

DUMB BITCH.

Beautiful

Intelligent

Tenacious

Courageous

High-value

The Smart Woman's Guide to
Decode Emotional Terrorism

SAMPLE

KIM BRIGHT

KIM BRIGHT

Dumb B.I.T.C.H.

*The Smart Woman's Guide to Decode Emotional
Terrorism & Narcissistic Abuse*

Copyright © 2025 by Kim Bright

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning, or otherwise without written permission from the publisher. It is illegal to copy this book, post it to a website, or distribute it by any other means without permission.

First edition

Preface

Every survivor remembers the exact moment she woke up to the truth.

“Dumb bitch!”

The words felt like two hand grenades exploding simultaneously in my face. For a few seconds, I sat at my desk in shock. I’d never been called a *dumb bitch* before in my life. It was one of those “*where were you when _____ happened?*” moments you never forget.

By the time my ears stopped ringing, and the back-and-forth yelling quieted down, there was no way I was going to let him pimp-walk out of my office after cursing me out. So, I came up with the hardest clap-back in modern clap-back history:

“And if you call me a dumb bitch again, I’m gonna write a book called ‘Dumb Bitch’ and help other women in these toxic relationships!”

Immediately, my inner critic fired off.

“Girl!

Really?

That was the best clap back you had?

I’m a write a book...?

Were you trying to prove him right?

How dumb was that?!?”

I spent the next hours, days, weeks being all super creative with words I *could’ve* said in the moment that was now gone.

Gone.

That's the concept I had the most trouble with during my toxic, twenty-eight-year marriage—especially without a book like this to help make sense of what was going on.

How do I get “gone” from a narcissistic relationship I love that's hell-bent on sucking the life out of me? How do I get “gone” from the trauma that molded me to gladly settle for crumbs for over thirty years together, while my emotional, mental, and psychological health lay lifeless in a chalk outline?

Gone.

Why did it take more than a decade from that faithful day in my office to realize that my identity and self-esteem were “gone”, and I was on auto-pilot in covenant by myself?

How do I thrive in this new reality that the relationship is “gone”, knowing I only sacrificed, people-pleased, and forgave my way to temporary peace?

Where do you buy storage bins big enough to pack all your memories, hopes, and dreams for a future that's “gone” and a present with only me here?

Here.

That's where the answers lie. After everything I've been through—domestic violence, infidelity + social media humiliation, false accusations, a 15-month trial in Superior Court accused by the ex of contempt, slander, and abusing his mother, even a judge's directive that halted *written communications* of this book—I'm still here!

That day in my office, I made a vow. If he was going to call me a “dumb bitch”, I would re-purpose those words into a positive weapon for women trapped in their darkest moments of emotional terrorism and narcissistic abuse. I would break down the tactics, expose the lies, illuminate truth, and show other women how to get free.

Yes, those words surfaced again; the book you're holding is that vow in print.

I didn't write this book from the sidelines. I wrote it from the battlefield. I know what it feels like to question your sanity, to stay silent out of fear, to beg for scraps of love that keep your soul famished. I know how it feels to be in love with a person who slowly erases you while smiling to the world—and the world unwittingly smiles back.

And I also know what it takes to thrive. To decode the manipulation. To see the narcissistic traits for what they are. To stop defending, justifying, enabling, and apologizing for someone who feeds on your low self-esteem.

I write this book not because of a degree or a title. But because I survived. I studied the tactics. I put language to the pain. And as a coach, I've helped other women escape the same hell.

So, if you've ever been called out of your name... if you've ever felt like you couldn't trust your own reality... if you've ever walked on eggshells until your feet bled... if you've ever asked yourself, *"I wonder which person will show up today?"*—this book is for you.

You are not crazy. You are not weak. And, you are not a dumb bitch.

You are stronger than you know.

And by the time you read the truth in these pages, the truth will set you free, too.

Working Definitions

Emotional Terrorism (n.)

ih-**moh**-shuh-nl **ter**-uh-riz-uhm

1 : any intimidation or manipulation that *threatens* to produce or *produces* what your heart fears most in the relationship.

Narcissistic Abuse (n.)

nahr-suh-**sis**-tik uh-**byoos**

2 : psychological abuse marked by gaslighting, control, lack of empathy, and exploitation that erodes identity.

B.I.T.C.H.

Beautiful
Intelligent
Tenacious
Courageous
High-Value
woman

Chapter 1: The Cat and Mouse Phenomenon

"He sent his word and healed them; he rescued them from their traps." - Psalm 107:20

Sis, have you ever watched a cat stalk its prey? The calculated patience. The elongated torso and blink-less focus. The deceptive quietness in every paw print, all culminating in explosive action. There's something almost hypnotic about the way a cat hunts. Could this explain why the mesmerized mouse always gets trapped?

