



A Father's Love: One Man's Unrelenting Battle to Bring His Abducted Son Home

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The inspiring, heart-rending story of a father's unwavering love for his son.

David Goldman and his Brazilian wife, Bruna Bianchi, led what appeared to be a happy life in New Jersey. But in June 2004, Bianchi took their four-year-old son, Sean, to Brazil for what she said would be a two-week vacation. Once there, she informed Goldman that she was staying in Brazil-and keeping Sean, setting in motion an international controversy that would eventually reach the highest levels of the U.S. and Brazilian governments. It would be almost five years before David saw Sean again.

What kept David Goldman going when everything looked so hopeless? In *A Father's Love*, Goldman recounts his extraordinary battle, despite overwhelming odds, to bring his abducted son back home. It is a riveting story full of peculiar ironies, unfathomable elements, threats, and legal twists and turns. Goldman describes in detail the wrenching emotions he went through and how he relentlessly rallied support behind the scenes from both high-level U.S. government officials and national media organizations. Father and son were finally reunited in December 2009, and Goldman writes about the challenges he is now facing as he works to rebuild his relationship with his son, and the advocacy work he is doing on behalf of other children in similar circumstances.

Goldman's unusual story movingly celebrates an ordinary man's incredible love for and loyalty to his son, and his ability to overcome the unimaginable to keep them together. It is a testament to how connected any father and son can be.

A Father's Love: One Man's Unrelenting Battle to Bring His Abducted Son Home Details

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Linda says

This book was well-written and a page-turner until the very end. It is a father's account of the abduction of his 4-year old son from New Jersey to Brazil by the boy's mother. The behavior of the perpetrators is more like reading fiction as the lengths they go to are unfathomable and despicable. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of thui book go towards helping others whose children haven been abducted.

Rachael says

I really enjoyed this book. I've followed this story for several years, and was worried that there would not be any new information in the book, but I was quite shocked about how much went on that the media did not/could not cover.

Shana says

This interesting book about David Goldman's experience trying to bring his son home from Brazil is a fast read. The story begins when Goldman's Brazilian born wife, Bruna, goes to Brazil with their son, Sean, to visit her family. Several days later, she calls Goldman to inform him that she is never coming back and is keeping Sean in Brazil with her. Thus begins his 5 year odyssey of trying to get his son back.

I had seen coverage of this story on Dateline and the Today Show, so I knew the basic story. I think I really wanted to read this book because I thought there might be more information in the book about Goldman's former wife and why she would do something like this. It's hard to conceive of a mother being so incredibly selfish as to take her son away from everything he knows and not allow him to have contact with his father or his father's entire family, all people who he had a very close relationship with. So what on earth was wrong with her that she would do something like this? Surely, I thought, he must have known she was crazy when he married her. Why do men marry crazy women and then complain when things like this happen?

But according to Goldman's side of the story, he never had any inkling that she was unhappy in their relationship or was capable of such a thing. And as I thought about it, I realized that it is perfectly conceivable that one person can think everything is going great in a relationship and have no idea the other person is miserably unhappy, or that someone who moved to America just to be married to you would want to return to their home country if the marriage ended and take their child with them. Clearly, Bruna knew that Goldman would never have allowed his son to live in Brazil full time and she obviously planned this out to get her son out of the country, so they could both live in Brazil, which was where she really wanted to be. And I do think it's conceivable that you can never really know what another person is capable of doing, even if that person is your spouse. As I once told a friend who was in the midst of a break up and lamenting how she could not have known what was in the other person's head, "People are married to serial killers for years and they don't know."

In any case, this is a cautionary tale. If you are an American national and marry someone from another country, the situation can turn into a big, giant mess if you have kids and end up getting divorced. And

apparently, the US government actually isn't very effective in getting kids back in these situations. Even in our own country, kids don't have "rights," they have "interests," and the selfish actions and wishes of adults often trump their rights. How wonderful it would be if this were not the case. Sean fortunately seems to be a very resilient kid. Good for him for overcoming the crazy circumstances he has lived through thanks to some of the selfish adults in his life. Unfortunately, as he gets older, he is going to have a better understanding of the very selfish actions of his mother and grandparents, who cared about themselves more than they cared about him.

