White Ibis

A gold sun wakes me. I prop myself on white bed pillows and gaze out my window onto a South Florida marsh, watching a white ibis peck for her breakfast. She puffs her graceful body into a pillow of feathers and then smooths herself before she arcs her wings, glides to the other side of the tea-dark water and disappears into the grasses.

The ibis has been here for a few days. I think she will come back tomorrow.

White is my favorite color, clean, cool, unsullied, the robes of angels.

You promised me white sheets and delivered them at the foot of the Appalachians. “Heaven,” you sang, “I’m in heaven,” and we floated together.

You reappeared again and again, with white sheets, with green sheets, with beds of leaves, with tea and honey.

Another sun shone on cushions as white and smooth as an ibis ready to fly. We nuzzled into them, and you rubbed your calloused hand over my skin.

Then you retreated into your old life. And I flew away to my new one.

The ibis has not returned.