

Tales of a Twenty Something

By

Danielle Daniel-Ramsey

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Forward

Danielle appears as a woman who has thought through what she means to communicate with each item she attaches to her body. It is evident that she has contemplated more of what is possible to express through hairstyle, clothing, footwear, and accessories than the average person perceives and she doesn't shy from crafting her intended messages. She sees attire as visual art. It isn't easy to pinpoint her influences, but she is contemporary.

Neither nostalgic nor futuristic, Danielle appears as a member of the present age; she is relaxed and comfortable in her clothing. Usually wearing multiple layers,

Danielle seems prepared to adjust to her surroundings, not only to maintain her own physical pleasure but to achieve the mood she aims to emit in part through whichever garment she allows to arise from “within.”

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Prologue

The early stages of adulthood can often be awkward and challenging. As a twenty-something, I know first-hand how difficult it is to be a voice of the generation. This book, *Tales of a Twenty-Something* gives a peak into a few of my experiences in my early twenties. Growing up in Harlem, NY I have had my fair share of memorable moments. After reading this book I hope you, the reader, will gain a better understanding of my interest and who I am.

Dedication

Dedicated to my grandmother, Rosalee. May
your wise words guide me and always keep
me safe.

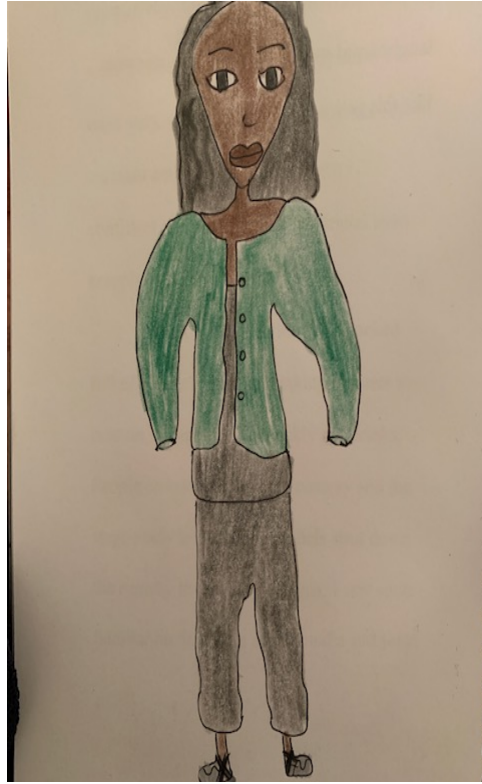
D'usse Dreams

The fashion event was at *The Open House Gallery* in SoHo, New York City. All the cool artsy people from around the city came with their friends to see the latest fashion from the urban sportswear brand *Trapstar London*. My childhood best friend, Tennille, had invited me since she was interning for *Roc Nation* at the time. It was the middle of November, the weather was comfortable so I wore my favorite olive green satin textured bomber jacket, satin camisole top, black skinny ripped jeans and cut-out faux leather black and white snake print shoes. My earrings were gold studs and my nail polish was the Essie brand in the

color *Sand Tropez*. I spent hours the night before applying product to my strands and twisting them until I had a head full of twist. My hair was in a kinky curly twist out and I wore a chocolate brown matte lipstick. I wore very natural makeup, just concealer, mascara and a brown lip. I felt very confident and put together, my friend even complimented my outfit.

When we walked in it was packed full of people talking and taking pictures to post on Instagram. We quickly got drinks. People crowded around the runway and the stage ready to watch the models strut down the runway in the latest designs. I saw some familiar models from social media and some

celebrities like; Angela Simmons and Jordyn Woods. I watched as conversations were going on around me and didn't feel out of place. Mingling with guest and models, we laughed and took photos. To be at an event like this was a dream come true.