The ones who really suffer from these situations are the children, who are kept from having contact with their "left behind parents" and that parents entire side of the family during their formative years. Sadly, there are many cases like this and most don't end happily. Although there aren't a lot of ways to prevent this, at the very least, I don't think anyone should allow their child to travel to the other parent's home country without them.

In any case, this book is a fast read that raises awareness of a troubling issue.

Debbie says

Since the story of Sean Goldman's abduction by his mother originated in my area before it became national news, I followed it from the beginning. It was fascinating to read about what was going on behind the scenes during the years that Mr. Goldman dedicated his life to bringing Sean home.

This book is very well-written, and - despite some overly-detailed explanations of the legal aspects - I found it to be fascinating. The highs, the lows, the disappointments, the heartwarming moments and the heartbreaking ones all come together in a way that makes this book a real page-turner. I wasn't sure how much I would enjoy reading it since I knew so much detail and of course I knew how it would end. But Mr. Goldman's determination and love for his son shines through in a way that makes nearly every word extremely compelling. It's a beautiful and inspirational story, nicely told.

Chris King says

Excellent and absorbing true story of a man's struggle to get his abducted son back from another country. The author goes into a lot of detail in this story, which some other reviewers didn't like, but I think it was important to set the stage and was his way of showing that he is not like many of the allegations made against him.

Because I am the father of four small children, and am married to a Brazilian, I could really feel the emotions and turmoil described by the author, as I pictured what it would be like to be in his shoes. It's saddening and incredible that the abductors would be so cruel and relentless. The backwardness of the legal proceedings, which constantly worked against him, was almost Kafkaesque. It amazes me that he was able to stay strong and maintain his integrity, dignity and reserve against such daunting odds and difficulties.

I won't spoil the conclusion. Suffice it to say that I finished the book feeling inspired, and thinking of my own little children and how much I love them, and how important it is to protect their innocence and do

everything I can to make sure their childhood is a happy one filled with love. Any book that reinforces those values and feelings is worthy of praise. This book did.

Elizabeth says

The ordeal was heart-breaking. But the book itself was too detailed and lasted too long. I was often confused because the transitions between past events & present events were not well written / read. Once I was about 3/4 of the way through, I started skimming until the last couple of chapters because I got the point that the situation sucked and the dad was being jerked around constantly. I just wanted to know how they were doing since he got his son back. I guess I was more concerned / interested in finding out if his son adjusted well and how things were going now. I wanted to know that everything was ok now and his son was irrevocably traumatized for the rest of his life.

Hilary says

An incredible story. Any parent will understand David's drive to bring his son home. Any parent who has been separated from a child through a custody battle or other uncontrollable event will empathize with the wrenching grief a child's absence causes. We can all read this and wonder how the Brazilian government could sign an international treaty and then just a couple of years later, even while agreeing with it, repeatedly fail to enforce it.

Anthony Ventrello says

I picked up this book at the local library and I was glad that I did. It was a page turner from start to finish and even though I knew how the story ended, I still was on the edge of my seat wondering what was going to happen next.

I was angered several times throughout the story at the corruption and blatant disrespect of the law that the Brazilian courts had. It should scare you because this could happen to anyone.

VLynch says

I have to say, Sean is a very lucky kid to have the father he has. I couldn't help but to cheer Dad along his adventure and become angry with each road block he endured. I did feel this book was a bit long, I had to remind myself that this was a true story, not an overwritten plot. Real life and so many heartaches. I wanted a bit more about Sean adapting to his life changes, but also felt relieved they were healing privately together. Way to go Dad!

Eileen says

I was a little taken aback at the beginning of this book and how David Goldman felt it necessary to first talk

about his popularity as a male model and did some name dropping. I'm not sure what this added to his heart wrenching story. David's Brazilian wife Bruna took their four year old son Sean on a two week vacation to Brazil, and the day after they arrived she let David know that they were there to stay and he was to sign away all custody rights as Sean's Father. This started David's six year long fight to regain custody of his son. The audacity, smugness, ruthlessness, corruptness (I can easily go on) of Sean's abductors is so appalling there were times it almost took my breath away. To this day, the litigation is ongoing, one of the reasons being that the kidnappers lost and they're "sore losers." Once this book started telling the story of Sean's abduction it was very compelling, with David Goldman doing a thorough job of navigating the reader through everything from the Brazilian and American families involved, to the political and media madness that at times almost drove David crazy, but never drove him to give up on getting his son back. You could practically feel David's highest highs and lowest lows.

