailman from the ditch and handed him a cell phone. “Call for help!”

His brother, Hank, sprinted back to their pickup truck and grabbed a large pipe wrench from the bed. Both young men entered the water and tried to break out the driver’s side window glass. One went under and immediately surfaced. “Window is busted out! Seth, hand me your pocketknife, airbag is inflated and the seatbelt is still on the driver. I got to puncture the bag, the belt release is too far to reach.”

He gave Hank the knife and moved through the muddy water to the passenger side of the car. Seth went under and managed to reach the seatbelt release through the broken window on that side. He surfaced immediately and yelled. “IT’S RELEASED!” He scrambled around the car and reached down to his brother and pulled him above the surface. “I got it off and both of us go under and drag that driver out.”

They had to surface once, before they managed to lift Rebecca’s limp body from the muddy water and dragged her to the road’s surface. Hank and Seth were performing

About The Author

Brian Durski



I was born and raised in rural Western New York. Happily married to my wife Catherine for forty-four years, we have three children and eight grandchildren. I'm retired after thirty-eight years of government service. My inspiration for writing the novel *Bring Me a Bluebird* was something my grandmother had told me almost sixty years ago. She'd said, when you see a bluebird, it means good luck. Fate has continually dealt the primary character in this novel a losing hand. He'll make his own luck!