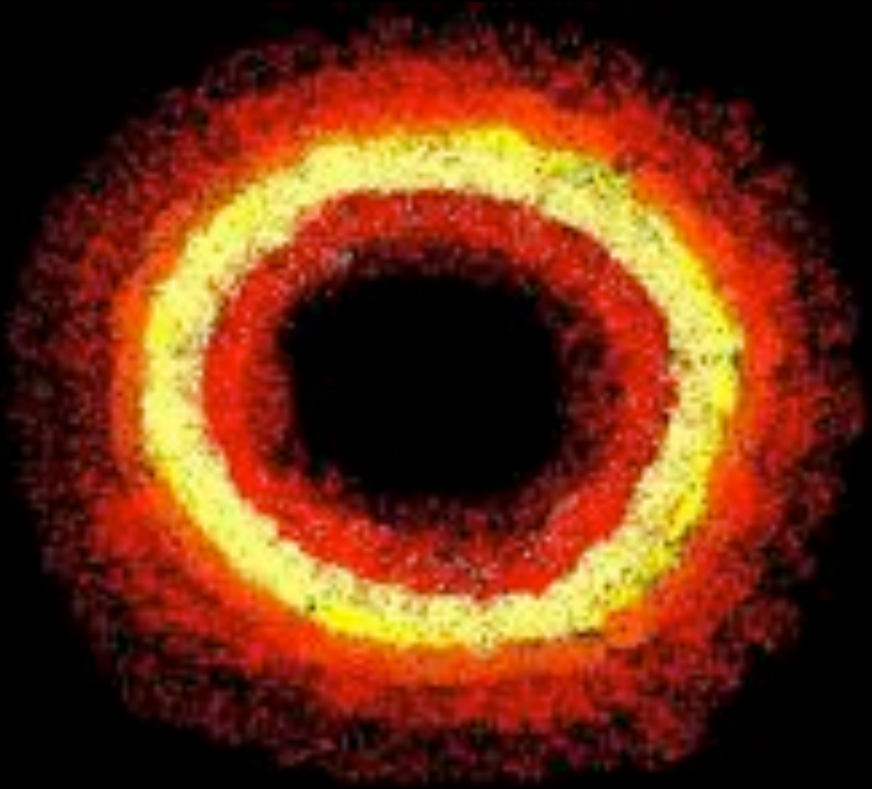


ANTIMATTER



POEMS OF PAIN:
VOLUME 1 (2007 – 2009)

CHRIS BUTLER

SCARS PUBLICATIONS 2011 CHAPBOOK

Poems featured in *Antimatter* have been previously published in the following publications:

bear creek haiku
The Beatnik Cowboy
The Blue Fog Journal
Breadcrumb Scabs
The Camel Saloon
Chantarellé's Notebook
The Cynic Online Magazine
Down in the Dirt Magazine
Opium Poetry 2.0
Poor Mojo's Almanac(k)
Zygote in my Coffee

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TOO SOON

I was evicted from the womb two and a half months too soon,
and born small enough to snug in the palm of a grown man's hand.
As my single layer of smooth baby skin scaled and cracked,
each limb was wrapped in oven mitts so I couldn't peel myself,
while I lied trapped inside this clear plastic tomb.

My mother was detoxing down the hall
and my father was nowhere to be found,
so I was encircled by nurses and doctors,
ensuring my chest continued to rise and fall
by keeping me breathing through impending doom.

As soon as I was discharged my mother was put in charge
and she affixed me directly in front of the TV.
My caretakers were primarily Barney and Sesame Street
when she sat comatose on the edge of her bed,
then left to waste WIC checks on cigarettes.

At the age of two my mother dragged me to day care,
propping me up at the bar in the tavern on the corner.
I couldn't stop crying as I choked on stale smoke,
so she dipped my pacifier in a pitcher of Miller Lite
and slipped it into my mouth.

GROWING PAINS

I'm already dying
once growth stunts,
as atrophic muscles
stiffen, tenderize,
then ache.

Please reserve a place
atop the dusted mantle
for my drained
and polished skull,
a hollow memento
to lament then pawn
to pay the rent,
since nothing is
better left unsaid
after I'm dead.