Geeta says

An interesting read. David Goldman's strength is commendable. His unconditional love for his son, his courage and sense of judgement to reach out political higher ups and media to stir a sensation that would be right enough to get him his son back, is amazing to read about.

What doesn't make sense is how such a prudent man could not sense a difference between him and his wife during courtship and during marriage. He did not sense his wife was not happy enough, that she could walk away from marriage and end up marrying someone she did meet or know during her marriage to David. Either that she was a good liar or that David was head over heels about her during all those years that he stayed married to her. Either way, the child lost many years of his childhood going through things that he shouldn't have to live with in the first place to begin with. Precious years of his childhood which he will never get back and which are said to be foundation years of a child's life. Hope, this experience does not leave life long scars in the child's memory where he grows up opinionated or feared about cultures or marriages in general.

Hopes and wishes for better world....

Diane says

A Father's Love tells the sometimes painful story of David Goldman's five year ordeal, in bringing his son back to his home in New Jersey from Brazil.

In 1997 when David was working in Italy, he met a Brazilian woman named Bruna Bianchi Soon the couple fell in love. The two married and made their home in a New Jersey seaside community where David resided, and two years later in 2000, their son Sean was born.

Since Bruna's family was from Brazil, the couple would often travel there a few times a year. In 2004, Bruna and Sean flew to Brazil for a two week vacation. David was to meet them there the following week, but four days into her visit she called her husband David to say that she wanted a divorce, as well as full custody of their son Sean. Shocked and in a state of disbelief, for over three years David struggled to find someone to help him to get his abducted son back. He made several trips to Brazil to see his son, but was repeatedly denied access to the boy, except for occasional and brief telephone calls. Gifts and cards which were sent to Sean by his father were sometimes returned.

Despite international court battles and judgments, his wife refused to give up their son. She divorced her husband David, and she married a prominent Brazilian attorney named Juno Paulo Lins e Silva. In August of

2008, the unimaginable occurred when Bruna died giving birth to her new husband's baby. Bruna's new husband seemed even more determined to see that David remained out of his son Sean's life, and he petitioned the court in Brazil to have Goldman's name removed from his birth certificate after Bruna passed away.

David Goldman, however, had no intentions of giving up on ever seeing his son again. More determined than ever, and assisted by New Jersey State Rep Chris Smith, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and President Obama, David was finally successful in returning Sean to his home in New Jersey several days before Christmas in 2009. Even though Goldman was successful in bringing his son home, the Brazilian family continued to bring court actions against Goldman, believing that Sean should be raised by Bruna's mother.

Each day since Sean returned home with his natural father, the two have grown closer and closer, establishing routines and trust and respect for each other. Even though not every day has been perfect, Sean is thriving in school and at home, since being returned to his birthplace and the home where his life began.

Well told, *A Father's Love*, is a poignant look at just how far a parent will go to do what is right on behalf of their child. I enjoyed this book, and feel that it not only tells the Goldman's story, but opens the communication to expose the fact that this is not an isolated case. International child abduction by parents is a very real problem that needs more exposure, and harsher penalties for offenders.

Melissa says

This is an extraordinary story about a man whose relentlessness, and hope was able to bring his abducted son back to the United States from Brazil after five long emotional years.

Justine says

I could have done without the name dropping in the beginning of the book (seriously, did I need to know he was in shoots with Claudia Schiffer or swimming in Michael Bay's pool?), but after that was a very compelling, almost maddening story of David Goldman's fight for the return of his son. I didn't hear of this particular story beforehand, but I was just amazed at the challenges this man faced in getting a country to stand by the law.

Pat says

It is unbelievable the tenacity that this father had in fighting for his son and the atrocities that both David's wife, and then her family, got away with in Brazil. David is a wonderful writer and the book reads like a fiction novel. Sometimes I had to remind myself that it was real. It does get bogged down a little towards the end with all the red tape David had to go through, but it is still well worth the read.