Imagine waking up one random morning to discover you've been cast in a role you never auditioned for: the Mouse in an elaborate game of "cat and mouse". Only this isn't happening in some random barnyard or back alley. The stage is set in your own bedroom, the kitchen, the living room. It's happening in real-time via text messages and voice notes, in whispered conversations at 4 A.M. and knock-out-drag-out fights by noon. This alternative reality happens in the numb space between "I love you" and "You don't even look good enough to be my wife!"

Welcome to the high stakes game of emotional terrorism, where two days actually *are* alike in the most stressful and manipulative ways.

Now, you may be thinking, "Terrorism, Kim? Really? Isn't that a bit

dramatic?”

Let me ask you this: Have you ever walked on eggshells in your own home? Have you ever rehearsed conversations in your head, strategizing every word, trying to anticipate all the potential landmines? Have you ever felt your stomach drop when you heard the garage door open, signaling his return after he left upset about something you didn't do? Have you ever seen his name appear on the caller ID, and now all of a sudden, you're afraid to answer the phone? Have you ever had to lock yourself in the bathroom, go to sleep with headphones, or leave the house altogether to get away from a verbal firestorm? Have you ever been so confused by someone's behavior that you questioned your own sanity, your own reality?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, Ma'am, you're not being dramatic. You're being terrorized.

The relationship is characterized by toxic cycles of the Cat's terror and near captures, and the Mouse's counter-attacks and repeated escapes. It's worth noting that there are moments when the Mouse doesn't even need an elaborate escape plan; the Cat playfully and willfully *releases* the mouse after capture, only to commence the chase again. The Mouse is often confused by how swiftly a peaceful olive branch can turn into a cruel weapon of mass destruction. Emotions can shift from jubilation to confusion, relief to dread in a matter of moments. And, if the Mouse has a propensity for people-pleasing, she often experiences a wave of self-imposed anxieties, trying to appease someone who is simultaneously hell-bent on destroying her spirit.

The term “emotional terrorism” isn't meant to sensationalize or exaggerate toxic relationships. It's meant to accurately name the emotional, psychological, and spiritual warfare experienced when one person systematically breaks down another's sense of self, reality, and safety.

Think about what you fear most in your relationship. Maybe it's a fear of abandonment, fear of infidelity, or simply the fear of losing them and being alone. An emotional terrorist, or strongly narcissistic person, seeks to destroy your spirit by using intimidation and manipulation that threatens to produce what you fear most (read that again).

It doesn't matter if they have the means, ability, or intention to carry out

the threat or not. They will activate sleeper cells in your psyche—"If you don't want to {insert demand}, then somebody else will!", or "Keep on {insert your attempt at a boundary or standing up for yourself} and you're going to find yourself alone!"

This brand of terror not only applies to what you fear most for yourself, but also what you fear most for them. For example, if the Cat has a predisposition to suicide ideation, trust me, no one will threaten to un-alive themselves faster than a Cat caught cheating. The warfare inflicted on your emotions, balancing the torment of infidelity and the threat of their death, would be terrifying. The mission is to disturb your mental and emotional well-being, successfully chip away at your self-worth, all while producing seeds of panic that grow deeper into emotional instability.

Just as domestic or international terrorism uses violence to control through fear, emotional terrorism uses psychological manipulation to achieve the same end. At the heart of the cat and mouse game lies this declaration of jihad that terrorizes the heart, mind, body, and soul of the Mouse.

Decoding the Rules of the Game

Every game has rules, even toxic ones. The rules may be unwritten, unspoken, but they will be enforced without warnings or grace periods.

When the stage is set for the game of cat and mouse, you, the Mouse, don't get to write, contribute to, or approve the rules—the Cat does. However, you most definitely need to be able to decode the rules of engagement. According to Section 0.01 of the Cat's Playbook, *the rules imposed on the Mouse do not apply to the Cat, and the rights and privileges given to the Cat do not apply to the Mouse*. If you go into this game thinking that the Cat will play fair, that there will be balance and empathy for your feelings, you will find yourself crushed under the weight of perceived love mixed with actual hate. And that, Ma'am, is a combination that will make your head spin so fast, your grip on reality will slip from your blistered fingertips.

Understanding these rules, should you choose to accept the part, is the

first step toward recognizing you're playing a game designed with your destruction in mind. Let's take a brief look.

Rule #1: The Cat always initiates.

How did you get here? Where did your invitation come from?

The game begins when the Cat selects you. Not a random choice or haphazardly. Cats are particular about their prey.