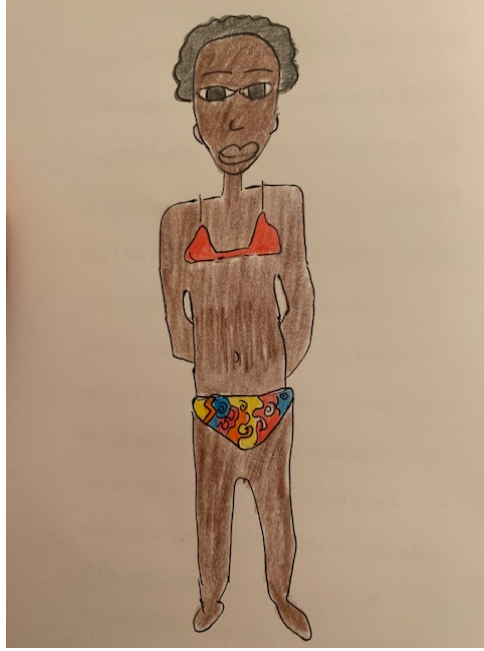
Fireworks

Summer of 2018 was my first time at Jones Beach. My Dad and I had made plans to have a beach day on the 4th of July with some family and to see the fireworks. I don't go to the beach often so today was going to be a good day. I wore my favorite concert T-shirt, it had Rihanna's body with the words "Role Model" printed over her. I also had on a hot pink two-piece bathing suit with geometric shapes on the bottoms and grey legging shorts. My toes were painted a lavender color and I had tiny coils all over my head. I walked across the sand and let the water hit my toes. Back and forth the waves came and kissed the shore. My Dad

had fallen asleep in one of the beach chairs, nothing but sun tan lotion all over his bald head. Of course, I had to take a picture and send it to my Mom.

It was the perfect day to go to the beach, we were there from early in the morning so after like six hours I began to tan. I sat in the sun listening to music eating a snow cone from one of the ice cream vendors walking along the beach. I was taking a break from the water since my hair was all wet from the getting smacked by the waves. My sister and I talked and drank champagne and watch my little cousins play in the sand. As the sun went down we anticipated the fireworks. Everyone on the

beach switched to warmer clothes and turned to the direction of the sun was setting. Red, blue, purple and gold the sparks were flying. I even recorded a few videos of the fireworks. It was a successful day in the sun surrounded by love, I felt blessed.



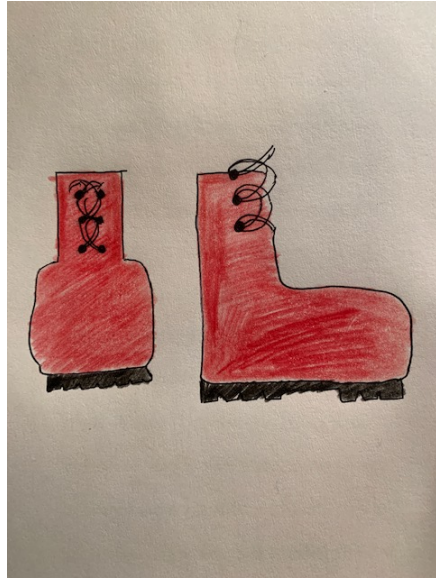
This Is for All the Ragers

The Mercury Lounge in New York City was where I had my first Rico Nasty concert. She's this rage queen rapper from Maryland that I discovered on Twitter. I had purchased VIP tickets that gave a select few accesses to meet her in person. I was excited yet nervous to meet her. I wanted to look good so I managed to dress up my normal makeup look with a gorgeous brownish- red eyeshadow color that made my eyes pop. I wore platform Dr. Martens that were this beautiful cherry red color made from vegan leather. I picked the worst day to wear these boots because my toes were in so much

pain. I didn't care, I just knew I was cute in these shiny Dr. Martens.

