Antidote

Corey Van Landingham

Published by The Ohio State University Press

Landingham, Corey Van.
Antidote.
The Ohio State University Press, 2013.
Project MUSE. muse.jhu.edu/book/27570.

For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/27570

For content related to this chapter
https://muse.jhu.edu/related_content?type=book&id=1031140
Romance Novel after the Car Crash

Hazard lights piling up—how the imagination makes a night sky of them, an uncanny aurora borealis of bystanders, the extra cars, extra bodies, the Oh, the Ob, no. Then. The stones gathered

in the dark, filling the pockets of the nightgown, the bringing them back to bed, like a lover might, like there’s some error in how to be drowned, but no, no confusion here, just weights to hold

a body down, stones that feign a boozy touch unreturned—that spite, the No sex tonight trick—and it’s shocking, really, how many people will gather around a body, but not touch it.

How it takes the one blonde twenty-something rushing from the ambulance to lift a wrist onto her lap, press her fingertips to the hollow between tendons for some Ob. Then, Sorry. Glass shimmers

and swears a new life, constellation around the still-echoing accident where it will get swept up and discarded, into the gutter, perhaps, or a ditch along the country road half-frozen over. Then a cloud

wraps itself over the moon in a you-shouldn’t-see-this draping, but it should, the moon should always see the shards of glass in the neck to prevent conjuring up a devil more merciful to stalk around the bed.

There will always be a worse apparition to sit cross-legged, hard back to the headboard, putting his hand in a silk pocket to add another icy stone, to leave his breath of frost across the extra pillow.

And a body can be turned on like a machine, but we don’t say “I’m sorry, miss, but he’s been turned off.” A body swears itself to another, swears off another, coaxes Just one more in that little
bleating voice it feels cruel to refuse. Hex then haw, caesura between Ob and the shit that goes unsaid, leaving the Ob alone in bed, pissed off, making lists of all the wrongs in the world.