

# Blueberry Picking

Category: Poems

written by Roz Levine | June 26, 2015

## **Roz Levine**

We ran from an outbreak of polio  
Abandoned the Bronx for a summer hideaway  
In the shadow of the Catskill Mountains  
Each day we traipsed craggy trails  
Stooped low beneath clear skies  
Plucked mounds of dark blues  
From bushes bursting with ripe fruit  
Filled our baskets to overflow

It should have been all this:  
Sunshine on eight-year-old skin  
Fresh air on innocent girl soil  
Thoughts of jam on toast for breakfast  
Happy days of laughs with the family

When anxiety overwhelms the mind  
Blueberry picking equates to worries  
Of prickly thorns and bee stings  
Sunburns and infected blisters  
Rattlesnake bites and botulism in jelly jars  
Everything, a gravediggers' paradise

## **About the poet:**

"Writing has been one of the major tools to help me navigate a life filled with high anxiety, including several cancers and a multitude of surgeries. When I retired from my work as a school counselor several years ago, I decided that it was time to dedicate myself to my writing life and to honor the creative spirit within me. I am a member of the Los Angeles Poets and Writers Collective, founded by Jack Grapes. My works have been published in [The Sun](#), [On the Bus](#), [Cultural Weekly](#), [Poetry Super Highway](#), [Silver Birch Press](#), [Forever in Love](#) and [Deliver Me](#)."

## **About the poem:**

"This poem was inspired by the atrocities that are occurring around the world and that create so much anxiety within me. I decided to get out of my head by tracing one of my earliest childhood memories related to anxiety—to document poetically how the simplest act, like picking blueberries in a beautiful mountain setting, was weighted down by my catastrophic thinking. I don't think I'll ever cease to be an anxious individual, but if I can make art from anxiety, I can live with that."

**Poetry editors:**

Johanna Shapiro and Judy Schaefer