

TROY ROEMER

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ABOUT CHRISTIAN

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TOP-RATED COVERFLY AUTHOR, KILLER SHORTS FINALIST, CHATTANOOGA NATIVE

Christian Troy (C.T.) Roemer's writing career started out like many others: by composing cringey love poems in high school. He parlayed his proclivity for emo drivel and transmuted his creative urges into whiney songs instead. These pathetic ballads mutated into folk diddies that he performed as lead singer for his college band, The Noble Thieves. After graduating with a bachelor of arts degree in Religion from the University of Georgia, he figured he should earn an actually valuable degree and completed his masters in English Literature.

SOME PEOPLE JUST NEVER LEARN.

After cranking through an 80 page thesis, C.T. figured the writing thing ain't so bad. After focusing on earning some cheese through a freelance career, he figured he'd stop trying to achieve self-actualization through online listicles and focused on his own interests instead. Now, he writes short stories, screenplays, novels, and nonfiction that scratches the dirty underbelly of human existence.

C.T. lives in Chattanooga, TN with his two kids, a wife, and dog.



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TROY ROEMER

Writing Samples



Grab N Go

C.T.'S FIRST FULL LENGTH NOVEL

Bragg and Officer Kate Paul find themselves unable to quite figure out what they want to do with their lives. While Bragg aspires to more than a PhD and fledgling video game streaming career, Officer Paul tries to remember why she got into law enforcement at all.



The Mercy

KILLER SHORTS TOP 10

A poor nursing student just wants to attend university and graduate, but his roommate's deformed cat tortures him day and night. With nowhere else to go, he decides there's only one reasonable action to take.



The Goodbye

A FAVORITE OF C.T.'S FRIENDS

Stuck in a hospital while his fiance slowly dies, our protagonist wrestles with reality while his future falls apart in front of him. What does it really mean to love someone?

Grab N Go

C.T.'s first full length novel follows Bragg and Officer Kate Paul who find themselves unable to quite figure out what they want to do with their lives. While Bragg aspires to more than a PhD and fledgling video game streaming career, Officer Paul tries to remember why she got into law enforcement at all. Their paths ultimately collide in a way that threatens to upend everything they think they know about the world.

Every glance at the clock was an effort to dilate time. She never wanted the class to end. At 8:21 - nine minutes before the end of class - Bragg went silent. Standing behind the podium, he looked down at his notes, then stared up and to the left. He was lost in thought. Kate had seen this look a million times on stream. She knew what came next was both unpredictable and expected. Her body tensed. She waited with bated breath.

Bragg's mind was about to explode.

“How long do you think it took the ancient Israelites to get sick of eating Manna? A week? A month? A year?”

The silence in the lecture hall got everyone's attention. Those who had been doing homework or browsing Instagram closed their laptops and put away their phones. Kate wondered at the way that the quiet caused more discomfort than chaos. Everyone's eyes were fixed on Bragg. The lecture hall was on pins and needles. Was class over? A low murmur struck up from the back. Friends were whispering to each other.

Kate sat by herself at her desk in the front. She leaned in closer, as close as the desk would allow. The tabletop pinched her stomach, but she needed to know what came next. She couldn't miss a word.

Bragg established eye contact with every student in the class. He started with the whispering friends in the back. His eyes rolled over everyone in the room, stopping at Kate. He peered deeply into her eyes. She couldn't breathe, but she didn't dare look away either. She glanced back and forth between Bragg, the professor, the class, her notes, and back again. He inhaled deeply. The whole class seemed to rush forward, even though everyone was perfectly still.

Finally, he spoke.

Grab N Go

“How long do you think it took the ancient Israelites to get sick of eating Manna?”

Kate could feel her heart pumping in her chest. Her temples flared. The class exchanged worried glances with each other, not quite sure what they just heard. Classic xXHammurabiXx.

“Anyone?”

Nobody dared speak up. The question felt like a sucker punch to the stomach – a trick question not meant to be answered.

