

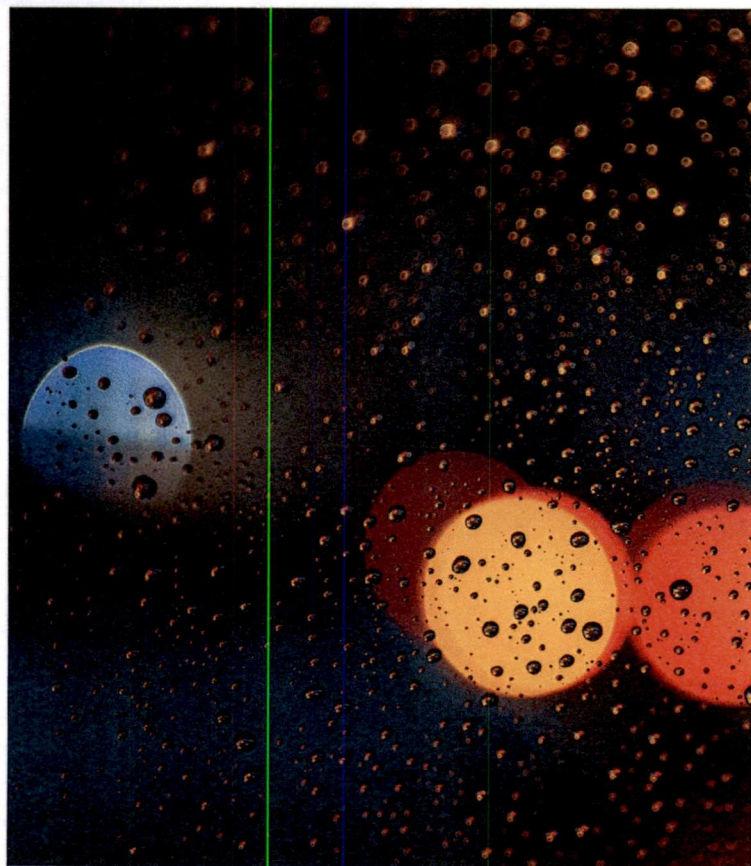
# The Big Change

by Raegan Cote

When I was sixteen, I fell in love with my best friend. For the sake of this article, I will refer to this person as “Alex”. Alex had vibrant red curly hair, freckles from head to toe that turned into one giant freckle in the summer, and stood at a whopping five feet, two inches. She had a gift for photography in which I had the pleasure of modelling for, she always wore Marvel t-shirts, and loved The Killers. She took nearly all of my “firsts” away; the first person I came out to, the first person I made out with, the first person to see me naked. We did prom, grad, the whole shebang. We saw each other grow in our most crucial teenage years, and we both changed an incredible amount. Alex, however, happened to change a little more than most people

I have always been someone to appreciate change. Sure, it can be hard, plus I’m a crier, so the tears flow whether it’s good or bad change. Now that I’m not sixteen anymore, and (hopefully) wiser than I was, my philosophy is: if you don’t change, you can’t grow. I project this onto all of my relationships, whether it’s a friend, or a partner. When I meet someone that I’m able to create a bond with, I know that they will not always be that same person forever. The largest cause of failed relationship is when one person changes, and the other is unable to either accept it, or change with them. It’s how people can grow apart, or become closer, and how come long-term relationships may seem nearly impossible to maintain. When things change, things end; which is how come so many people are afraid of it. When so many things are ending, it can block the view of all the possible beginnings.

Though all of that may have just sounded like a motivational Facebook post that your weird Aunt Jackie shared to her timeline, I stand by it, especially when love is on the line. In grade eleven when we became “official”, Alex slowly began coming out to me. Throughout the end of high school, though I’m sure way before, Alex began steering further and further away from the girl that I fell in love with. Alex began



finding more comfort in masculinity, while being confined to his biological femininity. Alex, my dear little Alex, was turning into a HE.

Alex and I were together for two whole years, and considering we started dating at sixteen years young, I’d say we did pretty good. By no means am I about to express that Alex’s gender transformation ruined our relationship. Being seventeen is what ruined it. The truth is, when Alex began coming out to me, I never really batted an eye. For me, love has no gender, so I was able to release that potential stress off of him. That’s not to say we didn’t have our issues. Since our relationship ended three years ago, I cannot quite remember every little thing we fought about, nor should I care, but the years have given me plenty of reflection time. I truly loved him, and he truly loved me, but insecurity barricaded our love for each other. Insecurity at our age was so common in kids all shapes and sizes. I mean, what girl didn’t hate their stretch-mark covered, blood hurdling uterus, sweaty, pubescent body as a teenager? Arguably, I think many of us still do (which is an issue in its own). For Alex however, the