

People of Walmart

by Epiphany Ferrell

I could be a werewolf. I could be, you don't know that I'm not, you can't prove it. I could be dangerous, secretly. I could be wild inside, fierce, deadly. You look at me with that contemptuous smirk while I'm here in Walmart dressed in sweats and house slippers, sloppy, a bit fat, trying to figure out which electric toothbrush to buy. You think you are better than me because my hair is in curlers and yours is blown out, because your blouse probably cost more than my whole outfit, maybe more than my whole week's wages. You sleep on a satin pillowcase; you put a scented sachet under your pillow at night to help you dream beautiful dreams. You think I don't know that about you? What does a person like you dream, anyway? Do you dream at night about the vice you long to indulge, or the momentous rite of passage for you when you move up from an Acura to a Jaguar?

Last night, I howled in a meadow at the moon; I ran down dark and twisty paths in the forest with the scent of pine and dirt in my nostrils; the wind brushed my fur, bringing me storied scents. I heard you last night, your voice shrill and your laughter brittle as you crossed your arms across your cashmered chest, a crystal flute of bubbling liquid in your graceful hand. Were I a dog, I might fall for your ball-throwing and think it a kindness. Our eyes meet, here in the no-man's land between gift-wrap and groceries. Mine glint, yours look down and away.

