

# Redheaded Stepchild



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## SEEING RED

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## Illness and Blame Six Ways

1.  
It could be our fault. True,  
we couldn't have unbalanced  
our own chemistry. But most people  
find a way to stay well, don't they?
2.  
Manage what you own. Attend  
the baby showers. Receive  
the cake slices. Make yourself laugh  
when the regular people laugh.
3.  
During a given year nearly twenty percent  
of the population is ill. They walk around,  
working their jobs, not following  
conversations. Trying to fade into their clothes.
4.  
One man is sorry – his colleagues,  
his wife. He'd like to keep  
what he has, but can no longer  
accommodate the ache stapled to his organs.
5.  
I am sorry. For being broken  
even when well. That in spite  
of what's been done for me, I could  
at any point collapse back into illness.
6.  
You all consider yourselves enlightened,  
can call out the markers for sick.  
But until you've lived in that country,  
its language won't fit in your mouth.

**D.O. Moore** is poet and translator living in Hyattsville, Maryland. Moore's work has appeared in places such as *Barrow Street*, *Beloit Poetry Journal*, and *RHINO*. When not writing, Moore turns wool into colorful jewelry for Woolly Bear Beads.