At first I didn't know what to ask her, I couldn't believe I was in her presence. I asked her how what it was like being a mom and being on the road all the time; she smiled and said her son is her world and that she hopes to one day make him proud. I knew early on that Rico Nasty was going to be a star. When she hit the stage the crowd started cheering and sing along to her scream rap music. We raged and danced while singing "Don't worry 'bout a bitch that never been in your place, always move in silence never question your faith". It was the perfect girl power song to make you feel

like a punk rage Queen. After this
experience, I made sure to see Rico Nasty
every time she came to my city.



I Am Not My Hair

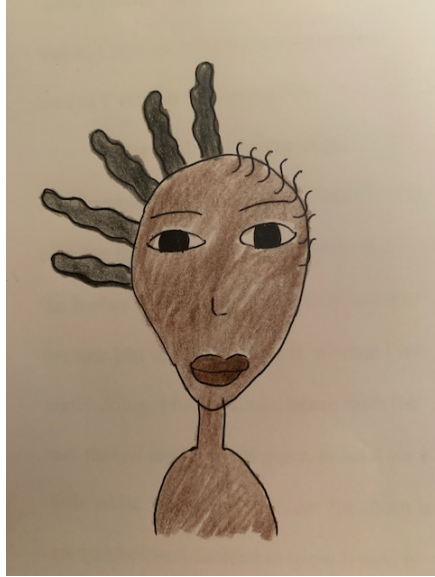
It was a hot summer day in the middle of August and I just got off work, I've been yearning for a change with my hair and finally decided to cut my locs after 3 years of locking. I had missed the versatility of my hair and wanted to feel my kinky coils again. I was going to have to start from scratch, that made me nervous. After watching countless YouTube videos, I finally felt confident enough to shave my head.

Denny Moe's located on 2496 Frederick Douglass Blvd in Harlem was my local barbershop. Some of the people who lived in the nearby apartment buildings were

regulars there. The thought of being in a shop around such a large group of men made me feel nervous, I've never been in a Barbershop before. My heart was racing, I could literally feel my anxiety rising. This was it, I was about to have the shortest haircut I've ever had in my life.

After a while I began to get comfortable. The sound and vibration of the clippers felt so relaxing against my scalp. As the barber was cutting I picked up some of the hair just to remind myself of what I was really doing. I had to make peace with the fact that all my hair was gone, at least for a little while. I keep the short cut for about ten months before I decided to grow it out. It

was one of the best hair decisions that I ever made.



We See You

For it to be the middle of August in Brooklyn, NY it was a surprising cool day. *AFROPUNK* was the first music festival I ever been to. I'll never forget this day because I wore the wrong shoes. I wore and off the shoulder origami sleeve top from ASOS with flare black Levi jeans and suede strappy sandals. I had moisturized my shoulders and arms with Shea butter that morning so I felt very sexy. The fragrance that I wore that day was *J'dore* by Dior, it smells sweet and mature just enough. My nails were painted a fierce sapphire hue, my brown skin really made it pop. The host said, "If you don't want to get elbowed in

the face you might want to move”. I knew then that it was about to get hectic.

Rico Nasty was the entertainer I came to see. I consider her to be the punk rap princess. You cannot help but shout and rage to her music. When she hit the stage the crowd went crazy. A crowd full of girls was ready to jump and sing along to her music with their Afrocentric fashion. I saw tones of *body modifications* like dramatic makeup, gauged ears and cool hairstyles. The festival is about visibility in a marginalized society and I felt seen amongst these people.



Queen of Queens

My first cool job was as Citi Field Stadium in Queens, New York. It used to be known as *Shea Stadium* back in the day, I couldn't tell you why they renamed it. I first became familiar with the Mets because that was one of my Dad's favorite baseball team. He was so excited when he found out I would be working there during the 2015 season.

Every day I commuted on the train from Harlem to Queens. I worked in concessions as a cashier. Our uniform were simply colors. Bottle green and white jacket with the Mets logo, green short sleeved

collar shirt with a matching green hat. We also had to wear khaki colored pants with a name tag to top it off. Since we had to wear hats, I wore my hair in chunky twist or braids.

