

Sue on the Post Office Steps

by Christopher Robin

She used to work at the Lipton factory
but it shipped
off to Mexico, or so she thinks
Most of the other warehouse jobs in this town
have disappeared as well
She used to make \$40,000 a year, and
had her own construction company
Which is more than I can say for myself
Only been on the streets two years
But her face seems to say otherwise

It's hard to get a call back
when you don't have a shower
So I said I'd give her some of my labor work
If I had enough
(Her boyfriend with a back injury
preferring to draw pictures for a few dollars
here and there,
which I can respect)

The other morning
I went to pick her up
to help me tear down a shed
she smelled like alcohol
but I overlooked it
and gave her some mints
The shed was aluminum
And after an hour blood was
dripping down her legs
And arms
"It's alright! I'm just thin-skinned," she said
"I'm just thin-skinned!"
"Alright, Sue," I said

A few days later I went looking for her
at our scheduled time
Her boyfriend said she might be in the park
Turns out she'd gotten drunk and taken a nap
But insisted on going to the job site anyway
And wouldn't get out of my truck
"You gotta be straight, Sue, I have
a reputation to consider..."
"You take both of us with you or nothing..."
was her boyfriend's reply
grabbed his pack and they stormed off
now when I pass her we both have to pretend
she is just one of those people
that can't be helped