

Tonya Liburd 4th prize
You don't want to know me

You will not know me
You will not remember me
And, furthermore, you don't want to know me

You may bump into me on the street while I'm mentally confused, trying to hide my embarrassment at not having enough change for the bus, yet still desperately counting, "... one... two..."

You may look at me and give me that look
I'm used to it
Always hurts just that little bit

I may be your sister, your niece, your daughter, your cousin,
But the blood may as well be as thick as water

You either don't, or can't relate, or don't want to
Because you can get up, go have a shower, eat, go about your daily routine
Without a second thought
About as much thought as you give me
And you will not want to know me

If you ask me what is happening with me these days
I will have nothing to say
Beyond the uphill battle to do everyday things
You will say nothing's changed
A judgment so out-of-touch with reality
All it does is add new pain to the pains and traumas of the past for me
Do I stay on the phone and say nothing like a good little girl? Mais oui
And I will know that you do not want to know me

You have a car, a house, a good job, a good soul
But after seeing my place
And knowing I spent time in a mental hospital
You're seeing a side of myself I once kept hidden from you And I
recall you saying you're getting bad at returning phone calls Do
you really want to know me? Anymore?

"All she has to do is get her act together"
"All you have to do is develop a routine"
"If you take your meds you can live a normal life"
"All you have to do is make an effort"

WORDS FROM THE STREET

Sunday June 26, 2016

"She's probably just doing it for the attention..."

It is so much simpler, so much easier to put it down to an aspect, a fault of myself, my personality

Rather than acknowledge that it's not me

But an illness that rears its head every moment of every day

And of the two, it and I,

I'm the one who gives way

But that requires a re-education, deconstruction, you see

And the honest to goodness truth of it all is

You just simply do not want to get to know me

A lifetime of not knowing

Let's just have a lifetime more

That's so much more effective than having to guard keys

Or a lock in the door

You don't want to know me, you don't want to understand

We could be standing toe-to-toe

But it's like I exist in a separate land

From you