

Fred Small

"Talking Wheelchair Blues"

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I went for a jog in the city air
I met a woman in a wheelchair
I said "I'm sorry to see you're handicapped."
She says "What makes you think a thing like that?"
And she looks at me real steady
And she says, "You want to drag?"
So she starts to roll and I start to run
And she beat the pants off my aching buns
You know going uphill I'd hit my stride
But coming down she'd sail on by!
When I finally caught up with her
She says "Not bad for somebody ablebodied.
You know, with adequate care and supervision
You could be taught simple tasks.
So how about something to eat?"
I said that'd suit me fine
"We're near a favorite place of mine."
So we mosied on over there
But the only way in was up a flight of stairs.
"Gee, I never noticed that," says I.
"No problem," the maitre d' replies.
"There's a service elevator around the back."
So we made it upstairs on the elevator
With the garbage, flies, and last week's potatoes
I said "I'd like a table for my friend and me."
He says "I'll try to find one out of the way."
Then he whispers, "Uh, is she gonna be sick,
I mean, pee on the floor or throw some kind of fit?"
I said "No, I don't think so,
I think she once had polio.
But that was twenty years ago.
You see, the fact of the matter is,
If the truth be told,
She can't walk.
So he points to a table, she wheels her chair
Some people look down and others stare
And a mother grabs her little girl
Says "Keep away, honey, that woman's ill."
We felt right welcome.
Then a fella walks up and starts to babble
About the devil and the holy bible
Says "Woman, though marked with flesh's sin,

Pray to Jesus, you'll walk again!"
Then the waiter says "What can I get for you?"
I said "I'll have your best imported brew."
And he says "What about her?"
I say "Who?" He says "Her."
"Oh, you mean my friend here."
He says "Yeah." I say "What about her?"
"Well, what does she want?"
"Well, why don't you ask her?"
Then he apologizes.
Says he never waited on a cripple before.
We immediately nominated him for Secretary of the
Interior.
Well, she talked to the manager when we were through
She says "There're some things you could do
To make it easier for folks in wheelchairs."
He says "Oh, it's not necessary.
Handicapped never come here anyway."
Well, I said goodnight to my newfound friend
I said, "I'm beginning to understand
A little bit of how it feels
To roll through life on a set of wheels."
She says "Don't feel sorry, don't feel sad,
I take the good along with the bad
I was arrested once at a protest demo
And the police had to let me go.
See, we were protesting the fact
That public buildings weren't wheelchair accessible.
Turned out the jail was the same way.
Anyway, I look at it this way--
In fifty years you'll be in worse shape than I am now.
See, we're all the same, this human race.
Some of us are called disabled. And the rest--
Well, the rest of you are just temporarily able-bodied

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