I typically worked at the pizza stand or with the burgers and fries, we also go to eat tons of free food. Every game the line was longer than you would expect. I became an expert at ringing people up fast enough to get everyone back to their seats. I never realized how much people like and can appreciate baseball. Thousands of people came out every day to show love to their beloved Mets. Parents with their kids and couples all in Mets *artifacts*. Ringing up

hundreds of orders a day it soon became second nature to me. I even made a few friends, meeting people from all walks of life and parts of New York was amazing to me. I'll never forget my time at Citi Field, working at stadium was a fun experience from the people to the excitement of the games.

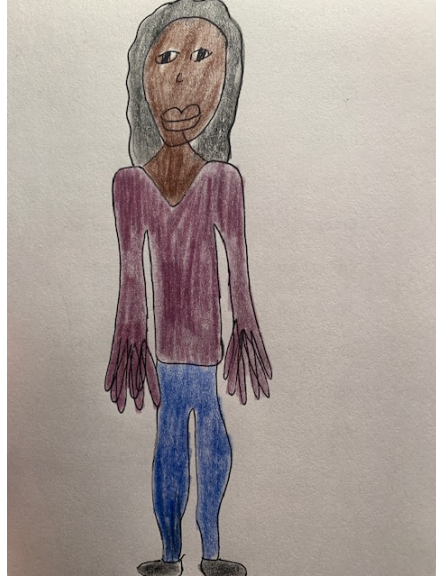


Night at the Museum

February 2016 was my first time visiting the Brooklyn Museum. It was Black History month so I was excited to see what was in store for me that night. I had met up with my friend, Natalia, who had lived in Brooklyn and wanted me to join her this evening. This was the day after I decided to start my locs, my hair was in mini twist first to begin the process. I wore this mauve colored sweater with a v neck and sleeves with distress from Urban Outfitters. During this time, the brown matte lip was a popular trend so I had that with very natural makeup, that was my signature.

When I arrived at the museum, it was packed. There were crowds of people at the Eastern Parkway entrance. It was first Saturday's at the museum so everyone was out to have a good time. Because it was Black History month, there were face painting, art drawings of people and a DJ to set the whole vibe of the night. There were *artifacts* of African Egyptian culture all around. Some of the pieces even had modifications done with gauges in their ears. This was the first time I was seeing a sarcophagus and Egyptian sculptures with the noses removed. There were even sculptures of Nefertiti, I took pride in being around all this history. Being at the

Brooklyn Museum and seeing art that was on theme for Black History month and being from Harlem, it really made me value what it means to be black.



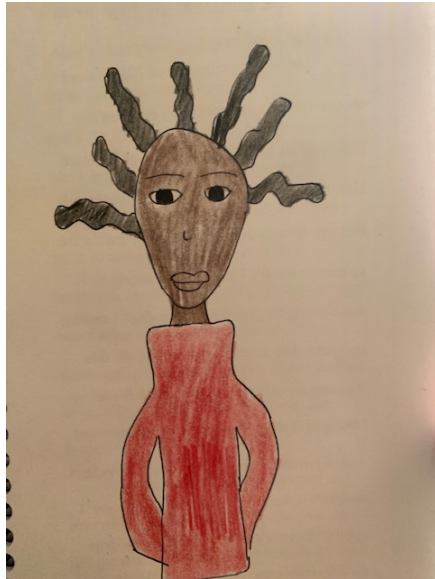
This Is for My Ancestors

During the winter of 2017 my family and I took a bus ride to the National Museum of African American History and Culture. We were only going for the day so I managed to dress warm enough considering it was the middle of March. I wore a burnt orange turtleneck that was made from the coziest wool like fabric. My jeans were *Madewell*, they were dark blue and faded at the knees with a raw hem. I always find their denim to be really good quality and hug the body well. I wore the 1460 *Doc Martens*, I knew there would be a lot of walking so I

wanted to make sure I was comfortable but stylish.

