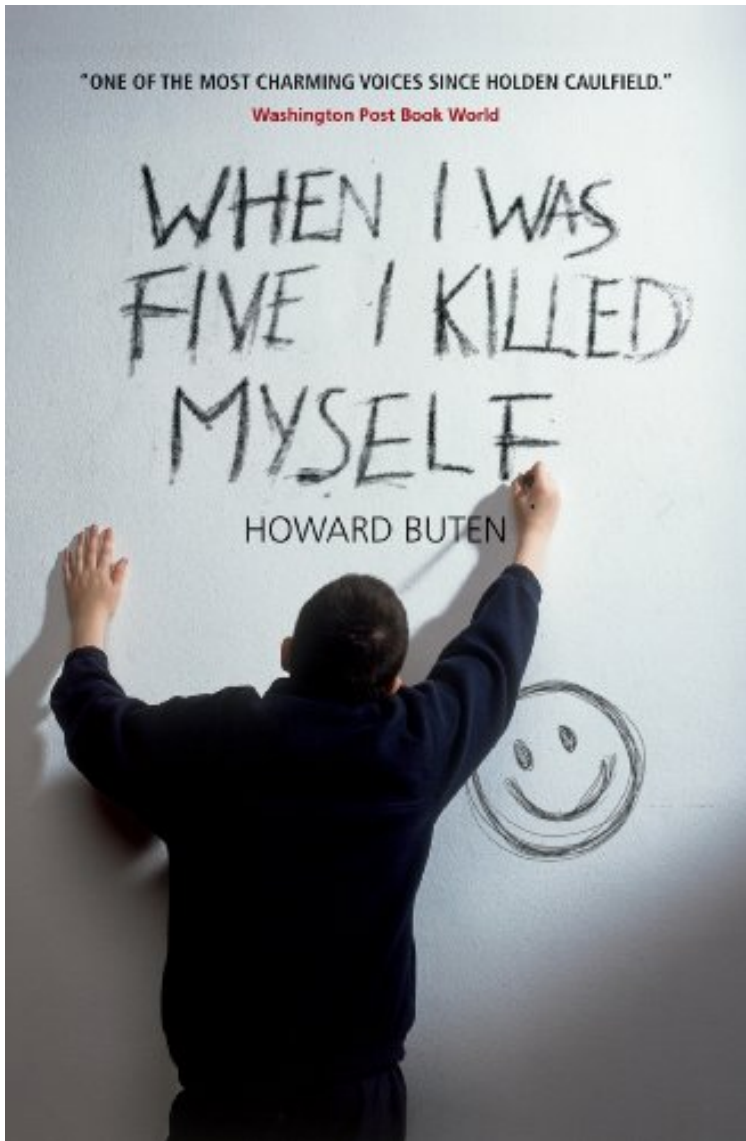


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When I Was Five I Killed Myself



Par Howard Buten
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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurBurton Rembrandt has the sort of perspective on life that is impossible for most adults to comprehend: the perspective of an eight-year-old boy. And to Burt, his parents and teachers seem to be speaking a language he cannot understand. When Burt meets Jessica he finds solace from the problems of growing up, of dealing with parents and teachers and adults in general. But when he expresses the ardent love he feels for Jessica, he is placed in an institution with autistic, mentally retarded, sociopathic, and generally 'disturbed' children. This is Burt's story as written in pencil on the walls of the Quiet Room in The Children's Trust Residence Center. It begins: 'When I was five I killed myself...' This strange, funny and darkly touching tale explores the chasm between childhood and adulthood in the starkly honest words of a misunderstood little boy. When I Was Five I Killed Myself is considered a modern classic in France where it

has sold over a million copies. Buten's writing is compared with Hemingway and J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*. Extrait Chapter One

When I was five I killed myself. I was waiting for Popeye who comes after the News. He has large wrists for a person and he is strong to the finish. But the News wouldn't end. My dad was watching it. I had my hands over my ears because I am afraid of the News. I don't enjoy it as television. It has Russians on who will bury us. It has the President of the United States who is bald. It has highlights from this year's fabulous Autorama where I have been once, it was quite enjoyable as an activity. A man came on the News. He had something in his hand, a doll, and he held it up. (You could see it wasn't real because of the sewing.) I took my hands off. "This was a little girl's favorite toy," the man said. "And tonight, because of a senseless accident, she is dead." I ran up to my room. I jumped on my bed. I stuffed my face into my pillow and pushed it harder and harder until I couldn't hear anything anymore. I held my breath. Then my dad came in and took my pillow away and put his hand on me and said my name. I was crying. He bent over and put his hands under me and lifted me up. He did this to the back of my hair and I put my head on him. He is very strong. He whispered, "It's ok, Son, don't cry." "I'm not," I said. "I'm a big boy." But I was crying. Then Dad told me that every day somebody gets dead and nobody knows why. It's just the rules. Then he went downstairs. I sat on my bed for a long time. I sat and sat. Something was wrong inside me, I felt it inside my stomach and I didn't know what to do. So I layed down on the floor. I stuck out my pointer finger and pointed it at my head. And I pushed down my thumb. And killed myself. Copyright 1981, 2000 by Howard Buten

Revue de presse Publishers Weekly (starred review) This psychologically intense tale moves quickly, and the difficult task of creating a child's voice with authenticity and depth proves Buten a gifted stylist and storyteller. The New York Times Book Certainly Buten offers some insight into a troubled child's mind.