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### **Growing/Dying by The Backseat Lovers**

The Backseat Lovers released their song Growing/Dying along with the rest of their songs on the album Waiting to Spill. The music video is 3 minutes and 35 seconds and was directed using a 2D animation style. Compared to most pop music videos, there are no real-life characters or realistic elements in the video. The band decided to use a monotone flat cartoon style. The song reveals the artists' personal views on adulthood.

Growing/Dying uses an allegory to dive into the journey of adulthood. The lyric "it would be nice to know" is repeated a few times throughout the song. They were alluding to the uncertainty in our lives. Uncertainty can shake the mental state of an individual because one cannot prepare for the real world. This allegory regarding the journey of adulthood emphasizes the lack of control an individual has over their life. Even though we have total control over the decisions we make. Those decisions can only influence our environment or others to head in the direction we want. There is no definitive outcome for the future regardless of our actions. The character in the music video seems aware of this total lack of control and increased uncertainty in their life; as a result, it leads to the deterioration of their mental health. As an individual gets older they grow whether that be physically, emotionally, or mentally. However, the journey of adulting is an extremely hard one and a fragile mind can be susceptible to falling off their paths. As seen in the music video, the animation of the character emphasizes how growing older is a difficult thing to do.

The Backseat Lovers used a metaphor to compare plants and human beings. The song opens up with the line: “Why does the plant on the windowsill reflect my state of mind?” Plants and human beings are both non-living things that are, as said by the song title, constantly growing and dying. Yet, there are differences that are obvious to the eye between plants and human beings. Human beings indulge themselves in the art of language. Through dialogue, human beings can easily communicate with others. Whereas, plants do not have a form of communication that is known to mankind. Regardless of these differences, the song claims that both plants and human beings are synonymous. As well as the words growing and dying, the slash between the words emphasizes that either word can be used in the same context. In western culture, death is seen as the end. However, there are various worldviews that look at death as necessary for life or the beginning of something new. Additionally, some cultures describe the creation of humanity through plants, specifically maize. Plants and human beings have a connection. Both have a similar life cycle but depend on each other for carbon dioxide or oxygen. This comparison is important because it forces the audience to reflect on their identity. How are the ways we treat ourselves and plants similar and different? The song reveals a relationship between growing and dying, compared to looking at them distinctly. As an individual gets older, often the personality or attitude of our younger selves change or die. Yet, it gives us a new opportunity for us to be better or create new changes in our lives. In the same that when plants die seeds can be used for new cultivation.

Pathos is used in the song to evoke a feeling of nostalgia, a point when life felt more simple. Compared to the impact of the music video, the chord progression and the guitar is how the song appeals to its audience. There is an emphasis on the last lines of each verse as it goes into an instrumental solo where the guitar takes over and attempts to make a statement. The last

line in the first verse is “just look me in the eyes.” When listening to a song for the first time, rarely do listeners remember the lyrics on the first go. Therefore, as the guitar takes over for a few seconds after the last line, the audience is forced to think about that lyric. That specific line portrays the issue of facetiousness. The character in the music video or even the lyricist themselves wants to be taken seriously. Eye contact can be a sign of respect or admiration. When one does not direct their attention towards you, it shows their lack of interest, but also disrespect. The instrumental part of the song stops for one specific lyric, instead, the singer takes control of the stage. This would be the first line of the third verse: “Why does the wall insist I have my back against it?” The rest of the instrumental harmoniously comes together at the end of this specific line. Now, the audience is forced to take in this lyric because it is the only thing provided in this part of the song. This specific lyric comments on the fatigue everyone feels at one point in their life. A flat surface, like a wall, can be leaned on to provide some temporary relief. Furthermore, it becomes easier for one to relax when one feels comfortable leaning on someone. These parts of the songs force their audience to think about the past when trivial thoughts did not become so frequent. Small things such as eye contact or walls take over the character’s mind, creating unnecessary worry. This sense of nostalgia is meant to force its listeners to wonder about a time when they did not have anxious thoughts.