

WHEN YOU SEE ME
BY RENEE FIRATO

when you see me
do you see the lines on my face from the times I've laughed
do you see the bags under my eyes from the times I've cried

do you see the golden hues on my skin
or do you see the grey hairs growing in
do you see the strength
or do you see the weight
do you see me grinding, working, sweat dripping from my face
or do you see me struggling, failing, and flirting with fate

do you see my flaws
or do you see my scars
do you see a sister, a wife, a mother
do you see a breast cancer survivor

did you look at my breasts

do you know that I know you did
do you know how many shirts I tried on
do you know how many didn't fit
do you know that underneath this shirt
I don't fit

you know that every woman is made differently
so every surgery is as unique as she
severing her pride and burning her beauty
leaving her searching to replace
what cancer attempted to erase

do you see me now

the scared woman healed
my strength revealed
my beauty radiating through
my chemotherapy kissed skin
the curves in my hair like the curves of my quads
pushing me through of every jerk and twist
weighing it out risk after risk

do you see me now and now do you see

when it comes to this coveted breast
off the shelf needs to be reassessed
because if I'm going to live well and be blessed
then I'm going to need a custom prosthesis

