



DRESSING UP

## WHY I QUIT RED LIPSTICK

*A makeup devotee goes bare-faced on the eve of her 32nd birthday*

BY REBECCA FERRIN

I like to browse my collection of fire-engine red and deep burgundy lipsticks in the morning, selecting a pop of colour to bring my face to life. Often, I also wear glossy black liner drawn thick above my lashes. I love wearing makeup and always have, ever since I used my paper route money to buy my first Revlon blush at age 10. I even spent some time as a counter makeup artist at Holt Renfrew. But on the eve of my 32nd birthday, I decided to go makeup free. As I move further into my 30s I find I'm wanting to cultivate confidence from within rather than from the outside as I did in my teens and 20s.

Before #wakeupcall, #feelingnuts and #ALSicebucketchallenge, there was #nomakeupselfie, a U.K.-founded social-media campaign for cancer research that saw Beyoncé, Jennifer Lopez and Miley Cyrus (and more than 168,000 other Instagrammers) expose their makeup-less faces. It mirrored a trend toward barely-there makeup on the runways, which peaked in September when Marc Jacobs sent models including Joan Smalls and Karlie Kloss down his Spring 2015 catwalk with only moisturizer on their faces—dark circles showing and all. François Nars, perhaps the world's strongest supporter of vivid pigment, was the makeup artist. The nerve!

To prepare for forgoing my liner, lipstick—and even BB cream—I indulged in a very long, very hydrating facial. While getting ready for my birthday dinner and drinks, I debated cheating with a dab of concealer, but settled for eye gel and lip balm. I paired a cuffed grey sweatshirt and jeans with suede

heels, this is where my lipstick would have come in handy: to dress up my fairly average fashion sense.

I felt self-conscious as soon as I walked into the bar at the swanky Shangri-La Hotel in Toronto; I believe it's polite to decorate for an occasion and I felt underdressed without my swipe of red. But my lack of makeup didn't earn any remarks from my guests, and the feeling fled once conversation (and drinks) got under way.

As I got more comfortable with going barefaced, I started to wonder whether my commitment to cat eyes means I'm succumbing to an expectation that women should be beautiful, ornamental. "It's not due to some grand conspiracy by men that women wear makeup," said Dr. Gad Saad, with great certainty. A professor of marketing at Concordia University, he wrote an article titled "Why Do Women Apply Facial Cosmetics" in *Psychology Today*. "If women gain a sense of liberty by indulging in the no-makeup movement, great! If you decide to negate this as part of your arsenal of tools to make yourself more attractive, that's natural." That's far from the last word on the matter, though it did make me realize it's not liberty I feel when I'm wearing red lipstick, but desirability.

Since my birthday experiment I've been wearing less makeup, in part because of the extra time I gain in the morning. I've also noticed that my blue eyes pop a little more when they're not competing with the rouge. But I'm not throwing out my M.A.C Ruby Woo just yet. To everything there is a season, and this season my bare face feels just right.



FRESH LOTUS EYE GEL, \$56, SEPHORA.CA. NARSSKIN LUMINOUS MOISTURE CREAM, \$72, HUDSON'S BAY. MAYBELLINE GREAT LASH CLEAR MASCARA, \$7, DRUGSTORES. KARI GRAN LIP WHIP, \$17, FRESHFACED.CA