The fine wine in my veins
sours into vinegar with age,

but, I'm too young to complain.

TWENTYSOMETHING

Coming of age
but going nowhere
after post-pubescence,
when my wrinkled gonads
ripen while they sag,
my hunch is backed.

Thinking I'm wiser,
but I don't know what
it is to be a man.
I remain a baby,
powdered and pampered
in adult diapers,
without a belly button
classifying my being
as an innie or outie,

because there still is this orange extension chord
feeding me,
intravenously,
externally,

eternally

growing old.

DOWN

I don't
want to live
down in the
basement,
where the single
synthetic sun
beams artificial
light from a
dangling bulb,
swinging my struggling
shadows with each
futile pass as I bob
for the contents of
cobwebs,
succumbing to
surrounding mouthfuls of
fiberglass insulated
cotton candy mixed
with carbon monoxide.
I hold
my breath while
hovering over the
graveyard corners
of discarded cockroach
carcasses, hollowed
out exoskeletons
of insects ingested by
incest, marked with
toothpick crosses,
all underneath
the weight
of home.

NOTHING BUT DUST

I am nothing but dust,
contributing to the dump
that is existence.

Mounds of molted skin
cells mixed with plucked
graying follicles make
me a rolling tumbleweed,
briefly bouncing across
the barren furniture before
collecting myself when
fussy gusts settle.

As I am nothing,
just dust.

STAIN

I am a stain,
distinguished from the
others with thick rusted
veins squirting ketchup
onto painted blue jeans,
but for the most part,
I tattoo myself across
the surface of this earth.

I am bathed
with soapy suds of
lemon-scented ammonia,
submerged in the kitchen
sink, only pulling
the rubber stopper
plugging the drain
when I'm clean.

WEIRDO

It feels like
the black sheep
of the flock,
encircling the
outskirts of its
block,
then is trapped and
implemented as
an imperfect pet,
awaiting to be
named and
fed.

RAPE DOLL

Used thrift-store
play thing, empty
staring through round,
brown, buttoned eyes,
is hot glued and blind,
with dry fibrous skin
chafing without spit,
like my unbendable
appendages sparking
static against the
stained shag carpet,
as fresh orifices form
from cigarette burns,
indecently exposing my
white cotton insides.

But hiding behind
this stitched smile
of repressed denial
leads me nowhere
except the washing
machine bleeding
bottles of bleach,
just to be tossed
in the vacant corner
when it's all over.

GRIND

Grinding my teeth
and thinking of you,
like I'm chewing sinew
or bleeding meat,

you're still stuck in
my sandpaper enamel,
breaking the brittle
minerals while crawling
over and around the
rows of rolling molars
or lodged between the
cracked gaps, ripping
at my rotting roots,
where mint-flavored
floss splits the
reddened gums.

Creaking mandible jaw
until my face aches,
chisels this mouth
into crowned porcelain
dentures, straightened fake,
to forget one flaw.

SHUT DOWN

Control alt delete
me

from your personal
history,

like you would do
to a contracted virus
without a man's
conceived vaccine,

as I undeviatingly
stymie impatience
with unresponsive
modus operandi
by ad nauseatingly
demurring
your vital
google search
for truth,

until your
carpel tunnel
tactile members
must push
my buttons
and arouse
the crash
before
the burn.

NOTHING MUCH MATTERS

Nothing much matters
when you're made of matter,
but even as the bipolar protons
mosh against the passive
aggressive neutrons (intending
on interjecting their struggle
into the scattered trajectory
of numerous negative ninnies
lounging around on unequally
dispersed electron clouds),
you mustn't wander far
from the dwelling nucleus.

PIECES

Taking out my brain
for it's yearly spring
cleaning to scrape
clinging thoughts,

my peace of mind
shatters into scattered
pieces, just to be pieced
together by passively
passing the time on
this splintered puzzle.

I meticulously mold
myself using industrial
strength adhesives,
securing separated sections
disconnected with indecisive
precision for an eternity,

or until I'm whole again.

LIBIDO

I got a full-frontal
lobotomy to sever
my infected libido
and swollen ego,
so double-jointed
surgeons would stitch
together wilting skin
with shivering fingers,
using slivered string
and plaster cast masks
as memorable memorabilia
of stuff that once was.

