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People have a deep-seated fear of losing their identity. This is demonstrated in both selections, "The Fear of Losing a Culture" by Richard Rodriguez and *Dark They Were and Golden Eyed* by Ray Bradbury. When we are introduced into a new world, city, or school, it is not hard to lose track of who we are. We meet new people, and they influence our personalities; for better or for worse. A new place to stay can also have an impact on who we once were. A new larger house might make one's ego go through the roof, while a smaller house might make him appreciate his old life more. Anything and everything has an effect on someone's personality, and the struggle to hold on to an identity is part of human nature.

In the story *Dark They Were and Golden Eyed* by Ray Bradbury, the author writes about the battle of a man to hold on to his identity after he and his family had to move to Mars due to an Atom war on earth. Throughout the story, Harry Bittering notices changes in his family and others on Mars. These changes are happening too slowly for anyone else to notice, and Harry cannot convince them they are happening. An example of this could possibly be if you have a pet. If someone has a puppy, they get to see it grow over time. However, if this person's grandparents visit the puppy, and come back after a few months, the amount of how much the dog has grown is clearly visible. Mr. Bittering would often say "I feel like a salt crystal in a mountain stream, being washed away." When introduced to a new place it isn't

hard to forget who we once were and lose track of our culture. As the reader progresses in the story, Mr. Bittering gets more and more stressed, warning his family and the other settlers on Mars that they must go back to Earth; he even goes as far as starting to build a rocket. He notices little changes the others do not, such as flowers having a different smell or extra leaf, crops turning different colors, and his family's eyes changing colors. Eventually the Martian air and sun get the better of Mr. Bittering. He and his family and all the others that settled on Mars completely lose their identity and move to a different part of the red planet.

In the personal essay "The Fear of Losing a Culture" by Richard Rodriguez, the author writes about the struggle to stay in touch with his Hispanic heritage in America. At the beginning of the essay, he gives the reader examples of why some people might immigrate into the U.S. It may be for work, money, food, a home, or trying to get out of harm's way; there are many reasons to settle in America. However, immigrants might find their heritage getting lost somewhere along the way. Rodriguez writes, "The U.S. Border Patrol works through the night to arrest the flow of illegal immigrants over the border, even as Americans stand patiently in line for La Bamba." Latin American culture has a massive role in U.S. movies, music, television, and comedy. I feel America takes the Hispanic-Americans for granted, as they have given so much to our country. Whether it is American customs such as fast food like Taco Bell or Del Taco, or more traditional customs like art, Hispanic culture has a huge impact on our lives in America.

"We come from an expansive, an intimate, culture that has long been judged second-rate by the U.S. Out of pride as much as affection, we are reluctant to give up our past," writes Rodriguez. This tells the reader that Hispanics are very proud of their heritage and that they will hold on to it as long as they can. Rodriguez also writes, "For a long time, Hispanics in the U.S.

felt hostility. Perhaps because we were preoccupied by nostalgia, we withheld our Latin American gift." He is giving an example of hiding your old self, and starting again. Other examples of this can be shown when someone changes schools or moves to a new neighborhood or community.

These are two very different selections, but they share a common theme. No one wants to lose sight of who he really is. Sometimes the change is too much and we completely lose our identity. Other times the two cultures blend, forgetting that the first one was ever there, although it stays with us subconsciously. Regardless, the theme of this struggle that we necessarily go through when we confront major changes in our lives, rings true in both of these selections which otherwise are so different in nature.