“How long do you think it took the ancient Israelites to get sick of eating Manna? A week? A month? A year?” Bragg paused. Nobody replied.

“You all do know what Manna is, right?”

A third of the class nodded their heads.

“How long do you think it took the ancient Israelites to get sick of eating Manna? A week? A month? A year?”

Bragg pressed on. “When God saved the ancient Israelites from Egypt, he sent them into the desert for 40 years. Finding enough food for a huge throng of people in such inhospitable conditions was malpractice, so God rained magical food down from the sky for them. Manna.”

The class didn’t move, and nobody could look away. Bragg smiled, the same smile he got on stream when he triple killed the enemy team and talked about how Nestle gave away just enough free baby formula to nursing mothers in Africa to have their milk dry up. Just enough to get them hooked on Nestle brand baby formula.

“Nobody knows what Manna tasted like. What the texture was like. What it looked like.”

Kate could barely breathe. Her desk was pushing her stomach into her spine, but she had to get closer to Bragg. To xXHammurabiXx.

“God didn’t ask the Israelites if they wanted to leave Egypt. I imagine some of them were pretty peeved at having to leave everything they knew behind for some promised land that never came.”

Grab N Go

The class's professor looked on in horror.

"After God drowned the Egyptian army in the Red Sea, the Israelites went into the desert. He started feeding them Manna. I'm sure at first, they were thankful. Of course, they wouldn't say otherwise, given they'd just seen God drown their half cousins and godfathers at the bottom of the ocean."

Kate's shoulders were tied in knots.

"But YHWH forgot that He chose the ancient Israelites. They didn't choose Him. And they never forgave Him for that."

A group of four girls in the back of the class looked like they were going to pass out. Someone coughed.

"Moses went up a mountain to get God's commandments, and the minute he was gone, the Israelites found themselves a God they liked better. A big beefy cow. After all that Manna, the Israelites couldn't help dreaming of a nice juicy steak."

The class's professor looked on in horror.

The professor cleared his throat uncomfortably, but Bragg ignored him.

"What we want is never what we need. And what we need is never what we want."

Kate smiled and Bragg peered down at her from the lectern.

"When you're all big shot lawyers one day, will you rain down benevolent Manna from the sky while the people you're saving hate you for it?"

It's too bad this rant wasn't on stream, Kate thought. She could practically see the memes flying in chat. DryJockey88 would have had a field day.

"Maybe God should have made the Israelites eat sand for a couple weeks so that they'd all remember their place."

Kate's temples pounded. She needed water.

"When the Isrealites finally made it to the promised land, God didn't even

Grab N Go

let Moses in. His chosen prophet.”

Bragg’s eyes pierced Kate’s.

“All that Manna for nothing.”

Kate laughed reflexively. The entire class stared at her. The back of her neck burned.

“All that Manna for nothing.”

Bragg gathered his notes, stuffed them in his messenger bag, and walked out of the classroom. Kate was still laughing when her professor nervously walked in front of the class and meekly whispered, “Class dismissed.”

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The Mercy

A poor nursing student just wants to attend university and graduate, but his roommate's deformed cat tortures him day and night. With nowhere else to go, he decides there's only one reasonable action to take.

The cat was like a detached vestige of Jared's own body - an extension of his own disgusting and neglected existence. It's like the cat allowed Jared to live vicariously through it. Where Jared locked himself in his room to blame his problems on anything and everything, the cat could roam around and poison everywhere else with his bullshit too. The cat permitted Jared to live his existentially hermetic life while still reminding me at every turn that I'd better not forget I'm only living in this cheap-rent house because of his charity.

**The Joker didn't exist until Batman showed up.
One thing creates another.**

In some ways, living at Jared's did do something to me. It gave me a villain. Well, two villains. The Joker didn't exist until Batman showed up. One thing creates another. If Jared and the cat were mirror images of each other, I was the other polarity of the magnet. It was all connected. Living in that house felt like we were orbiting physics, mechanical forces forever acting upon each other, rotating through hell without any escape.

