

A LETTER FROM BILL GLOSE

AUTHOR OF *ALL THE RUINED MEN*



Dear Reader,

As a paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne Division, I served in the Gulf War as part of the first units deployed to prevent Saddam Hussein from invading Saudi Arabia. After months of tension, I was part of the ground invasion into Iraq, charging through sand dunes littered with dead bodies.

Countless drills had taught us to perform our jobs with hard-hearted efficiency, always focusing on the mission. But empathy doesn't abandon you as you point your weapon in the faces of women and children or search the pockets of dead soldiers for usable intel. Training allowed us to function as a cohesive unit in the chaos of war, but not how to function as individuals afterwards, how to make sense of everything we'd seen and done, how to live happy and productive lives. Afterwards—after war—we had to balance the shiny ideals we'd once embraced with the muddy truths we'd actually experienced.

I took after my father, a Vietnam vet who never spoke about his war. Stoicism was his fortress. It became mine too. Silence served as a tolerable stopgap for a while, but once I left the Army, I had too much free time to think. Reports about scores of veteran suicides had me worried. I hadn't considered taking my own life, but some dark vortex had me in its grip. My choices were simple: I could follow the lessons of my silent father and let my internal anger and confusion grow until they exploded, or I could try something different. So I began to write about my experiences and those of other soldiers fighting in our seemingly never-ending wars.

What I learned was that words had the power to heal. And that healing could be shared—with other veterans, with their families, with anyone curious about what it's like to go to war and come home with serious emotional baggage. Writing these stories served as a form of self-therapy and sharing them with the world as a form of group therapy. Being part of a veteran's writing community gave me a sense of kinship I hadn't felt since being a soldier. It was like I was still fighting for the soldier, sailor, airman, or Marine in the figurative foxhole next to me. Speaking my truth and listening to theirs, our words bringing us together and making us whole.

In reading these stories, I hope you feel that same kinship with these characters. They are composites of my own experiences and imagined renderings of those who continued to fight after I left the service. My intent was to show the human cost of war, how those we call on to fight are not done battling once they come home, and how each veteran must struggle to find normalcy in a world where they no longer comfortably fit. I am happy to share ***ALL THE RUINED MEN*** (St. Martin's Press; 8/2/2022) with you. I hope these stories touch your heart. Thank you for your support.

All my best,
Bill Glose

PRAISE FOR *ALL THE RUINED MEN*

"Bill Glose hinges the traumas of war to everyday events: playing poker, hosting a party, digging a pool. *All the Ruined Men* is **an impressive debut from a seasoned storyteller** who understands nuance and character and how memory abides inside every present moment.

These stories are **brutal, disarming, tender, and wrenching.**"

—**Sheri Reynolds, author of *The Tender Grave* and *The Rapture of Canaan***

"Through these heartfelt stories Bill Glose shatters **the myth of the tight-lipped, stoic veteran.**" —**Will Mackin, author of *Bring Out the Dog***

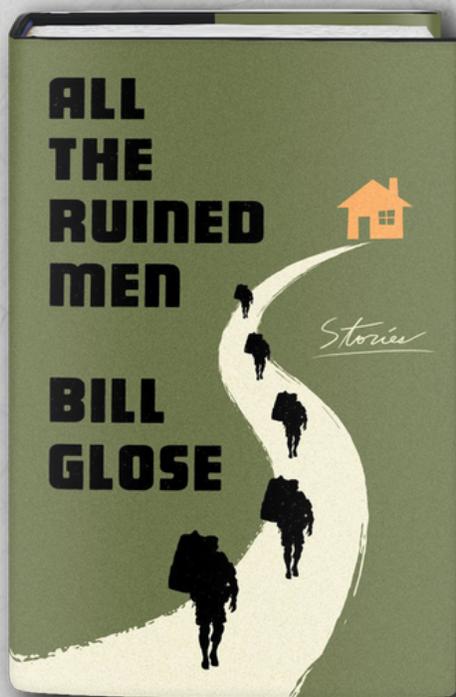
"Brutally honest.... **An important book all Americans should read** to understand the fallout from twenty years of continuous war." —**Brian Castner, author of *The Long Walk***

"Searing, evocative, **masterfully told.**" —**Mark Treanor, author of *A Quiet Cadence***

"This accomplished book is more than a collection of war tales. It's a reckoning."

—**Matt Gallagher, author of *Empire City* and *Youngblood***

"Glose rivets the reader's attention with gritty, convincing detail...**A tribute** to those whose lives were wrecked by fighting in America's longest war, *All the Ruined Men* is **one of the most moving collections I've ever read.**" —**David Poyer, author of *Violent Peace* and *Heroes of Annapolis***



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