SELL MY SOUL

Sell my soul
and strip my bones
bare,

because I'd
enjoy swallowing
whole

any inanimate
object or animistic
stone,

some sustenance
for my invisible iron
core,

to feel full filled
of immaterial matter,
alone

with this essentially
senseless essence
absent,

lost in limitless
limbo of inseparable
selflessness
and unsubstantiated
substance,

while I am too
busy being a human
being,

breathing dust
into stuffed nostrils,
bleeding,

because I don't
need it no more.

HEAVY

I'm in dire need
of a safe haven
but I'm too heavy
for your heaven,
like a clipped-
winged angel
spiraling towards
the fires of hell.

WHIP-IT

After hours,
a mound of discarded cream
melts across the Stop & Shop parking lot
on a cool, cloudless August night
under the mumbling neon lights,
illuminating a chilled aluminum can
seized by my shivering hand.
The mass leaks in milky streams,
running off in creviced directions,
as the cans hiss with emptiness
from my pointer pressing the tip.
I am sodomized by the next nozzle,
resulting in inhalation of numbing nitrous,
causing my brain cells to swim in circles,
just to drown in puddles.

SEIZURE

She's been seized
by these seizures
after overexposure to
strobes shining
epileptic suns,
causing her to
swallow swollen
tongues and flush
clenched colons,
and shivering her
despite her fever
by drenching her
pruned flesh with
freezing sweats,
until she
chokes
on the
stench of
burning hair.

WHEN A PREGNANT WOMAN READS THE SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING

(PREVIOUSLY ENTITLED "LUCKY")

The upside-down brown cylinder sits
amongst the rows of circular white filters.
I slowly slide it beyond the gold foil,
and my fingertips raise the cigarette
to its resting position between my lips.
I flip the lid on my shiny silver Zippo,
and as my calice-laced thumb rubs the wheel,
it sparks the flint that combusts the charred wick.
The flaming orange cherry bursts the tip
in a cancerous cloud of crackling steam,
as inhalation lunges against my lungs.
I round my mouth so swirls of smoke
spiral in disintegrating circles into the sky.
The ash drags along the paper and tobacco,
until I flick it with a snap of my wrist
and watch as dust drifts with the wind.
Once the glow reaches the cotton butt,
I drop it to the cold concrete and snuff it out
with my moccasin, extinguishing the smoldering light,
knowing I will decompose long before the remains.

CONTAGIOUS CANCER

I am a cancer cell,
intending to spoil
the whole bunch
by back-stroking down
the blood stream with
lymph fluids, while
establishing colonies in
the composting colon and
expanding real-estate
prostate space above a
towering tumor on the
left testicle, just to
lounge around the lungs
and be exhaled onto the
apex of the nervous system,
before spreading out
to this epidermis surface,
exposing my true self.

REDUCED TO ASHES

I feel cleaner
reduced to ashes,
seducing me into
spontaneous
combustion,

as a cataclysmic
catalyst initially
extinguished
by secreting
territorial piss,

before mercury
colored blood
boils bubbles over
charred coals,
choking termite
fed trees into
kindling, subsequently
creating
cremation by
sacred ceremonies
inside of Nazi ovens,

and scattered
across some
serene scenery,
against the
freest breeze.

OLDE THYMER'S

I wish I'd died before I got old,
as my double-helix spirals downward,
but these are the genes I wear,
since they are my only pair.

My double-helix spirals downward,
covered in defective chromosomes,
but they are my only pair,
like decaying leaves on the family tree.

Covered in defective chromosomes,
smothering my precious brain cells
like decaying leaves on the family tree,
I sit in my rocking chair awaiting my fate.

Smothered by my precious brain cells,
I sink, drowning in dementia,
sitting in my rocking chair awaiting my fate,
stalling regularly to recall.

As I sink, drowning in dementia,
naively believing that life is fair,
I stall regularly to recall
all the tales I've been told.

I still naively believe that life is fair,
since these are the genes I wear,
but from all the tales I've been told,
I wish I'd died before I got old.

