

From Ancient Legends and Infidelities, “Sexual Shamans,” Chapter 2

It was a fact the Sultana Bird could walk on water even when there weren't floating plants. It could run across the marsh without sinking and when it did it appeared as an iridescence, a beaming hyacinth streak. Then it would disappear off the map which was made of water vapor because the country was too slow, too insecure about its borders and the people there uncertain to a definite degree. What mattered was they made the effort over a period of time, to cultivate a belief. It didn't have to be a large one like life after death or the earth circling the sun. But just one belief in something else. The day the appliance repairman slept with the glazier's wife, someone passed the window glowing purple and called the glazier. After he slashed the man's buttocks with a shard he told everyone it had been the Sultana Bird who detected the adultery, just as the ancients said. Then there was a lot of handshaking and belief all around. Because sometimes a true story becomes true overnight, the way something someone said you hated long ago suddenly blooms through a quiet supper, the sun just down, the sky wine above water.