They want a challenge, but not an impossible one. They want a Mouse with enough spirit to make the chase interesting, but not so much spirit that they might actually lose. They want Intelligence, but the kind they can outsmart, not the kind that outshines them. They want enough beauty that can be paraded around to impress others, but the kind they can also convince is ugly without them when the time is right. They want strength, the kind with broad, soft shoulders that can carry them and their goals, but also the kind they can gradually weaken with a mixture of love bombs and word bombs.

So, you've been watched. Studied. The Cat has cased you like a jewelry store slated for a pending heist. Your worth, far above rubies and diamonds, is under surveillance. Where has unhealed trauma left her most vulnerable? Through which door did her daddy abandon her and now it's a prime target for illegal entry? She has guards around her most precious gems; but how can they be distracted, or better yet, paid off with adoration, praise, or mind-blowing sex? The emotional terrorist has collected all the data needed to conclude—you are the one. Time to roll out the red ~~flag~~ carpet and welcome you to the game.

The stage is set and your personal invitation warms your heart. It's often sealed in an answer to your unspoken prayer for help, guidance, connection, or support in a certain area of your life. Well, whaddya know—the Cat is an expert or has access to resources for the missing piece of the puzzle. Void filled.

In short, they want you. The Beautiful, Intelligent, Tenacious, Courageous, High-value woman. The B.I.T.C.H. The one with endearing traits sprinkled

with a dash of unhealed trauma, family issues, and hidden insecurities the Cat can smell on your soul.

Rule #2: The game has distinct phases (H-P-R)

First comes the “**hunt**”—what many in the mental health community call “love bombing.” This is when the Cat showers you with attention, affection, gifts, and admiration to form a deep, emotional bond with you, quickly. You’re perfect. You’re everything he’s ever wanted. You’re not like other women. You understand him in a way no one else does. All of this adoration waters your soul in spaces that may be dry or brittle, or it fertilizes a seed of pride buried deep in your heart. Either way, you’re hooked on the high because it feels so good to finally be appreciated, seen, and adored.

Then comes the “**pounce**”—entrapment by the first betrayal, the first cruel comment. The first time they call you out of your name or humiliate you in public. It’s shocking. It came out of no where, often unprovoked. You don’t know who this guy is, and this intrusion by *Mr. Hyde* is as disorienting as whip lash from a rear-end collision you never saw coming. Never in a million years would you have ever expected the Cat to treat you in this manner, and you would be hard-pressed to convince anyone else that he did what he did.

But before you can fully process what happened, or hold them accountable for their actions, here comes phase three—they “**release**” you. You’re presented with the perfect, motion picture apology that crosses all the t’s and dots all the i’s you were going to bring to their attention. How impressive is their contrition and self-awareness! They bring flowers. They snot cry. They promise it will never happen again. Relieved to have your loving partner back again, you believe them.

And the *hunt* begins again. Your pleasure chemical levels shoot through the roof. Then the *pounce*, again. Then the *release*, again. Then the...

Rule #3: The Cat controls the clock.

One of the most disorienting aspects of this game is its unpredictability. The Cat decides *when* the hunt begins, *when* the pounce happens, and *when* the temporary release is granted. And of course, every *when* is dictated by a universal *if*—*if* the Cat decides to hunt, pounce, or release based on their rules of engagement. You're constantly reacting, never able to act on a solid footing. Your life becomes dictated by their fluctuating moods, their needs, and their schedule.

Here's what a typical week in the game might look like. Monday might be perfect—dinner together, genuine conversation, physical intimacy, great sex. Tuesday might be silent treatment for a reason you know nothing about. Wednesday, when he finally does speak to you, might bring accusations that you're cheating or you don't love him, followed by tearful apologies and sexual advances by sundown. Thursday might be so normal you start to think you imagined the chaos from the previous days. By Friday, you're mentally and emotionally exhausted, confused, and desperately trying to figure out what you did to trigger this cycle.

But here's the truth: You didn't trigger anything. The game was designed this way from the start.

The Psychological Impact of the Game

Living in this perpetual state of uncertainty creates what psychologists call a *trauma bond* — a powerful, emotional attachment formed through repeated cycles of abuse and affection. The highs feel so high, they become addictive, especially after the turmoil of devastating lows. You just want to feel the love again. You just want to be free. The missing moments of peace and affection become worth *any* ransom price.

Your brain, desperate to make sense of all the chaos, begins to adapt. You develop hyper-vigilance, constantly scanning for signs of danger. Ultimately, the moments of peace you ransomed with your last become the boogeyman you can't trust. The affection you craved betrays you. You become an

unexpected expert at reading subtle shifts in tone, facial expressions, body language. You learn to anticipate needs before they're expressed. Crumbs of kindness satisfy your soul like a feast. You become smaller, quieter, more accommodating, more pleasing.

In psychological terms, the game exposes you to the cause and effects of *intermittent reinforcement*. This strategic and powerful form of behavioral conditioning happens when rewards (in this case, love and affection) are given unpredictably, causing the person to try even harder to earn them by people-pleasing or walking on eggshells.