I did my best to not be at the house as much as possible. Between work and school, I didn't have much free time. I made excuses to sleep at the school library when I could. I'd shower in the Applebee's sink. I could manage the school year, as busy as I was. The distractions were ample enough that I didn't have to deal with Jared or the cat enough to really affect me.

I tried to get out of the house as much as possible, but I couldn't pick up more shifts behind the bar without causing World War III between the other bartenders whose lives depended on the almost perfectly balanced harmony between hours, shifts, drinks served, tips received, costs of living, and the market rate of weed and other hard drugs. The equilibrium functioned as a sort of blood pact between our corporate overlords and us. I'd grit my teeth, serving self-entitled corporate managers trying to fuck their secretaries while Jared struggled to keep his dick hard with increasingly niche porn. All the while, he collected a steady serving of disability

The Mercy

payments that I helped pay for via social security and disability taxes taken out of my bi-weekly paycheck. Then I would come home after my shift to see that the goddamn cat had pissed on my pillow for the third time of the week.

I made excuses to sleep at the school library when I could. I'd shower in the Applebee's sink.

It might as well have been Jared himself pissing on my bed. In my mind it felt the same.



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The Goodbye

Stuck in a hospital while his fiancée slowly dies, our protagonist wrestles with reality while his future falls apart in front of him. What does it really mean to love someone?

I should be nose blind to this hospital room by now. Every new smell puts me into fight or flight mode. The nurse's parfum. The piss in the bedpan. My unfinished lunch on Grace's bedside table. Add on top the ever-adjusting concoction of high-school-anatomy-class-scent formaldehyde and Pine Sol, and it's any wonder my nose works at all. Every new artificial cleaner feels like a spike being driven up my nose into my brain. On the bed a few feet away, Grace's breaths are barely audible. I want to scream. I want to pick up this sofa bed, throw it through the window, and watch it smash a car 10 stories below, but I don't. I try to sleep.

On the bed a few feet away, Grace's breaths are barely audible. I want to scream.

I can't remember the last time I had a normal dream. Because my sleep pattern has consisted of 30 minute dozes interrupted by nurses and doctors skittering into the room at all hours of the day and night, I feel like I might be losing my mind.

I jolt awake from the plane crash. I was sitting on a window seat, watching the landscape change from green to red. Maybe I was flying to Yosemite, Grace and my favorite place in the world. A small crack in the window's glass turned into a ring-sized hole. I tried plugging it with my finger, praying I might survive. I held on tightly to the seat, waiting for the plane to land. The crack continued to grow, inching across the glass like slow motion lightning. The crack gave into the pressure differential between the outside and fuselage. The finger-sized hole swelled. The interior of the plane swirled with trash, vomit, piss, and tears from the passengers. The plane disintegrated somewhere over the rocky outcroppings of who knows where, USA. I fell towards bright red boulders that looked like Nerds candies from the sky.

Now I'm awake again.

The Goodbye

Grace should have passed by now. I close my eyes and try to imagine her consciousness - whether there's any part of her that feels the cold hand of death tugging on her wayward soul or not. I wish I believed in heaven so that I could weather these days imagining her getting a head start to the pearly gates while her body slowly pulls the levers that'll shut down her kidneys, stomach, liver, gallbladder, thyroid, uterus, skin, nails, brain, and heart. It could be a comfort to know the real her is hovering next to the fluorescent lights, smiling down at me while I lie on this couch. Unknowingly to her or anyone in the hospital, I roil in an all-consuming rage that nobody can see. It's the only thing I have left to feel.

I don't believe in souls. I don't believe in heaven. I don't believe in much of anything. My happy ending was stolen from me.

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Ready to talk?

CONTACT CHRISTIAN

Thank you for considering Christian
for your publication!

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