

Mostly I Sit by James Mulhern

I am no longer desired.
Once people called me handsome
and paid attention.

I was always going somewhere,
looking for excitement,
the place where things were happening.

Now, mostly I sit, read,
go places in my mind,
enjoying memories of the past.

With bulging veins, barnacles on my skin,
and a bald head, I don't attract
the attention I once received.

I'm the old man someone helps
with a grocery bag full of
ripe melons, plums, and berries,

happy to shove it all in
the refrigerator drawer.
Joyful to sit and be ignored.

James Mulhern has published fiction or poetry in literary journals and anthologies over seventy times. In 2013, he was a Finalist for the *Tuscany Prize in Catholic Fiction*. In 2015, he was awarded a fully paid writing fellowship to Oxford University in the United Kingdom. That same year, a story was longlisted for the *Fish Short Story Prize*. In 2017, he was nominated for a *Pushcart Prize*. His writing (novels and short story collection) earned favorable critiques from *Kirkus Reviews*, including a *Kirkus Star*. His most recent novel, *Give Them Unquiet Dreams*, is a *Readers' Favorite Book Award* winner, a *Notable Best Indie Book of 2019*, and a *Kirkus Reviews Best Book of 2019*.