



# We Were Flying to Chicago

*Kevin Clouter*

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“Clouther’s first collection of stories shows an 'old' talent—meaning, his sophistication in treatment and technique and his wise observations of the human condition have the feel of an author who has the experience of several story collections behind him.”—*Booklist*, **starred**

"Sharply observed."—*Toronto Star*

"The 10 entries in Clouther’s debut collection all display a sure-handed grasp of craft."—*Publishers Weekly*

"In each story, Clouther finds the magic, mystery and story-telling potential in an otherwise ordinary, everyday world."—*The Iowa City Press-Citizen*

"The purpose of [Clouther's] conceptual stories is to open a vein, tap into a raw emotion in the reader, and his beautiful, character-driven stories are case studies in those emotions. Clouther makes us feel, and then he gives our feelings skin."—*The Heavy Feather Review*

"Kevin Clouther's collection of short stories is further evidence that some of the most interesting literary fiction is coming out of small presses like Black Balloon Publishing. . .I can confidently report that this is writing that's unmistakably alive and feral. . .Dare I say that I hear Raymond Carver and Ernest Hemingway echoing in my head?"—David Abrams, *The Quivering Pen*

"Kevin Clouther's collection of wry, funny, big-hearted stories is utterly satisfying and unexpected, like scratching an itch you didn't know you had."—Rebecca Johns

“Kevin Clouther’s remarkable collection illustrates, page by page, the unique joys of reading short fiction. By turns subversive and poignant, darkly humorous and deeply moving, these ten stories show us the author’s expansive range and the heart that drives his imagination. Clouther’s beautifully rendered characters will stay with you long after you’ve finished the book—you’ll see them on the street, in the office, in your mirror. “—Bret Anthony Johnston

In this striking debut collection, characters find unexpected moments of profound insight while navigating the monotony of daily life. Here we find a man who drives to the wrong mountain, a hubcap cleaner who moonlights as a karaoke star, and a deliveryman whose urgent letters have no willing recipient. While lulled by the deceptively simple rhythm of the ordinary, Kevin Clouther offers the instant before momentous change—the view over the cliff, the intake of breath before a decision, a glimpse of stark vulnerability, of faith and hope.

Kevin Clouther was born in Boston, Massachusetts, and grew up on Cape Cod and in south Florida. He holds degrees from the University of Virginia and Iowa Writers' Workshop, where he completed his thesis under Marilynne Robinson. He teaches creative writing at Stony Brook University, where he coordinates the program in writing and reading series, and at Johns Hopkins. He lives in Floral Park, New York.

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