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FIRE BIRD

by

Ha Ryn Ahn

I see a flamingo perched on one skeletal leg, the other cocked back. He is eating strawberries plucked from a tourist. I approach, praise his work—his revolution of lawn ornamentation in North America. We hit it off, discuss our common interest in shrimp and temperate climates. He suggests we should go someplace more private and I giggle, cancel my dinner plans.

We go back to my timeshare, lay on a chaise overlooking the sunset. He curls his long neck towards mine, wraps his wings around my body. His feathers at my back make me feel like Icarus, his warm breath singeing my goosebumps.

He tries to kiss me, but can't—his beak is black and soft, my lips pink and hard. We are all fighting to become what we once were, trying to find what we haven't lost. I see one of his feathers drift away. It rises toward the sun like kindling off a flame, smoking into white ash.