This was my first time visiting the museum so I was excited to see the history on slavery and how African Americans transitioned into being citizens in society. When we pulled up to the museum there were hundreds of people and food trucks around. After receiving our tickets, we all took a group photos. We then went into groups and headed toward the lower level of the museum where we learned about the beginning of slavery and the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. Being surrounded by the history of my people filled me with an abundance of joy and pride. The whole tour took about

four hours of walk through the exhibits. I
couldn't believe I was lucky enough to see
all the work and obstacles my ancestors had
went through just to see brighter days.



The Most Awkward Date

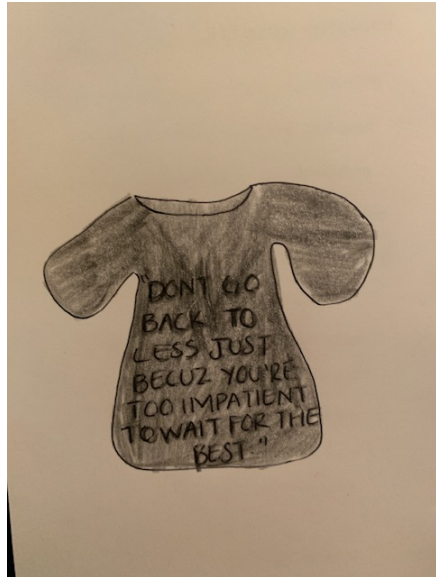
During the summer of 2015 I went on one of the most awkward dates of my young adult life. I met this guy at Webster Hall in New York City, a popular nightclub that my friends and I like to go to during the summer months. I was new to dating so I was willing to give this man a shot. Leading up to the date I wasn't nervous at all, this was just an opportunity to make a friend, so I thought. I wanted to smell good showered with a *Lavender* shower gel, shaved my legs and moisturized with *Shea butter* all over. I applied *Degree* deodorant and my favorite *Rihanna* perfume. Before I even applied my

makeup, I felt sexy and confident. Back then I didn't wear much makeup, just concealer under the eyes, mascara and a deep purple matte lip for a pop of color. I wore a graphic black long sleeve crop top that read in English, French and Japanese "Don't go back to less just because you're too impatient to wait for the best". I thought that was fitting since I just got out of a toxic relationship just a year before. I was excited to see what kind of other guys were out there.

When the date finally started, everything seemed cool. He picked me up in his car and we drove to the Lower East Side for dinner. I suggest we go to one of my

favorite restaurants, Verlaine which has a mix of Asian and French cuisine. During dinner, we talked about what we did for work and how we both ended up at the club that night. Everything was going well until he noticed I was texting on my phone then he got weirdly jealous and started asking me questions. I remember two girls sitting a few tables across from us watching uncomfortably as this guy proceeds to get suspicious and ask me who I'm texting. I ignored him and continued to text on my phone. I was nervously shaking my leg as I ate my food. My heart started beating so fast, at this point I was getting uncomfortable and wanted this date to be

over. After dinner was over he had moved in for a kiss. It was so unnatural and forced, I hated every second of it.



Caribbean Vibes

Every September in Brooklyn, New York, the locals celebrate J'ouvert, it's a street party that's the official start of the Labor Day parade. My friend Natalia who's from Trinidad but lives in Brooklyn wanted to take me around the neighborhood; seeing as that I was from Harlem and never been in that part of town. Since this took place in the early hours of the day I didn't do much to get ready. I wore a black T-shirt from Urban Outfitters, blue ripped jeans from Abercrombie & Fitch and my favorite colorful Reebok sneakers. I also had my turquoise faux leather backpack full of water, snacks and an extra shirt just in case

things messy. I knew there would be paint and oil thrown so I didn't wear any makeup and wore clothes that I didn't care if it got ruined. This was my first J'ouvert experience so I was sure to be open to everything that we came across.