HEMINGWAY'S WAY

Hemingway's way
can be found on
an inland island,
where an unlovely
loner skips individual
sandy granules over
evaporating oceans,
yearning to be kissed
by glass lips protruding
for breath from the top
of a brown paper dress,
before performing
oral pleasure
upon a loaded
twelve-gauge
pump-action
shotgun,
just for fun.

SUICIDE SONG

When there is nothing left
and I've chewed my last chalky antidepressant,
my eyes glance to shiny synthetic disks.

I open the plastic case and the port on my stereo
to place the plastic wax on its outlined tray, allowing
the lackadaisical laser to scan through the tracks.

A disfigured finger presses the seek button
to skip towards my sacred sad song,
then is preset on a continuous loop for eternity.

*Sometimes I find myself thinking
That these skinny wrists need slitting,
But I must be kidding...*

The symphony of bittersweet cacophony bursts
in distorted waves from the speakers.

*Puffing packs of cigarettes
Is cheaper than a box of bullets,
Yet it's better not to know it...*

The discord of the singer's vocal chords express
endless verses of angst-ridden lyrics.

*Flying kites at night,
Under the bright white lighting strikes,
Is prayer my life takes flight...*

The bass bumps persistently against my ear drums,
mirroring the rhythm of my fading heart.

*It's just my style
To fit the tragic profile
Of a downward spiral.*

PERFECT DAY

When every
day is the
worst of
your life,
then your
premature
birth sure
must've been
perfect.

ANTIMATTER

CHRIS BUTLER

Also available from Scars Publications by Chris Butler:

Emo (© 2010, 16 pages)

The War of Art (© 2010, 16 pages)

Down Syndrome (© 2010, 64 pages)

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other publications from Scars:

Magazines: *Children, Churches and Daddies* (cc&d magazine), founded June 1993; *Down in the Dirt*, conceived 1994, founded 2000

Books: *Hope Chest in the Attic, the Window, Close Cover Before Striking, (Woman.), Aut umn Reason, Contents Under Pressure, the Average Guy's Guide (to Feminism), Changing Gears, the Key to Believing, Domestic Blisters, Etc., Oeuvre, Exaro Versus, L'arab, The Other Side, The Boss Lady's Editorials, The Boss Lady's Editorials (2005 Expanded Edition), Daulty, Seeing Things Differently, Change/Rearrange, Death Comes in Threes, Moving Performances, Six Eleven, Life at Cafe Aloha, Creams, Rough Mixes, The Entropy Project, The Other Side (2006 Edition), S top., Sing Your Life, The Beauty and the Destruction, cc&d v167.5 (Writing to Honour & Cherish, editor edition), Blister & Burn (the Kuyppers edition), S&M, cc&d v170.5 Distinguished Writings editor edition, Living in Chaos, Silent Screams, Taking It All In, It All Comes Down, Rising to the Surface, Galapagos, Chapter 38 (v1, v2 & v3), Finally, Literature for the Snotty and Elite (v1, v2 & part 1), a Wake-Up Call From Tradition, (recovery), Dark Matter: the Mind of Janet Kuyppers, Evolution, (tweet), Get Your Buzz On, Janet & Jean Together, poem, Taking Poetry to the Streets, the Cana-Dixie Chi-town Union, the Written Word, Dual, Prepare Her for This, Uncorrect, Living in a Big World, Pulled the Trigger, Venture to the Unknown, Janet Kuyppers: Enriched, She's an Open Book, "40", Sexism and Other Stories, the Stories of Women, Sulphur & Sawdust, Slate & Marrow, Blister & Burn, Rinse & Repeat, Survive & Thrive, (not so) Warm & Fuzzy, Torture & Triumph, Oh, the Elements, Side A/Side B, Balance, Chaos Theory, Writing To Honour & Cherish, Distinguished Writings, Breaking Silences, Unlocking the Mysteries, the Book of Scars, We The Poets, Life on the Edge, Revealing all your Dirty Little Secrets, Deceit Remains, Charred Remnants, Hope & Creation, Bending the Curve, Layers of Creation, Dark Matter, Survival of the Fittest, Crawling Through the Dirt, Laying the Groundwork, Weathered, echo, Ink in my Blood, (bound) (4 editions), Enriched Poetry, cc&d Enriched Prose, Enriched with Dirt, An Open Book, Literary Town Hall (cc&d edition), Literary Town Hall (dirt edition), Give What You Can, Down in the Dirt v084, Come Fly With Me, Clearing the Debris, Sectioned & Sequestered, Six Six Six, Skeletal Remains, Out of the Web, Don't Tread on Me, Lines of Intensity, Entering the Ice Age, When the World Settles, Into the White, Along the Surface, Life... from Nothing, the Line to Power, Fear the Forsaken, Down In It, Falling Into Place, Wake Up and Smell the Flowers, Unknown, Looking Beyond, Infamous in our Prime, Anais Nin: an Understanding of her Art, the Electronic Windmill, Changing Woman, the Swan Road, the Significance of the Frontier, The Svetasvatara Upanishad, H a vest of Gems, the Little Monk, Death in Malaga, Memento Mori, In the Palace of Creation, R.I.P., Bob the Bumble Bee, Remnants and Shadows, I Saw This, the Drive, Thomas at Tea, Crashing Down Nineteenth, Blue Collar Ballet, no poem, In Your Heart the Apostrophe's Teardrops of God, the Adventures of the Key to Believing Bear, Anais Nin: an Understanding of her Art (second printing), Deckard Kinder / Charlie Newman, 12 Times 12 Equals Gross, a Marble Nude Pauline Borghese with a Marble Apple in her Marble Hand, Challenge of Night and Day and Chicago Poems, Lighten Up, Not Far From Here, Watershed, You Have Finally Won, Avenue C, Suburban Rhythms, Down Syndrome, the Dark Side of Love, The pill is a man's best friend, Angel's Syllable Is Good Boss of Devil's Spine, Poems and Stories from The Blue Collar Book of the Dead, Cat People*

