

Another Father's Day come & gone, my thirteenth since my arrest & imprisonment. I left two beautiful daughters & an unborn son out there. The truth is that I had left them long before I committed murder & came to prison.

My daughters could barely say "dada" when I chose booze over family. I was drowning in my many addictions by the time my boy came along. I have never met him.

For the first few years of my sentence, I was blessed to visit with my daughters a few times each year. They always seemed to enjoy our brief time together, never giving any indication that anything was seriously wrong with our relationship. Perhaps I was blind to it then. Or perhaps I am terrified by the thought of it now. But I feel a significant separation.

I received no Father's Day card this year. My guilt & shame for my past neglect — my abandonment — won't let me write the number of years passed since my last Father's Day card. God knows I did not deserve the few I did receive. But my heart aches with the realization that my babies know it, too, that they might feel let down, neglected, abandoned, without the daddy they deserved.

I have long claimed to dislike receiving holiday cards in prison, reminders of what I am missing with my family. But this month I am rethinking that sentiment. I would give my very life to know that I have not hurt my children this way. The truth, though, is that I cannot have it so easy. I must suffer the taste of my own medicine.

Dan. June 17, 2013