When I arrived in Brooklyn there was dozens of people in the streets. I had taken the 2 train to Franklin Avenue to meet my friends. While I was waiting there were girls in shorts and bikini tops walking down the street towards the big crowd of people dancing. I soon met up with my friends and we walked for a few blocks just watch everyone take part in the festivities. After a few hours, we decided to let this man with

paint throwing it on everyone, paint us with it. I got the white paint all over my upper body and sneakers. Then we walked to get flags, I bought a Barbados flag since I have family from there; I was so proud to celebrate and feel closer to my people. The streets were full of music and conversation from everyone being in the street until the late hours. There were guys throwing paint and oil on girls while they danced to reggaeton music. Everyone was hanging a good time, it was late but we managed to make it to sunrise safely.



Welcome to Astroworld

I've been anticipating going to see Travis Scott in concert for the past three months. My friend Jessica and I bought tickets to see him live at Madison Square Garden located on 34th street in Manhattan, New York. I spent the last few weeks learning all the songs on his new album *Astroworld*. Before a concert, I like to listen to the album one last time in the shower. After I get out the shower and finish my three-step skincare routine for glowing skin, I apply my makeup. Getting ready to go out is always the favorite part of the night for me. I wore a simple all black outfit; a sheer mock neck sweater, charcoal colored flared

jeans and suede pointed toe ankle boots with a kitten heel. There's something about wearing all black that makes you feel chic and sophisticated.

A few of my favorite songs on the album are *No Bystanders* and *Wake Up*. The Houston native rapper is best known for his auto tune, musical arrangements and producing. The size of the crowd at Madison Square was monumental. There were hundreds of people at the entrance to the building by the metal detectors, some in their Travis Scott merchandise from pervious concerts. I wore a simple all black outfit; a sheer mock neck sweater, charcoal colored flared jeans and suede pointed toe

ankle boots with a kitten heel. There's something about wearing all black that makes you feel chic and on top of your shit.

When we arrived at MSG we went to the merchandise counter to buy T-shirts and walked to concessions for our drinks. I had Hennessey and coke on the rocks and Jessica had the same thing. The arenas size was beyond measure, the walls went back so far, I could barely see the other side of a room. The seats were so close together you felt like you were shoulder to shoulder with your neighbor. When Travis Scott hit the stage the crowd went wild in pandemonium. The crowd closest to the stage was the most excited, I assume those were the fans of

Travis since he came on the scene in 2015. During the entire show the crowd formed a mosh pit, guys and girls hyping each other up as Travis is on stage rapping and aping them up. Everyone's cheering and singing the words to every lyric. Lights were flashing from all cellphones in the crowd. I was in awe that I was a part of this moment in history. I was at a sold-out show at one of the most famous arenas in the world. The theatrics during the show was the best part. Since the album was named after a theme park in Texas that closed several years ago, an amusement park was the aesthetic of the stage. He even had a rollercoaster built that he took fans on for a ride; even his girlfriend

at the time, Kylie Jenner made an appearance. By the end of the night my adrenaline was to the roof and my voice was gone. I sang the words to every song while recording a few videos for my memories. That day was truly magical.



Good Vibes Only

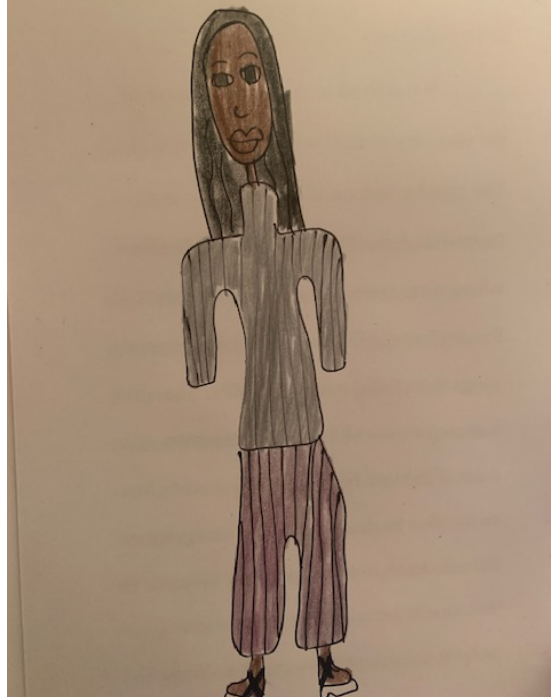
It was a rainy Sunday in October, my close friend, Jessica had invited me to her 24th birthday event that day. The theme was Mean Girls, so we all had to wear a different shade a pink. She had planned for a few of us to have brunch at Amadeus Nightclub on 7951 Albion Ave in Elmhurst, Queens. I never had brunch at a club so as I was getting ready I was playing some music just to get in a good mood.

