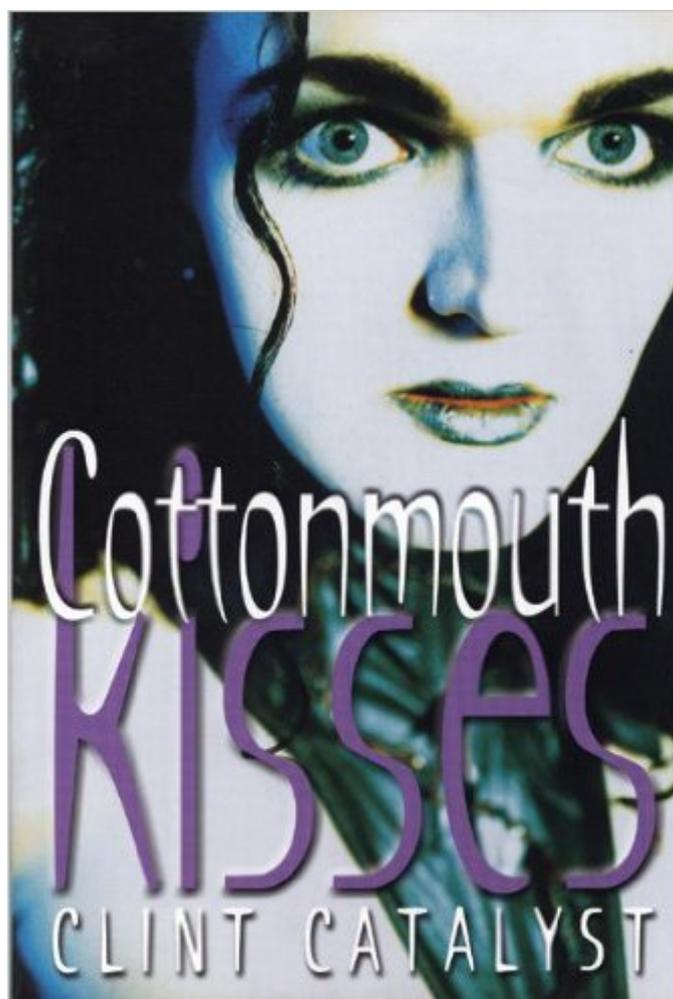


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# Cottonmouth Kisses



## Synopsis

Whether he's writing about a chance sexual encounter at a Goth club called Lilith or revealing the inner thoughts of young hustlers in Hollywood, Catalyst unearths the trashy truth in his characters' unconventional lives.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (24 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,885,598 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #73 in [Books > Gay & Lesbian > Literature & Fiction > Poetry > Gay](#) #2432 in [Books > Romance > Gothic](#) #2485 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > United States > Anthologies](#)

## Customer Reviews

Mouth-watering! Catalyst lives up to his name, candidly plunging his reader/victim into lethal accounts of feverish boy lust, middle-Americana, gritty drug-sex, and the peril of Gen-X relationships with dragonfly-wit. For those initiates, Cottonmouth Kisses is an eye-opener- an absolute required text from a venerated voice of the San Francisco underground scene. For that "been-there, done-that" audience, this collection of poems and prose should resonate with genuine laughter and remorse, sighs of remembrance, and an unsynthetic frankness. Pieces like "Everybody's Big Exception," and "Panhandled Presence," (almost criminal without the inflection and intonation from Clint's live readings) are carefully intermingled with prose/poem passages whose allusions range from 70's sitcoms and K-tel to Jean Genet, from Coil and Siouxsie to Plato and Donatello's David. The result is a humorous, insightful, and well-crafted collection of work from a brother who survived to tell the tale. A millennial tour de force!

