

## Running shoes

### Julienne Bay

I'm not sure what came over me, but it happened after we broke up for the third time. *I've had enough*, he said, *I need to find myself, on an open road*. I sat and pondered what he had meant. Have I been tying him down, somehow keeping him from moving forward in life? I didn't think so; and he never cared about what I did on my own time either. Nevertheless, it was over for good this time.

I know it's a cliché. Many have done it before me. Forrest Gump had done it. Terry Fox had done it. People did it for various reasons, whether it's for charity, or simply running away from reality. I don't know what my reason was; I had an urge one afternoon. I grabbed my running shoes, credit card, cellphone and just ran down the road.

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Normally, I never left the city because I hated small towns. I hated the open sky, and the feeling of emptiness. My eyes were fixed on the open road during the entire journey; the blue sky met with the horizon and there were trees on the either sides of the road. I was already bored of the scenery. I had been following only one direction for about eight hours at that point and didn't even know where I was.

Just then, I heard a voice.

“Are you lost?”

It was an elderly woman, who looked even older than my 86-year-old grandmother. Her teeth were perfect but I knew she was wearing dentures. She was holding hands with another elderly man, who was slightly taller. They both wore the same hunched back, glasses and wrinkles.

“Please, can you tell me where I am?”

“You’re at *asdkfja;dkjfa;sdkfja;ldjk*. Did your car break down?”

I looked at them. They looked sweet together. But I also thought about how long they must’ve been together and how much they must’ve gone through together. They probably never used the pronoun *I*. They must’ve become *we*, years back, because they shared everything together. Everything must’ve been conjoined; their home, family, and even the forgotten memories.

Holy Christ, thank goodness we broke up. I would’ve lost my own identity completely, if we had stayed together.

“Have a nice day.” I said.

I turned around and walked to the Greyhound bus stop I had seen. I bought a ticket with my credit card and just headed home. My phone battery was running out and I hadn’t packed my charger. I guess there was no point of even having a phone, because it wasn’t getting any reception in the boonies.

I asked myself: *why are you running? How would an open road help you discover anything?*

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I got home and I opened my fridge. Home is where beer is.