The first thing I did was shower and my five-step skincare routine. In the shower, I applied hair remover to get my legs nice and smooth. I exfoliated with a seas salt product from Lush Cosmetics then did a

fifteen-minute facial and moisturized with Ole Henriksen products before putting on makeup. First I put on a thin layer of foundation then I begin to fill in my eyebrows with a pencil. After that I used concealer for under my eyes then used a dark brown concealer stick to contour. After my face was complete, I proceeded to get dressed. I wore a cream colored ribbed turtleneck with high-waisted, wide leg corduroy pants with lace up heels. My nails were a mauve shade of pink with white line designs and my toes were and off white. I felt good in what I was wearing. My hair was newly braided and I smelled like flowers from the scent of my favorite *Marc*

Jacobs Daisy fragrance. I felt so confident. No one can really tell you anything with a fresh manicure.

We arrived at the club the décor of the was very chic. It was open and spacious. The coaches were a lavender purple and there were beautiful chandeliers right about where were seated. It was “Good Vibes Sunday” so the DJ was playing all the good songs from today and early 2000s. The waitresses were all beautiful, they were dressed in black bodysuits with sheer tights and leather boots. The whole evening, we danced, drunk mimosas and took pictures. It was nice to get out of the Manhattan and party in a different borough for a change.



Sex Sells

The summer of 2017 was when I started my job at the Museum of Sex. It's located at 233 5th Ave, New York, NY 10016. The summers in New York City were usually muggy and gross so I looked forward to freshening up to start my day. In the mornings, I would shower with my favorite *Dove* soap, brush my teeth with baking soda and peroxide then start my three-step skincare routine. Figuring out what to wear everyday was easy. The employees were only required to wear all black. My go-to outfit was a short sleeve V-neck cotton shirt and black khaki pants. On my feet, I wore these comfortable *Nike Sock*

Dart sneakers. They had no laces and slipped on like a glove. Wearing comfortable shoes was key since I would be on my feet all day.

I have never visited the museum prior to being hired so I had no idea what to expect. We sold everything from nipple clamps and funny condoms to vibrators and massage oils. It was like a pleasure wonderland. Zendaya even stopped by to visit the *Bouncy House of Boobs* before she bought a *Free the Nipple* T-Shirt from the sex shop where I worked. Being a part of the team means you get to try products from brands like *LELO* for free so you can better educate the customers on the products.



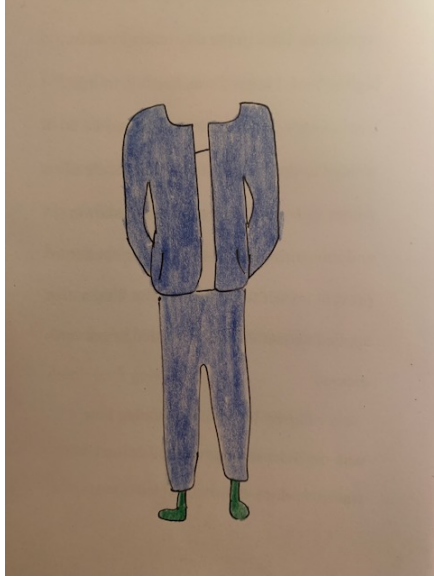
Lights, Camera, Action

The first few months into 2018 was a bit of a drag. It was the beginning of spring and I've been going through a lot of changes with weight gain and dealing with social anxiety that I wanted to restore my confidence. A friend of mine, Martial who is a photographer suggested that I take photos with him to put me in a better mood. I have never shot photos with anything other than my camera phone so I was a little hesitant on how they would turn out.

