

For Marz

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I don't know how to start this piece. There's so much I want to say,
So many words to try and craft into careful lines and poetic statements.
And yet I can't find a way to begin.

Do I start at the beginning?
The night we first talked?
We were in a room with booming speakers,
I watched you dance with your boyfriend all night.
At school, you walked around glaring at the world,
Staring at your phone,
Daring anyone to try to approach you.
But I went to talk to you that night.
Two sentences.
"What's your name?"
(which I didn't catch)
"I like your ring"
(which I didn't tell you was Taylor Swift merch)
(I wanted to seem cool)
And then we didn't speak again all night.

And then School Camp.
I was freshly out of the closet,
Joking about having to sleep in the field
Instead of cabins of boys and girls.
You made the same joke,
So we shared a cabin with some friends and half-strangers
And our enby friend dressed like a dad.
We played truth or dare every night.
The app we were using hated me,
All the dares were sexual,
The truths were weird,
But we had fun all the same.
Spending hours in an outdoor chapel,
You videoing the fake religion we created.
I'm still not sure about some of the people in our cabin.
They haven't been the friendliest of people,
But thinking back to how quickly we became friends,
How close we got,
Makes them irrelevant to us now.

One week after we got back,
We said “hello” before class
And you handed me a binder
My mum threw away.
I got to wear it for two hours.
Then it was gone.

You stopped sitting with your old friend group
And started sitting with us.
Now you take your headphones off
And laugh
And talk
And smile so much more.
You seem lighter and happier now
Because you’re around people who love you.

We had a New Year party.
You, me, your boyfriend, and Enby-Dad.
We invited more people,
But I’m kind of glad it was just us.
Even more truth or dare,
And you ended up giving me dramatic eye makeup.
I looked so emo
My mum got concerned.
We played Yahtzee and listened to music
And I can’t think of a better way I could have spent
The first moments of this year.

You say you look up to me,
You idolize me.
I remember in an assembly
The speaker said to turn to the person next to you
And say someone that inspires you.
And even though you were sitting half away across the hall,
You yelled my name
And pointed at me
And almost made me cry.

Later that day you handed me a tiny potato,
That you had carved a face in it
That looked like mine.
“With great power comes great responsibility”
I buried it.
So it can grow into a me-potato tree.

I could write for 20 hours
About every little moment.
When you bought me a pride flag,
I couldn't take it home.
The time we started a boyband
In the middle of the night.
The support and validation we typed out to each other
At ungodly hours after bad days.

The second time I saw you in a crowded room,
With booming music making it impossible to speak,
You dancing with your boyfriend, being sweet,
We were friends.
And even though that moment mirrored our beginning,
I can't imagine it being anything even close to the end.

Because you have so much farther to go.
So many more nights of dancing with your boy,
Singing with your friends,
Laughing and talking
And helping me theorize.
In the future,
You'll be legal,
You'll be clean,
And I'll still be with you,
Trying to think of a way to start this piece.