

The Man Who Couldn't Move

by Tim G. Young

The man couldn't move. Having finally arrived at home and able to stretch his legs from the soft confines of his couch to the coffee table, he realized he was not moving, and not likely to be moving. The thrill of no movement wrapped around his head like the tightness of a drug he never realized he had ingested. The intense, long, complicated day of working into constant movement, moving from dreary detail to extremely dreary detail, while others drove nails into the top of his head, all the while breathing desperately as if submerged in a pressurized cabin, unable to seriously comprehend the seriousness of his completely absurd situation increased the effects of the wrap around drug.

Without warning his eyes expertly navigated into a closed position setting off the dream machine long without power until this very second. The power screeched with increasing volume into his pressurized zone releasing fogged over images of a large fork scraping immense piles of brown baked-on sugary baked brown beans from a plate he wasn't sure belonged to him. It could have been someone else's plate, someone else's beans. The scraping was aimed directly into quite a large empty garbage can covered with a pale green liner with tiny knots tied all around the outside. Without thinking he lifted the exaggerated fork from the plate and saw the now dark brown sauce drip seductively from the tines. A sauce laced with the thickness of molasses and sugar. The individual beans locking themselves together into a series of rock candies on a stick, popping and crackling.

Now other images of food began to dance on his eyelids: crackers and cheese, chip and dip, shrimp with cocktail sauce, caviar and miniature pancakes, peanuts and cashews, his head began to move subtly at first and then more agitated as the food in his head transferred to a rumbling in his stomach which cut off the dream in mid crunch, his eyes now flapping open as if in a wind. His appetite piqued, there arose thoughts of preparing snack like items, but to manage such a task would require the outstretched legs to bend, fold and carry the attached body into the room of the kitchen. Signals to the brain remained unanswered. Nothing but silence and similar signals back and forth canceling each other so that if even an almost imperceptible movement in the toe was registered war would be induced. All thoughts of movement crushed like revolts in China.

It became clear the man could no longer see his way clear to fight or even begin such a battle. He watched from the ragged sidelines as the once crisply uniformed troops of the movement threw their weapons sloppily over their shoulders and folded their signs of war into small enough squares to fit into their pockets. The bugler packed away his horn. Then as the epiphany settled in, the man came to his glorious realization he had actually won this hard-earned struggle. Legs and feet could now remain in their original position of complete stillness. Any energy at all completely restricted to an open or closed eye, or perhaps a completely random thought considering what the baked beans and pale green trash liner had to do with anything. A deep, completely thoughtful sigh of relief overcame each and every other emotion as he succumbed to the inexorable logic of the man who couldn't move.

