

1996

you don't understand

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you don't understand

don't come up behind
and startle me
i might hurt u
don't slight me
i might hurt myself
u know...i park in the handicapped zone because i am...
with everyone shooting that look
i still don't have to justify
what the ignorant cannot see
and fake a limp on those days
i just can't take it anymore

i am tired of people
thinking i am getting special privileges
"how come she can?"
is Lupus no reason?

walk a day in this body
wake up feeling shitty for

no reason at all
fear the cold and the sun
for no reason at all
go in the bathroom and vomit
(come out smiling)
for no reason at all
have a fever
for no reason at all
be Black and blue
for no reason at all
have the doctors treat u with bone chilling efficiency
for no reason at all
realize death hangs around the corner
for no reason at all

yes, this is my special privilege especially when
the world fears illness, does not want to listen
let alone learn the lessons it contains
for u, or someone u know, maybe even love may meet this monster

when i get all my other credentials together

my grandmother's caregiver
mother of two cats
recovering addict
formerly battered woman
sexual assault survivor
(who remembers the word courage contains the word rage)
healing entity
poet
woman in a relationship
lover
bank employee
grocery shopper
a licensed driver
former dealer
lover of Ethiopian food
...a woman whose life is ending
and beginning at the same time...
pseudo-vegetarian
health conscious human
herbologist
french speaking meditator and mediator
jazz fiend
honey roasted almond popper
whistle blower
avid reader of novels about women of power
i get a brief idea of who i am today

but
i park handicapped on days i need to
so
if u ask me how i feel
(if u really wanna know)
when it's good i feel better than u
but when its not --
everything hurts
and it feels like gravity is bulldozing me under

i tell u i am scared i won't be able to take care of myself
and have to depend on others who don't know how to live with this
and don't really know how to live
at all.

k.t. hunt-johnston