Trapped Breath

Blue Braun

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It all changed when Mr. Freeman was smiling wide, a smile big enough to hold a watermelon. Mrs. Confrey, inches away from his oven-warm face, had ideas in her head. *He wants to understand me? Did he have an accident as a kid that caused his neediness to be extreme?*

"Always be cautious with someone extreme," her mother once told Mrs. Confrey when she was little. Little Mrs. Confrey’s lace soft fingers tried to pry open a jar filled with jam as her mother continued ranting. Gross jam—Mrs. Confrey thought it looked like the insides of the body, the inside of the liver, the inside of the heart.

"I like you and I think you like me..." Mr. Freeman began, still keeping intimate eye contact with her. Mrs. Confrey released her breath because, for a split second, it was as if her breath was trapped in a jar filled with nothing.