

Reader, I**Corey Van Landingham**

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“Reader, I married him”—yes, Corey Van Landingham did. *Jane Eyre* acknowledgements aside, looks to the heavens to help comprehend just what that makes her. As her sidekick, we’re in for a dazzling ride of allusion, wit, bawdiness, and joy. The author of two previous collections, Van Landingham earned Wallace Stegner and National Endowment for the Arts fellowships and now teaches creative writing at the University of Illinois.

Reader, I

*studied sonnets on a chaise longue in Charleston. Each small
song clarified the couplet, the fevered rhetoric of two held
together, in the rental car, on the long drive south. Each day
we were more married, more varied in how we touched. It once
made me sad. That much would be lost, and soon—Nothing but
tenderness and pleasure, Samuel Johnson defined that first honeyed
month against the waning moon. On time, Shakespeare alacked
its wrackful siege. But dawn's novel idiom arose brilliant from
the harbor. Highballs kept, somehow, the thinnest rime. We
shuttered the hotel windows, plotted years of humid mornings,
scones crumbling in our sheets. What else, reader, could we
script on the Chevy's rear glass? What would seem just still,
returning, as we must, to the year, what would thrill him, might
remind that even a slim crescent dazzles the black ink of night?*

MATT SUTHERLAND (March / April 2024)

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