

The Blueberry Man

by Timmothy Merath

It was a Thursday. That's when I found out about the blueberries.
Those precious, round little wonders, now forever untouchable.

I left the note on the ledge of the balcony, taped down so it wouldn't fly away.

It was going to come to this, eventually. After that Thursday, each day became worse. The pain in my mouth so much more painful with each passing attempt to push a blueberry past my tongue. Each hour gone by without even trying... that was so much harder. To give in.

I stepped onto the ledge, my homemade blueberry suit shining in the morning sun, its birth into the world a moment before its death.

My foot catching the tape on the note, releasing it into the wind.

The moment I hit the ground, I knew death had fled me. It wasn't ready and had made its escape, probably somewhere around the third floor.

The suit saved my life and sentenced me to decades of hell.

They say that the suit cannot be removed, it's keeping me alive. Holding my organs in place. I can't argue this point, now that I can't move or speak.

Everyone thinks of me as the blueberry man and they send many gifts. The nurses spoon feed me my favorite food every day. It makes me happy, they say.

They don't know about the pain.

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It's been forty years. I've resigned to this living death, the fire from my mouth is just as trusted as the sun, rising each day to burn away at my flesh. But from the inside.

Saved my life, they still say.

A miracle.

