Heaven as a Room

A small round table pushed up against the window. Sunlight beaming in. Cheap chairs on either side. The woman is on the left, down to her underwear, no top, sitting on the chair with her feet up on the edge of the chair, her knees up in front of her like twin monuments, like arches of triumph, spread out enough so that, between them, we see clearly her left breast. Her right breast is closest to us, on the outside of her right knee. Her left hand holds her knees up on the chair, and her right hand holds a smoldering cigarette a finger's length (a cigarette's length) above a glass ashtray. She is smiling widely at the man across the table. Her teeth show. She could be laughing, or in love.

The man is sitting in the other chair, leaning against the wall on the other side of the table, facing us. His left arm rests on the back of the chair. He is naked but for his boxers, his legs extended, knees straight, heels on the hardwood floor, toes angled up slightly, naturally. He is skinny and hairy. He looks to be laughing, eyes cast down and to his left (our right), away from the table and the woman's gaze. His right hand is on the table, making a fist around a green bottle of beer. A single glass of water sits on the table, halfway between our lovers, just to the right (our right) of the ashtray. The floor in the foreground is strewn with various articles of clothing, including a red pea coat, a black puffa jacket, a gray scarf, and a white wool cap.

To the right of the man is a desk. On the desk, there is an open laptop. There are papers stacked jaggedly, as if hastily, or rather, as if accrued over time without any urgent need for order, in fact with the opposite of haste. A coffee mug. Two plates stacked on top of each other. A bottle of Evan Williams. A red plastic cup. Under the desk, there are a few dust-stained

papers, pushed back against the wall, as if with a foot, or blown by a breeze through the window, or induced by human movement from within the room. A highlighter. One half of a broken pencil. Cheap sunglasses with green plastic temples and one lens popped out of it and this lens nowhere to be found, not by us.

To the left of the woman is the bed. An oddly shaped mass of messy, dark blue sheets. A queen size box spring supporting a twin size mattress. White light shining onto it through the window in patches like constellations in the night sky. No pillows.