Compact Discs: *Mom's Favorite Vase* the demo tapes, *Kuyppers* the final (MFV Inclusive), *Weeds and Flowers* the beauty & the desolation, *The Second Axing* Something is Sweating, *The Second Axing* Live in Alaska, *Pettus & Kuyppers* Live at Cafe Aloha, *Painless Orchestra* Rough Mixes, *Kuyppers* Seeing Things Differently, *SD/SD* Tick Tock, *Kuyppers* Change Rearrange, *Order From Chaos* The Entropy Project, *Kuyppers* Six One One, *Kuyppers* Stop., *Kuyppers* Masterful Performances mp3 CD, *Kuyppers* Death Comes in Threes, *Kuyppers* Changing Gears, *Kuyppers* Dreams, *Kuyppers* How Do I Get There?, *Kuyppers* Contact a Conflict a Control, *the DMJ Art Connection* the DMJ Art Connection, *Kuyppers* Questions in a World Without Answers, *Kuyppers* SIN, *Kuyppers* WZRD Radio (2 CD set), *Mom's Favorite Vase* and *The Second Axing* These Truths, *assortedartists* String Theory, Oh (audio CD), *Life At The Cafe* (3 CD set), *the DMJ Art Connection* Indian Flux, *the DMJ Art Connection* Manic Depressive or Something, *Chaotic Radio* Chaotic Radio Week #1, *Chaotic Radio* Chaotic Radio Week #2, *Chaotic Radio* Chaotic Radio Week #3, *Chaotic Radio* Chaotic Radio Week #4, *Chaotic Radio* Chaotic Radio Week #5, *Chaotic Radio* the Chaotic Collection Collection #01-05 (5 CD set) etc. (audio CD, 2 CD set), *Chaotic Elements* (2 CD set), *Chaos in Motion* (6 CD set), *SD/SD* Screaching to a Halt (EP), *PBBJ* Two for the Price of One (EP), *Kiki, Jake and Haystack* An American Portrait, *Kuyppers/the Bastard Trio/Paul Baker/the JoAnne Powells Trio* Fusion (4 CD set), *podcasts* the Evolution of Performance Art (13 CD set), *Kuyppers* Live (14 CD set), *the DMJ Art Connection* the Things They Did to You (2 CD set), *Kuyppers* Seeing a Psychiatrist (3 CD set), *Kuyppers* St. Paul's (3 CD set), *Kuyppers* the 2009 Poetry Game Show (3 CD set), *Kuyppers* and the *HAL*man of South Africa Burn Through Me (2 CD set)