On the day of the photoshoot I wanted to keep it simply so I wore a denim on denim look. I wore a white ribbed long sleeve top and a true denim blue jeans from

ASOS. My socks were olive green and made from Supima cotton from UNIQLO. Then I tied the look together with camel colored platform sneakers from the FentyxPuma collaboration. I was in the beginning stages of growing out my hair so I coiled my strands with a coil sponge to keep my curls sprung and cute. My makeup was simply, I wore foundation and concealer with a bit of a dark brown concealer stick. I wore a brown lip pencil from Sephora and Fenty lip gloss in the color *Diamond Milk*. I loved my outfit and I felt beautiful with my short hair style. I was stepping out of my comfort zone that day.

Finding a great location was key to having cool street style clothing. Martial and I took the train to Canal St then walked around until we found a neutral spot. We took photos in two locations; one near an alley where there was a bunch of brick walls and in Chinatown. For just a day I felt like a fashion blogger from social media. The photos turned out good considering I never spent time in front of the camera.



New Year's Eve 2017

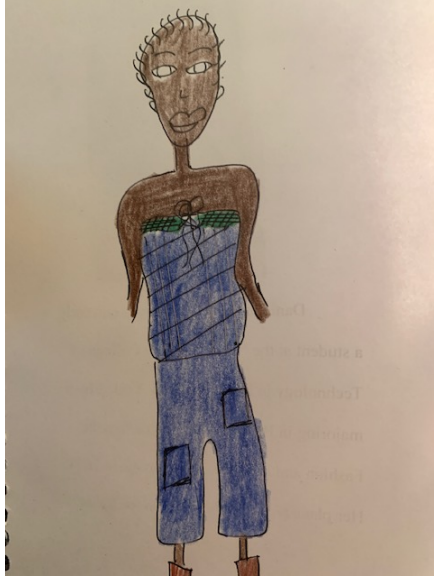
As a young adult, I never really spent time with extended family during the holidays. Stuff like that my parents would orchestrate back in the day when I was in high school. I knew I was heading to my Uncle Dee's house in New Jersey so I wanted to dress cozy. It was the middle of winter so I went in a steaming hot shower and moisturized my skin with Shea butter to prevent myself from getting ashy. I then applied deodorant and proceeded to get dressed.

I knew I would be spending time with my older siblings and cousins so I wanted to dress stylish. I wanted to wear

something different so I took a green and navy blue flannel and buttoned and tied the sleeves in front so I can wear the shirt as a sleeveless top. I paired that top with light blue denim jeans with patch work on it from Urban Outfitters. Since I knew I was going to be in the house I wore wool Timberland socks and my short chocolate brown UGGS. My makeup was a bit done up since it was New Year's Eve. I wore a smoky eye look with a bold red lip in the color *New Americana*. You couldn't tell me like I didn't look good.

It was fun hanging out with that side of the family. I talked to my sisters and cousins while a few other people were

playing card games. My sister Erica and I had taken a few shots of Tequila just to warm up and feel nice. The night ended in laughter, food and alcohol. This was the beginning to many more quality time sessions with that part of the family. Since then we've been getting together to spend more time with each other around the holidays.



About the Author

Danielle Daniel-Ramsey is currently a student at the New York City College of Technology in Brooklyn, New York. She is majoring in Business and Technology in Fashion and is on track to graduate in 2021. Her plans are to graduate and work for an

advertising agency. Danielle lives in central Harlem in Manhattan, New York. She hopes to start a fashion blog someday that can inspire other young people to create on a platform that can help them manifest their dreams. In her spare time, she likes to visit museums, go to yoga class, music festivals and streaming good movies on Netflix.