I Should Be Dead Bob Beckel

Read by Bob Beckel and Graham Beckel

Growing up poor in Lyme, Connecticut, with an abusive father, Bob Beckel learned to be a survivor: to avoid conflict, mask his feelings, and lie—all skills that would later serve him well in Washington, D.C., and on the campaign trail. In college, Beckel found himself drawn to both drugs and politics, the dual gravitational tug of '60s counterculture. He confronted bigotry while registering African-American voters under the new Voting Rights Act, found inspiration volunteering for Robert F. Kennedy's 1968 presidential campaign, and, in the devastating aftermath of the Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. assassinations, was among those tear-gassed by Chicago police at that year's Democratic National Convention.

After a stint in the Peace Corps in the Philippines, Beckel arrived back in the nation's capital on his twenty-fourth birthday with the goal of reinventing himself. He quickly carved out a reputation as a savvy campaign consultant, spearheading dozens of successful congressional races. In 1977 he became the youngest-ever Deputy Assistant Secretary of State and went on to manage Walter Mondale's 1984 presidential campaign, before launching a second career as a TV host and commentator.

But Beckel was living a double life: Washington success story by day, self-destructing alcoholic by night. On January 20, 2001—George W. Bush's first Inauguration Day—he hit rock bottom, waking up in a hospital psych ward after a ferocious bender. In the years that followed he struggled to recover from alcohol and cocaine addiction, debt and legal problems, public scandal and private pain—until a surprise phone call started him on a path that would transform his life.

Written with the frankness, warmth, and take-no-prisoners honesty that has earned him legions of fans on television, Beckel chronicles how his addictions nearly killed him before a series of friends and unexpected allies helped him find his way to faith, sobriety, and a life of peace and purpose.

Bob Beckel, a contributing columnist for *USA Today*, is a former co-host of *The Five* on Fox News Channel and professor of political strategy at George Washington University. A graduate of Wagner College, Beckel lives in Maryland.

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John David Mann is coauthor of the *New York Times* bestsellers *The Red Circle* and *Flash Foresight* and the national bestseller *The Go-Giver*. His *Take the Lead* (with Betsy Myers) was named by Tom Peters and the *Washington Post* as Best Leadership Book of 2011.

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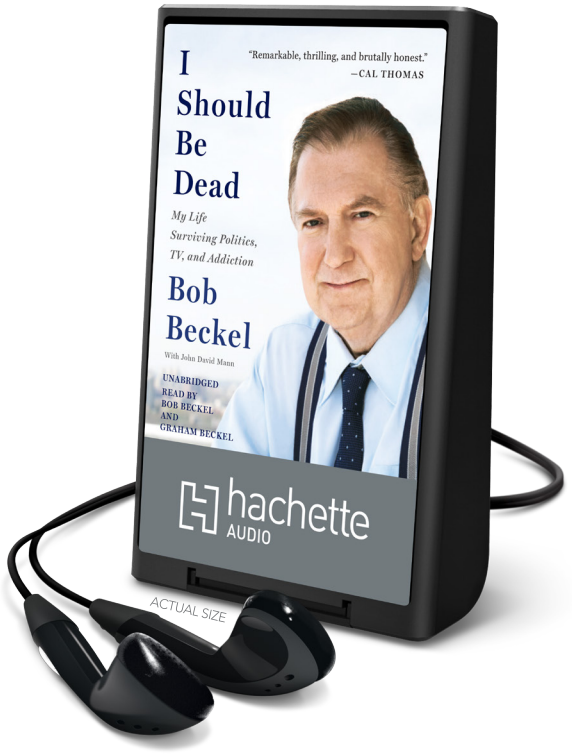
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