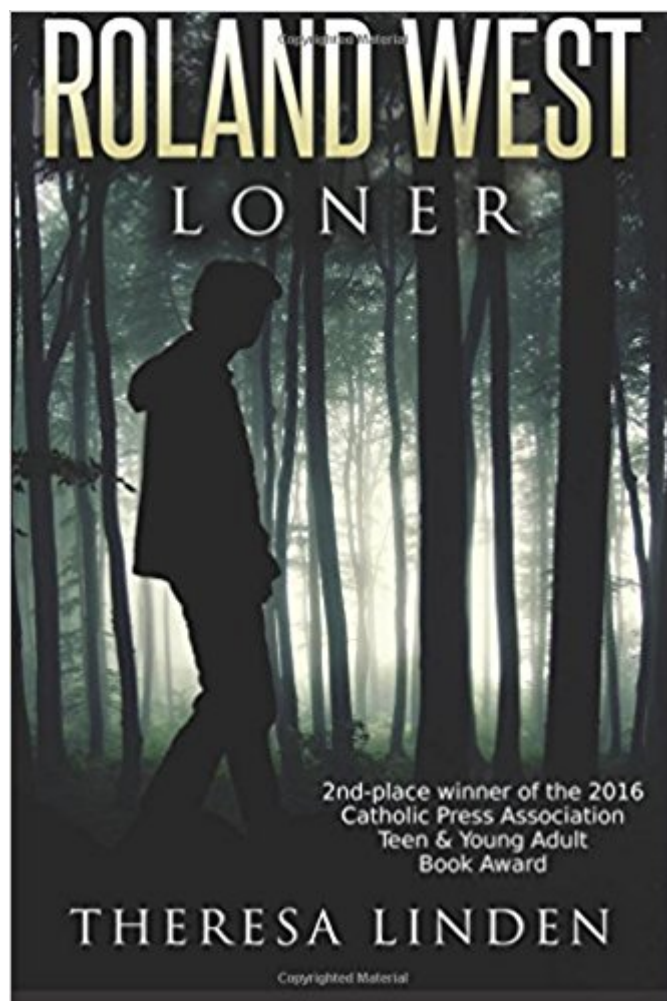


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# Roland West, Loner



## Synopsis

2nd-Place Winner of the 2016 Catholic Press Association Book Awards in the Teen & YA Fiction Category! Roland West, Loner is a contemporary Christian story of a fourteen-year-old boy who finds himself friendless at a new school and the subject of cruel rumors. Despised by older twin brothers, he feels utterly alone but not without hope. If he can avoid his brothers while his father is away, he might have a solution to his problem. When his brothers lock him away, having a plan of their own, he gets rescued by an unlikely pair: a neighboring autistic boy and his brother. Struggling to trust his new friends, secrets, rumors, lies, and an unusual inheritance put him on a journey that just might have the power to change the life of this loner. Roland West, Loner addresses loneliness, sibling relationships, facing fears, autism, and the Communion of the Saints.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Roland West, Loner is a stellar teen novel! Entering the local public high school forces shy Roland to confront his fears and explore friendship and trust all while dealing with his mean and manipulative older brothers bent on ruining his life. Theresa Linden's superb writing will draw you in and her real-to-life characters will keep you reading to discover what Roland's friend Peter has inherited, who's after it, and whom Roland can trust. With mystery, suspense, a hint of budding romance and an encounter with the Divine, Roland's story has something for everyone. --Carolyn Astfalk, Author of Stay with Me Roland West, Loner, is one of those books I couldn't put down. Linden tells a delightful tale, weaving the supernatural with the ordinary in a way that left me

breathless. You'll never doubt the Communion of Saints after reading this wonderful novel. I can't wait for the sequel. --Susan Peek, Author of *A Soldier Surrenders*

Theresa Linden is the author of award-winning *Battle for His Soul* and *Roland West, Loner*. She has several published young adult novels and two short stories in *Image and Likeness: Literary Reflections on the Theology of the Body*. She holds a Catechetical Diploma from Catholic Distance University and is a member of the Catholic Writers Guild and the International Writers Society. Balancing her time between family, homeschooling, and writing, she resides in northeast Ohio with her husband and three teenage boys.

