

Anti Body Body Club

It's lasting longer than we all thought. Twelve years and counting. Funny, how quick we abandoned all the Instagram sap and went straight to the damn malaise. Spread it on real thick too, everyone taking one big bite of the depression-and-jelly sandwich. As much as we all started in it together, when the lucky ones were released from our ikea-clad tombs, everything shifted.

I guess that's how it goes. We used to say we had an uncanny ability to accept things quickly, to shift into a new gear. But I'm not so sure. Now it feels like we're operating a whole different machine.

-

This morning, a young guy wearing one of those 'Anti Body Body Club' hoodies passed me on the street, winking as he cruised by. I could tell he was trying hard to channel Timothée Chalamet, without looking like he was trying hard to channel Timothée Chalamet. I guess that was the problem. I heard him spit on the ground a few steps behind me, 'marking his territory' as they say. Welcome to the club, I guess.

As much as we all liked to pretend that humanity was resilient in the start, we caved in on ourselves pretty spectacularly about 2 years in. FB, TW, IG — all choked with admittedly amusing memes about our apocalyptic new situation. But eventually they fell silent. We got bored. And then we got angry.

At each other, for socialising. Or not. At Trump, for you know, everything. At Sweden. They did it wrong. And then a whole new thing to be angry about happened. Some of us got better, or couldn't get sick at all. And some of us didn't.

Please check your privilege on the form.

We stopped trying to find a vaccine around 4 years in. There was no announcement or media frenzy. It just sort of fizzled out like a lame tinder chat or loose plan for a friendly beer with an old acquaintance. People stopped crying. People stopped caring. There were no clickbaity, doom-sexy headlines, no daily podcasts or LinkedIn updates or 'how to cope working from home' articles. We were all burned out, and not just the ones trialling and testing vaccines. Everyone. Even hearing about it was tiring. I guess we should have seen it coming — hopes up, hopes down. Then up again. Then down. And then it just stayed down. I think that's when the collective malaise really set in. Even the scientists were over it.

That's when we started talking about antibodies.

If we can't fix it, we'll do the next best thing. Shift it. Not everyone can get back to life, but some can. There were riots at the start. Big demonstrations, seas of masks in all different colours, with feisty slogans over the mouths or big upside-down frowns stitched across the front. The great stitching boom of 2020. Who knew it'd take a massive fuck-off pandemic to get kids sewing again? But like everything else, the next news story came and we stopped paying attention.

Testing for antibodies was our biggest mistake.

-

The government adopted a lottery style system for neighbourhoods around the country, surprisingly quickly. Love it or hate it, it worked. We tested the whole damn place in 9 months. I was tested in June.

Before testing started ramping up, we were still all talking about race, gender, politics, class, wealth and how none of it mattered now — that this virus went beyond borders and blah blah blah. But we got bored of that pretty damn fast. Really it just made everything a lot simpler. Wealth, race, gender, politics — it still didn't matter. All that mattered was if you had antibodies or not.

Weekly gossip columns started popping up in the “news”, tracking the world's celebrity darlings and their most recent test results. Brad Pitt, he was good. The world collectively sighed with relief. Meryl Streep? She was staying inside. Luckily no one really cared about her by then, anyway.

Bye Bye Barber

Everyone's hair stopped growing. Scientists said something about 'collective stress'. Hair today, gone the next. Ha. I was pissed — the ONE time I get bored and try to pull off a pixie cut, the world shits itself and goes into lock down. I guess I don't care so much now.

I feel bad for the barbers though. Where did they all go? Probably day drinking in their apartments and living off the shitty compensation system like the rest of them.

The stylish hairdressers keep posting old hair cutting videos on Instagram. You know the ones, slow-mo blowdrying with blush pink tips, applying toner in organised sections, brushing unspeakably smooth hair in those un-stoppable, too-watchable time-lapse time-wasters. Ok I take it back. I want long hair again.

Funny, no one seemed to care that our nails stopped growing too.

Author: Bronte Wilson
bronte.e.n.wilson@gmail.com