

The Move

January 30th 2011 was the day my life changed. It was the day my plane landed at DFW Airport. It was the day I said goodbye to all my friends and family in Canada, and it was the first day of a very different life for me. Although I wasn't born in Canada, I had been living there for as long as I can remember. My first day of kindergarten was there, I went to grade school there, all my friends and family are there and a whole bunch of "my firsts"; it was where I grew up, and nobody forgets where they grew up. It's strange when things that one would never expect to happen in a million-and-one years, actually end up happening. People always say "expect the unexpected" and so I did. My father got laid-off from his job, and the only other one he could find that paid him well was here, so that is why my entire family moved to Texas. Before moving to Plano, I used to live in Whitby, Ontario, which is roughly 40 minutes away from Toronto, and luckily I've lived in both. To put my siblings and I at ease, my father told us that Whitby is like Plano and Toronto is like Dallas, so that was my mindset before arriving.

If someone came up to me three years ago and told me that I'd be moving to Texas, I would laugh at them and start performing all the Texas clichés that came to my head. I lived in a nice house, went to a great school, didn't have to work and was surrounded by friends and family. Life was good, so why would I ever want to move to Texas? I was happy where I was. I liked the cold (sometimes), I liked singing "O' Canada" every morning in class, I liked French being the second language, I liked eating the classic Canadian Poutine (French fries and cheese with brown gravy drizzled on top...so good!), but most of all I liked being surrounded by people who also appreciated these things as much as I did. All these things made me feel like a puzzle piece, I fit in perfectly. So, when I found out I was moving to Texas, I was in complete disbelief, even after I had been living here for a few months. Even though I lived in a nicer house now and

my family could afford more things, I felt so out of place, and even worse is the fact that I was in high school. People describe high school to be this horrible, competitive, get eaten alive with BBQ sauce kind of place, and in certain aspects, it can be. Moving in the middle of one's high school career is a horrible idea, and I only speak from experience. All of a sudden GPA, the SAT and ACT, once foreign concepts, were now something common. I understand where my father was coming from when he said Plano and Whitby are similar, but in reality they are barely on the same scale. Plano is a teacher and Whitby is still a young, growing student.

I didn't realize that we as human beings could be so different from one another, one person's idea of wealthy can vastly differentiate from another person's view. I realized this when I went to visit a new friend for the first time. People say that everything is bigger and Texas, and boy are they right. I thought my house was big but when I walked into her house and I was stunned, it was perfect, almost *too* perfect! It could've passed for a show room house for two reasons; it looked like nobody actually lived in it and because there was not a vintage crocheted pillow or sauna stone out of place. I felt like I was a tourist in a museum, and I was slightly tempted to take pictures. I walked in wide-eyed, and to her, it was just her house. Having her own car, or a home theatre, or a swimming pool was just something normal for her. She had always grown up in luxury, but to her it wasn't luxury, it was just *her* average. She wasn't the only one though, all her friends lived the same way, and so did most of the people around me. I couldn't even think all these things were weird, because they weren't; my weird is their *normal*.

Eventually, one has to face reality and this move is what proved to me that this world is so diverse, and not just by ethnicity or race. All of us can look at one thing, and yet we would all have different views on it because of how we live. Take water for example, it's something I use every day without a second thought, and something others walk 3 miles just to have access to.

Something so precious to others can be completely insignificant to others. Our social class does not *have* to define who we are as people, but for the most part it does because it affects the way people look at you and treat you, it shouldn't, but it does.