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We all Wear a Mask

Sarah Turner

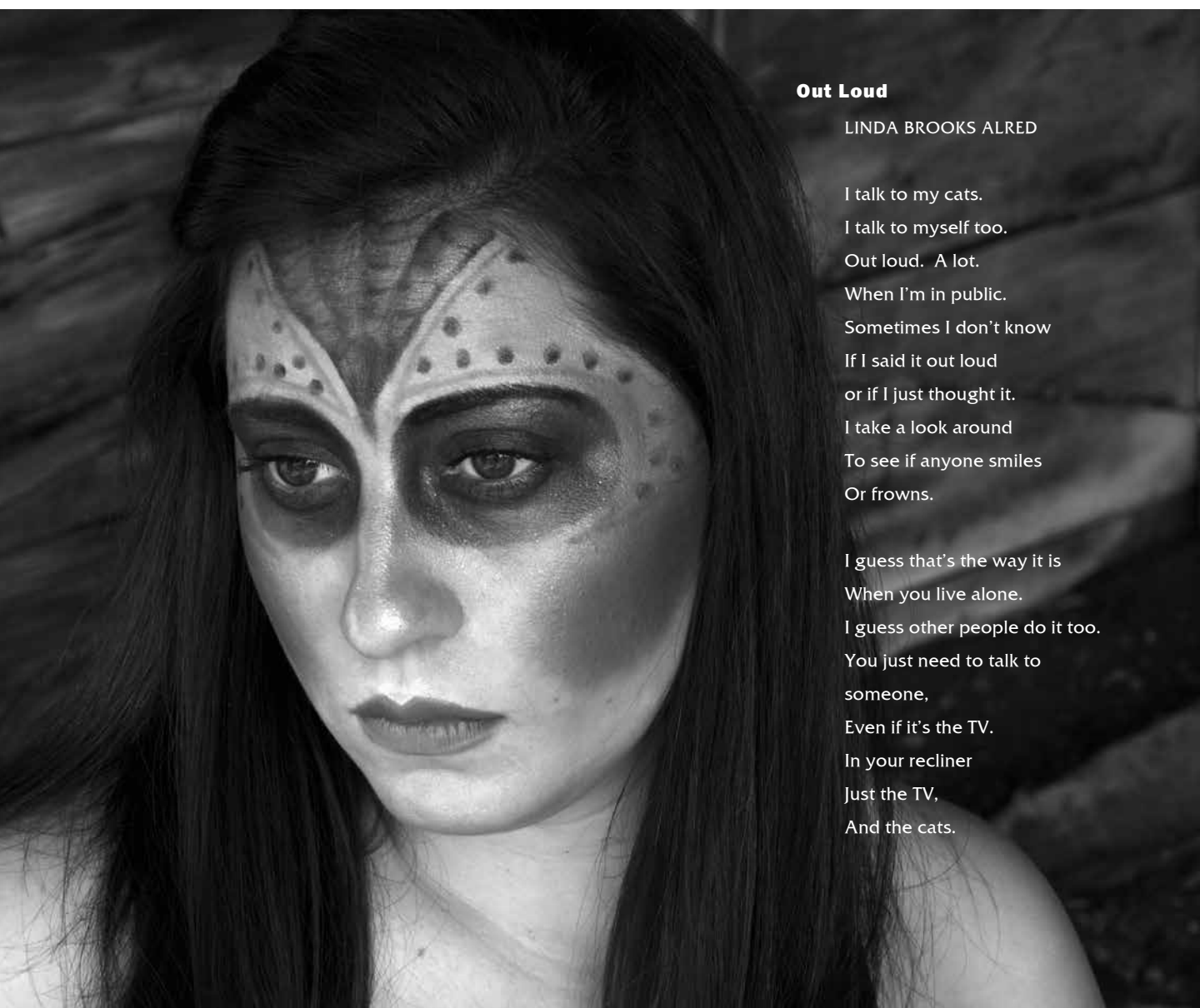
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WE ALL WEAR A MASK SARAH TURNER



Out Loud

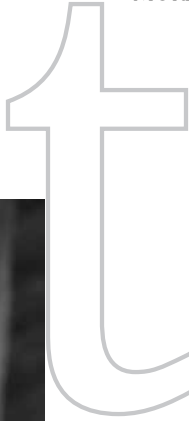
LINDA BROOKS ALRED

I talk to my cats.
I talk to myself too.
Out loud. A lot.
When I'm in public.
Sometimes I don't know
If I said it out loud
or if I just thought it.
I take a look around
To see if anyone smiles
Or frowns.

I guess that's the way it is
When you live alone.
I guess other people do it too.
You just need to talk to
someone,
Even if it's the TV.
In your recliner
Just the TV,
And the cats.

Long-Distance Relationship

MORIAH WALTON



THE CONCEPT OF HISTORY does not mean very much to a child of eight years to begin with, much less when said child is faced with the enchantment of a recently arrived bank of fog. Thus, when my sainted mother attempted to pry me away from my two-hour perch at the window that misty winter day with the lure of a history magazine, I would not be moved. The woman baffled me. There was a sea of crystalline drops suspended outside like the sighing whispers of a million aqueous faeries and she was rattling on about paper and ink: clearly a mark of insanity. In this conviction, I might have remained forever plastered to the window. But I live in Texas, land of the bipolar weather. Within ten minutes, my fairyland was swallowed by a violent thunderstorm that swept over the countryside without so much as a “pardon-me” by way of apology.

Devastation has a funny way of settling in an eight year-old, particularly when said eight year-old is wildly imaginative. In my childish frustration, I determined

the best way to show the weather my displeasure was to completely ignore it. Affecting a ridiculous air of nonchalance, I flounced my way through the house in a royal snit, fully intending to show the weather who was boss by reading whatever it was my mom had offered me earlier. It was in this preposterous state beneath the tendrils of a thousand arcs of lighting I was ignoring that I first met Dr. Tesla.

The man did not notice me. He was sitting quite at his ease, fully immersed in a book. Piercing eyes pored over the tome, oblivious to all save its words. The book intrigued me. I knew any number of boring old men who would sit in chairs, but my bookish self instantly connected to a man who would choose to do it with a book. My unconcealed enchantment with this tall, athletic physicist went completely undetected by the individual in question. This may seem odd, but was hardly surprising to me. He had, you see, been dead for 58 years.

I KNEW ANY NUMBER OF BORING OLD MEN WHO WOULD SIT IN CHAIRS, BUT MY BOOKISH SELF INSTANTLY CONNECTED TO A MAN WHO WOULD CHOOSE TO DO IT WITH A BOOK.