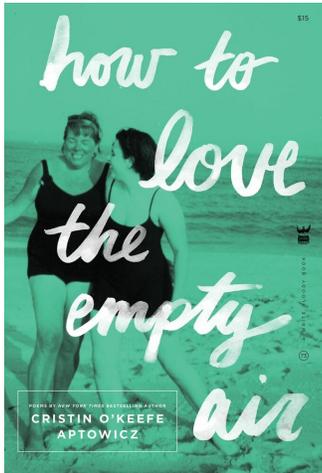




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HOW TO LOVE THE EMPTY AIR

By **CRISTIN O'KEEFE APTOWICZ**

“Grief is one of the most impossible things to put words to... Cristin O’Keefe Aptowicz does the impossible.”

—Sarah Kay, author of *No Matter the Wreckage*

“Aptowicz is something of a legend in NYC’s slam poetry scene. She is lively thoughtful, and approachable, looking to engage the audience with her work and deeply committed to the community that art and slam poetry can create.”

—Jo Reed, NEA

Just in time to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the publication of Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* comes

HOW TO LOVE THE EMPTY AIR (Write Bloody Publishing; xxx; 978-1938912801 by acclaimed writer Cristin O’Keefe Aptowicz.

Vulnerable, beautiful and ultimately life-affirming, Cristin O’Keefe Aptowicz’s work reaches new heights in her revelatory seventh collection of poetry. Continuing in her tradition of engaging autobiographical work, **HOW TO LOVE THE EMPTY AIR** explores what happens when the impossible becomes real—for better and for worse. Aptowicz’s journey to find happiness and home in her ever-shifting world sees her struggling in cities throughout America. When her luck changes—in love and in life—she can’t help but “tell the sun / tell the fields / tell the huge Texas sky.... / tell myself again and again until I believe it.” However, the upward trajectory of this new life is rocked by the sudden death of the poet’s mother. In the year that follows, Aptowicz battles the silencing power of grief with intimate poems burnished by loss and a hard-won humor, capturing the dance that all newly grieving must do between everyday living and the desire “to elope with this grief, / who is not your enemy, / this grief who maybe now is your best friend. / This grief, who is your husband, / the thing you curl into every night, / falling asleep in its arms...” As in her award-winning *The Year of No Mistakes*, Aptowicz counts her losses and her blessings, knowing how despite it all, life “ripples boundless, like electricity, like joy / like... laughter, irresistible and bright, / an impossible thing to contain.”

About the Author

Photo Credit: Anis Mojgani



Cristin O'Keefe Aptowicz is the author of seven books of poetry, including *The Year of No Mistakes*, crowned the Book of the Year for Poetry by the Writers' League of Texas. She is also the author of two books of nonfiction, most recently *Dr Mütter's Marvels: A True Tale of Intrigue and Innovation at the Dawn of Modern Medicine*, which spent three months on the *New York Times* Best Seller List. Recent awards include a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, the ArtsEDGE write-in-residency at the University of Pennsylvania and the Amy Clampitt Residency. When not on the road, she lives in Austin with her husband Ernest Cline, author of the *New York Times* bestselling *Ready Player One*.

Connect with Cristin at <http://aptowicz.com/> or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/COAptowicz/?ref=ts>

Cristin can discuss the following talking points in interviews:

- Cristin can discuss how she was able to channel her grief into her writing. How much time did she allow between her mother’s death and her writing of *How To Love The Empty Air*?

- Cristin can share some insight on if she found writing to be cathartic. Would she suggest it to others?
- Cristin can discuss her move from NYC to Austin, and how different the two places are in terms of the writing industry.
- Cristin can discuss how different writing poetry is from nonfiction, and if she finds it easy to switch between the two forms.
- Cristin can share some advice for young writers looking to make a career out of their writing.
- Cristin can discuss some of her early influences, including how her mother influenced her. How did she get into writing?
- Cristin can discuss her beautiful title, *How To Love The Empty Air*.

HOW TO LOVE THE EMPTY AIR by Cristin O’Keefe Aptowicz
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