It's the same principle that keeps gamblers "bonded" like glue to slot machines. With every pull there's an anticipation, a rush of excitement that *this* could be the moment. This next pull could be the big payout of your dreams. Without surprise, you adopt the mindset that, "If I don't play, I won't win." Now, sometimes you win and the Cat surprises you with an easy payout of love and affection. Sometimes you lose and the Cat pounces on you even harder than before. But, the possibility of reward, mixed with toxic optimism and displaced faith, keeps you playing long after you should have exited the game.

Invisible Wounds and Unlimited Lives

"But he's never hit me," says many women trapped in the game of cat and mouse. "He's never physically hurt me."

Physical abuse leaves visible evidence—bruises, broken bones, scars. Emotional abuse leaves invisible wounds that can be just as devastating, and often take longer to heal than visible ones. The wounds from emotional terrorism may be invisible to others, but they're painfully real to you, and can cause any of the following deeper issues:

- Depression and anxiety
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Chronic pain and other physical health problems
- Cognitive distortions and difficulty trusting your own perceptions

- Low self-worth and lack of true identity
- Difficulty forming healthy relationships in the future

Because the game demands that you develop such a toxic resistance to repeated emotional wounds, it diminishes your perception of reality that—you're in serious danger, girl!

The cat and mouse game begins to feel like a wicked video game where the pounce doesn't hurt that bad after all, and you always find a way to play another day. You fully believe you've been given unlimited *lives* in the game, where it doesn't matter what happens to *this* mouse, or how many times she fails the mission to please the Cat. You'll be given another mouse in the game, where this time you'll be rewarded because you will know, do, and be better.

But, what the game does not tell you is that every iteration of the mouse is weaker, more confused, and more damaged than the previous players. The mouse will never be as strong and confident as the day she was chosen for the game. And the Cat knows it.

Cat Tactics Decoded

Let's take a brief moment to look at some common tactics the Cat employs to maintain game control.

Gaslighting: "That never happened. You're making things up again."

Translation: *I need you to doubt your reality so you'll accept mine.*

Projection: "You're so selfish. You never think about anyone but yourself."

Translation: *I'm describing myself but attributing these qualities to you to deflect attention from my behavior.*

Isolation: "Your friends don't really care about you. They're just using you."

Translation: *I need to separate you from your support system so you'll be completely dependent on me.*

Moving the goalposts: "Yes, I said that would make me happy, but what I really meant was..."

Translation: *I need to ensure you can never succeed or feel secure in meeting my expectations.*

These tactics aren't random acts of meanness. They're calculated strategies from the emotional terrorist's playbook designed to maintain power and control.

Mouse Traps

As an Intelligent woman, you must be aware of common pitfalls that can keep you trapped in the game. Here are some early mouse traps intended to seal your fate:

Mistaking intensity for intimacy: The passionate beginning of these relationships often feels like deep connection. Is he really that into you after only one week? He's not. Real connection builds over time through consistent action, respect, and vulnerability.

Confusing jealousy with love: Being constantly monitored, questioned, or accused isn't a sign of passionate love. It's a sign of insecurity and control that won't be "cute" for long.

Believing you can fix them: Your love, patience, and understanding won't heal someone who doesn't recognize they're wounded, or doesn't want to change.

Comparing your situation to worse scenarios: "At least he doesn't hit me" or "At least we have financial stability" are thoughts that keep you accepting the unacceptable bare minimum.

Investing in potential rather than reality: You stay for who they could be, not who they consistently show themselves to be.

Breaking the Cycle

I won't pretend that the way out of this game is always quick, easy, or painless. Trauma bonds are real. The thoughts that terrorize you appear real. Your love—yes, even amid the chaos—is real.

But recognizing emotional terrorism for what it is represents a crucial first

step that strips the game of some of its power. Understanding the rules helps you see that you've been set up to lose from the beginning—not because you're weak or stupid, but because there was a vulnerability that made you susceptible to the game.

In the chapters that follow, we'll explore how narcissistic relationships develop, why Intelligent women often stay in them longer than you might expect, and most importantly, how to repossess your power and ultimately tell the Cat: "Game over."

For now, I want you to hold onto one truth: This game does not dictate your worth, God does. It was always about the Cat's need for control. Your value as a Beautiful, Intelligent, Tenacious, Courageous, High-value woman (B.I.T.C.H.) remains intact, regardless of how long you've been playing the game.

The fact that you're reading these words means something within you recognizes the toxicity of your situation and is fighting to break free. That fighting spirit? That longing for more, for better? That's the real you, the you that existed before the game began, and the you that will emerge stronger when the game ends.

And it will end, when you're ready. I promise you that.