I was introduced to Clint Catalyst's work when I saw him read at Tonic during the Fringe Ink/FringeFest. Astounding. Cottonmouth Kisses is a remarkable, varied work with an array of voices. Catalyst's prose is not unlike the (cottonmouth) snake from the book's title: it is rapid,

seductive, a force with which to be reconed. Furthermore, each piece has its own "turn," so to speak-- its own venomous lifebite. The story "Metaphor and Remorse" is one of the most remarkable works I've read in my life, a frightening tale of artifice and addiction told through a complex narration: the words of the narrator interspersed with the narrator's thoughts, memories of his lover's words. What they reveal, as well as what the narrator doesn't reveal, is both poignant and haunting. And the final piece, "The Dreaming Real," is one of the bravest and most beautiful things I've ever read in my life. Through contemporary, whip-smart diction in the form of a letter, we learn about the death of a chemical romance and the rebirth into clear-thinking, cloudless emotions, a new life. Clint Catalyst has a wickedly beautiful new voice. This book is both queer and universal, gritty and gorgeous....a must read & must re-read.

I've been reading Clint since he was an imprisoned resident of a small Arkansas town and admired every word he put down on paper - or whatever it was he wrote on. I only say prisoner because I've heard the horror stories a small religious/KKK town can produce. Fortunately for us, he escaped. Clint can take a mundane situation, (though in his world the mundanes are few and far between) and using his powerfully artistic words, turn even the simplest event into a kodak moment from hell. The book's range of emotions, sheer boredom to absolute terror, innocent love to brutally ecstatic rape, uncertainty, yet cocky as all hell attitude allow the person reading his individual pieces to be right there beside him at every incident, observing and feeling. Clint scrutinizes unnoticed and sees all the absurdities in life that most people wouldn't give a second thought to. He has a unique way of seeing the glass neither half full nor half empty but either overflowing with some seedy liquid or dry as a bone, shattering at any moment into itchy sand particles. I don't know where he finds his words or exactly how he puts them together to create such (well, I won't say beautiful although beauty IS in the eye...) narratives but I hope his fairy tales never go away. I recommend this book to all of you who have survived, or are still trying hard to. And I look forward to what this brutally honest writer has for us in his future never-never land.

This book is a fresh wound bleeding with raw emotion. Clint takes a lower dive into the abyss of desire. His desire to see more, feel more, be more, live more, fuels him through the white heat delirium buzz of chemical euphoria and ultimately into the depths of delusion. This book is a must read for anyone who is driven by the sacred and profane, the demonic and the divine. The quest for beauty and truth takes us to our darkest urges as sweet and evil as "cotton mouth kisses" as Clint's stories are proof.

After reading Cottonmouth Kisses I found myself in awe of the sheer richness of Clint's language. His command of both poetry and prose is astounding and refreshing indeed. His honesty and unpretentious approach to the recording of his own experiences is a gift to his reader. Whether Clint is writing about drug addiction, sex, friendship, or love, the sheer energy of his personality shines through in every piece. The combination of rage, passion, sorrow, and humor that animates this book is something to behold and reading it was like being taken on a ride where every turn promised something new. A truly wonderful collection of writing. Moving, engaging, and always on the mark.

What an amazing tome: a collection of short stories, prose-poems & letters that deals with the venomous lifebite of living & loving with too much feeling in a world that doesn't have enough. Each of these works is viciously brilliant & diverse, acerbic wit coupled with the despair of longing, dark subject matter illuminated by intelligent humor & observation. The short story "Allegory," for example, is clearly a first-person hallucinogenic tale of drug addiction, yet Catalyst never mentions a substance once. Instead, the bottom of his narrator's day-to-day "drops out"; that is, he finds himself in a dank cathedral, transmogrified to another nameless, faceless being stripped of everything but an insane longing. The prose-poem "Everybody's Big Exception" is a razor-sharp account of love disguised through the shallow validation of being sexually attractive to unavailable, terminally unconcerned straight men. And the pieces "Pained and Painted" and "Flouncing About" are the most concise and telling accounts of clubland's lip-glossy veneer I've ever read. Furthermore, most of these works are fraught with a turbo-charged sexuality like no other. There is no meaningless orgasmic encounter in these pieces, not even the ones that are presented as such. Cottonmouth Kisses is a collection that is exactly that: Venomous, Predatory, & Protective in its vulnerability. All the pieces have their own cracking of the rattled-tip, their own turns. Most importantly, the collection as a whole is a contemporary account of experiencing extremes & coming full circle. I love & treasure this book.

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