

Scapegoat's Cross: Poems about Finding and Reclaiming the Lost Man Within

I'm pleased to announce the completion of the manuscript for my second book. *Scapegoat's Cross: Poems about Finding and Reclaiming the Lost Man Within* is both a companion and a follow-up to my first book, *Iron Man Family Outing*.

I've included some preview material from the new book on this announcement, including an excerpt from the introduction and one of the poems that appears in the book. Additional excerpts can be found at www.rickbelden.com/new_book.

I'm also making signed preview copies of the completed manuscript available to those who'd like an early look. Information about ordering preview copies of *Scapegoat's Cross* is available at www.rickbelden.com/new_book.

I'm very proud of this new work and eager to get it out into the world where it may be of use to others.

Rick Belden

Introduction (excerpt)

I'm a man who got lost. This is the story of finding and reclaiming that man, of looking straight into all the pain and confusion in my life that got me lost in the first place and actively making the decision to stay on the path of truth and healing, even if I can't pretend anymore that I know where it's taking me, where I'm going to wind up, or how long it's going to take me to get there.

Twenty years ago, I wrote a book called *Iron Man Family Outing*, which was largely focused on the experience and consequences of growing up with an angry, abusive, emotionally unavailable father and a mother I saw as his victim and my protector. I told my story as best I knew and understood it at that point in my life, and I told it as completely as I could. But there were many things I didn't understand yet about myself, my history, and my family ...

My relationships with women continued to be broken, if I had them at all. Every job felt like a death trap that left me gutted and hopeless at the end of the day. I wanted more, and I knew I was capable of more, but something seemed to be blocking me and I didn't know what it was. Once again, I found that life was calling me to look more deeply into myself, and when I did, I discovered that I was still carrying a big secret from my childhood, a secret I didn't even know I had ...

face my ghosts

nobody's perfect
nobody's all bad
nobody's all good
 and nobody knows
 what it's like to live in
somebody else's skin.

I'd like to understand why people did the things they did
I'd like to know what was going on in their heads
 and their hearts
but the only thing I know for sure is that
 I'm the last in a long line of lousy childhoods.

people tell me
 why can't you just get over it
which really means
 why can't you just forget about it
but they don't understand that
 forgetting is not a solution
 because what is left forgotten
 is left unhealed.

they don't understand that
 I have to find all the pieces of myself
 that were shattered over the years
 and lie scattered on the road to forgiveness.

they don't understand that
 I have to face my ghosts
 so I don't pass them on to someone else
 like someone else
 passed them on to me.

I have to face my ghosts
I have to find them
I have to name them
I have to know them
I have to set them free.