

# Sorbet in the Luminous Capsule

*by* Shawn Misener

*What a dream. The excellent heart-firework. The future gold, a moving mannequin.*

You turn to me, head smaller than ever. Fading into itself. I wonder if this is what self-redaction feels like. "Sorbet," you say, sounding like an echo.

"Is that ok?" I ask.

Now your head is flickering, losing the signal. I slow the process and find myself staring with wet eyes at a headless you. These moments last forever, and I file them away.

Off to fetch the sorbet, leaving you alone on the grass. Privacy settings are high; only a dozen or so of the thousands present are actually visible. One of them is just a pair of moon boots, hopping toward the bushes, another a shadow folding over the lawn. Above, the Theta district of the park silently rolls, its distance itself romantic and awesome. Several jumpers have died already this year attempting to bridge the gap, decked out like birds, crowds trailing with their feeds. Sometimes bodies just vanish, their privacy commandeered by shadows. I'm surprised they still try.

Returning, your head is embedded in a slow loop. Face/Void protocol. I'm enraptured. Even in the brief flickers where your eyes and nose are visible you look gelatinous. Like a forgotten traveler suctioned to the side of an immersion tank. Am I sick because this bizarre spectacle is irresistible to me?

I love you. I say it, I think. Or maybe I just subvocalized it. Do I want you to hear me say it?

"Sssss...baaay."

I almost forgot. One purple scoop. With no mouth to eat it.

I begin to count time in my head. Sync it with your binary reality. Your head. Quickly, I slip the sorbet where your mouth was a nanosecond before, and release, yanking my hands upwards.

Success almost happens before it happens. I don't have to wait. You are whole, pushing the cold lump around your mouth in satisfaction.

"S'good," you mumble.