The story starts at the West house where Roland lives with his father and older twin brothers Jarret and Keefe. Their father is a freelance Archaeologist and Geologist and when on trips often takes one of the boys with him. Next is Roland's turn but when the meaner twin Jarret overhears where it will be he wants to go so he sets out to make Roland look rebellious. The West family like their privacy and their nearest neighbours the Brandt's own a bed and breakfast, a twenty minute walk away. They have two sons, Peter who is Roland's age and goes to the same school and Toby who is nine and autistic. With a mystery inheritance for Peter, the twins locking Roland in the basement to his rescue by the Brandt boys, a friendship forms although Roland is still reluctant to let anybody in. This is certainly a page turner, an exciting story with an absolutely wonderful ending, thank you so much Theresa for such a great book, I highly recommend it.

This is a great series for adults, both young and not-so-young! Believable characters make this story ring true!

In the last month I have read 6 novels and published short stories by Theresa Linden, but this book was the one that started it. I have been greatly impressed by her writing. In a different review I compared Linden's writings to Madeleine L'Engle and Lois Lowry and the more of her writings I read the more I stand by that statement. If we were to do a side by side comparison between L'Engle's main series and Linden's then the Chasing Liberty Series would be the Kairos series and the West Brothers would be the Chronos series. And this book is a magnificent read. The West brothers are not exactly what you would call normal. First they live in a castle. Second they have travelled the world on digs before their mother passed away. They have had tutors, and keep horses. And until this year few people in town knew anything about them and their family. Roland hates public school

and the only thing keeping him going is plans of going on a trip with his father. But his desires and plans are about to have a huge wrench thrown into them and the person throwing that wrench is the older of his older twin brothers Jarret. But sometimes great things come from adversity. This time the adversity brings change. And though change is not always wanted, it is truly what Roland and to be honest both of his brothers, Jarret and Keefe. For out of this Roland will have his first real friends, Peter Brandt and Caitlyn Summer. But for someone who has never really had friends, making friends and learning to trust might prove to be a very hard thing to do. But when you combine all of that with a mysterious ancient box, a notebook in a different language and some relics and things are about to get real interesting. This book was an incredible read. Before I had even finished it I had picked up a few of Linden's other books to have in my pile of books to be read. The more of Linden's writings that I read the more I want to read. This is an excellent book by an amazing author so check it out.

If I was allowed to choose only one novel this year that was not only sheer delight to read, but also had the most profound impact on my spiritual life, it would be - without a shadow of a doubt - "Roland West, Loner" by Theresa Linden. I wish I could give this book to every Catholic teen I know (and their parents too!). At first glance, the story is on a purely natural level: a teenage boy, alone and friendless in a new school, trying to cope with his cruel older brothers. But the plot swiftly moves into a new and unexpected realm - that of the supernatural - sweeping the reader way beyond the halls of River Run High and plunging straight into the doctrine of the Communion of Saints. The way Linden accomplishes this will take your breath away. When we first meet Roland, our 14-year-old hero, he is on the verge of a trip to Italy with his father. This is Roland's chance to escape his brother Jarrett and the nightmare of school. But Jarrett wants the trip for himself, and will stop at nothing to get it. While their father is away, he locks Roland in the cellar and puts his scheme into action. But, unknown to Roland, he does in fact have a friend: someone special in Heaven, who likewise has a scheme and is putting it into action. Roland's life, and the life of all the characters, is about to be changed forever. When Roland is rescued from his prison by a boy from school named Peter, a friendship springs up between them. The two are drawn together especially by a mysterious locked box that Peter has been given as an inheritance. What it contains is literally out of this world -- a gift directly from Heaven. But someone else wants the treasure too. The race is on to keep the box and its precious contents safe. Peter's secret inheritance is the very heart of this suspenseful and heartwarming story. Once you've read this magnificent novel, you will never again think of the Saints as being far away! I cannot recommend this novel highly enough. A rare work by an

extremely talented author, that will stay with you long after the last page has been closed.

Sometimes miracles happen instantaneously. Sometimes they take longer. Roland West, *Loner* is a great novel for pre-teen and teen boys and girls because it demonstrates the power of prayer and of forgiveness to heal rifts in families and between friends. I learned right along with the story's characters about a particular Catholic saint, Conrad of Parzham, but I won't disclose how he figures into the plot. I'll simply say that this book contains a wonderful mix of real-life heartache, pulse-pounding suspense, and the awesomeness of the spiritual and supernatural. I received a copy of this book from the author and am happy to provide this honest review.

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