

*Dominique's  
Dress  
Diaries*



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Dominique Whelan

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## Prologue

In the intricate times of our lives, there are threads woven with memories, emotions, and experiences. For me, dresses have been more than mere garments; they have been vessels of self-expression, catalysts for transformation, and mirrors reflecting the chapters of my journey. This book is a celebration of those dresses and the profound impact they have had on my life, from the innocence of childhood to the complexities of adulthood. As I reflect on the 15 dresses chosen for this book, each one represents a milestone, a memory, or a moment of significance. From the whimsical sundress I wore as a little girl, twirling carefree in the backyard, to the elegant gown that adorned me on my prom day, these dresses have been witnesses to my growth, my joys, and my sorrows.

Through the pages of this book, I invite you to embark on a journey with me—a journey through the transformative power of dresses. Together, we will explore the emotions evoked by each garment, the personal milestones they symbolize, and the lessons learned along the way. From the innocence of youth to the wisdom of adulthood, these dresses have been my companions, my confidants, and my storytellers. As we delve into the narratives of these 15 dresses, my hope is that you, dear reader, will find echoes of your own experiences within these pages. May you be inspired to embrace the beauty of self-expression, cherish the memories woven into the fabric of your own life, and celebrate the transformative power of the garments we wear. This is not just a book about dresses; it is a testament to the resilience of the enduring power of personal style that shapes our lives. Welcome to my dress diaries.

*Dominique Whelan*

## Foreward

My name is Maria Giarraffa, as a close friend of Dominique, I've had the privilege of witnessing her journey with dresses unfold over the years. From childhood memories to pivotal moments in adulthood, each dress has played a significant role in shaping her identity and story. Having had the opportunity to read her dress diary book, I've gained deeper insight into the profound impact that these garments have had on her life.

Through the pages of this book, I've come to understand the emotional depth and personal significance that each dress holds for Dominique. From the innocence and wonder of her early years, where dresses were symbols of imagination and play, to the moments of empowerment and self-discovery in her adult life, where dresses became expressions of confidence and identity, Dominique has navigated life's journey with grace and her dresses served as faithful companions along the way. What struck me most about Dominique's dress diaries is the raw honesty and vulnerability with which she shares her experiences. Her words resonate with authenticity, inviting readers into her world and inviting them to reflect on their relationships with clothing and self-expression. As Dominique invites us to explore the emotions, memories, and personal transformations woven into each dress, we are reminded of the power of fashion to transcend mere aesthetics and become a reflection of our innermost selves.

Ultimately, Dominique's dress diary book is not just a collection of stories; it is a diary of the resilience of a woman and the enduring power of personal style in dresses. Through her journey, we are reminded that clothing is not just something we wear; it is a form of self-expression, a means of storytelling, and a source of empowerment. I am honored to have been a part of Dominique's dress journey and am confident that her book will inspire readers to embrace the beauty of self-expression and celebrate the transformative power of the garments we wear.

*Maria Giarraffa*

## Acknowledgments

As Dominique reflects on the completion of this dress diary book, she is deeply grateful for the many individuals who have contributed to its creation and her journey. First and foremost, Dominique extends her heartfelt thanks to her family for their support and presence throughout these chapters. Their love and belief in her dreams have been a constant source of inspiration. Dominique is also thankful to her friends, whose presence and companionship have brought joy and laughter to her life. Their insights and perspectives have imprinted the pages of this book and made the journey all the more meaningful. Additionally, Dominique acknowledges the influence of society, including social media and celebrities, on her choices and experiences with each of the 15 dresses discussed in this book. From trends to cultural shifts, these external factors have played a role in shaping her relationship with fashion and self-expression. Lastly, Dominique expresses her deepest gratitude to the readers who embark on this journey with her. Your support and encouragement mean the world, and she hopes that her dress diaries resonate with you as much as they have with her. In closing, Dominique wants to convey her profound appreciation for every individual who has played a part in this project. Your contributions have not gone unnoticed, and she is forever grateful for your presence in her life.

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## Chapter One

### *Gingham*

I grew up in Gravesend, Brooklyn, New York, living in a house that we rented, by my aunt and parents in 1998. My Aunt Juli had the top floor with her dog, Ashley, and my parents, brother, and our dog, Bambu, and I had the first floor and basement. We also had a split backyard together, given we were family, and we had a pool and garage, giving my brother and me plenty of room to play indoors and out. My mother's name is Francesca and her birthday falls on July 4th, a date synonymous with celebration across America, as it marks the nation's birthday. I remember we always had parties in our backyard, however, birthdays were always extra special. I recall it being my mother's birthday, and my family always tricked me into believing the fireworks were from Macy's and all around were for my mom's big birthday party. I wore this dress to my mother's birthday celebration.

The charming *red* and *white* square neck gingham short cotton dress that I wore exudes youthful playfulness. The bold contrast of the red and white squares creates a striking visual pattern, with the gingham in different sizes. The delicate ruffles *adorned* the edges of the dress at my knees, giving a whimsical flow to it. The bows *adorning* the tank top straps add a sweet and dainty detail, enhancing the overall charm of my childhood dress. At the center chest, a small rose embellishment adds a delightful flourish, serving as a focal point of the dress. With its balanced *volume* and *proportions*, the dress draped beautifully on me, accentuating my innocence and grace. The soft cotton *texture* ensured comfort for my delicate skin at the age of four. There was an absence, from what I could recall, of no *odor* or *taste*, highlighting the purity of the cotton fabric. Overall, this dress not only was delightful to the eyes but also embodied the joy and innocence of my childhood.

The ruffles delicately *enclosed* the edges of the dress, adding a playful flair and softening the *silhouette* against my body. With bows *adorning* the tank top straps, the dress offered a subtle *adherence* to my shoulders, enhancing both comfort and child style. The small rose at the center chest served as a gentle attachment to my dress, drawing attention to its intricate detail. Its fit was tailored to complement my childhood era, ensuring both freedom of movement with a flattering look. Overall, this dress is not just a piece of clothing but a tailored *adornment* that gracefully embraces the first memory I recall of choosing a dress to wear myself.

This red and white square neck gingham dress evokes a flood of nostalgic emotions, reminiscent of the first time I had the joy of picking out my outfit as a child. The sight of the playful ruffles adorning the edges and the airy bows on the tank top straps fills my heart with warmth, transporting me back to that innocent time of exploration and self-discovery. The small rose at the center chest serves as a cherished reminder of the excitement I felt when selecting such a special garment. Its vibrant colors and sweet details symbolize the carefree happiness of childhood, leaving an incredible mark on my memory. As I reminisce about this dress, I am filled with a profound sense of closeness and nostalgia, reflecting on the simple joys of youth and the cherished moments spent in playful innocence.





## Chapter Two

### *Ruffles*

My uncle's wedding was a milestone for me, considering it was my first time visiting my dad's home country, Ireland. I was about five years old during this time it was the year of 2003, and I remember all I wanted was to wear a pink dress. My mom and I went shopping in Macy's at Kings Plaza Mall in Brooklyn, New York, and picked out this baby pink dress for the wedding. I had a pink bag with a purple butterfly on it already at home that I was planning to wear with the dress. I was super excited to show off in a bright, pale pink dress at a family party. On the day of the wedding, my mother dressed me in a pink dress, a pink/purple butterfly bag, white stockings, and small, strapped, chunky heels.

The mauve pink dress gracefully went past my knees, exuding an aura of youth and elegance, perfectly suiting attending a family wedding. Its delicate ruffled edges added a touch of whimsiness, while the tank top straps provided a sense of simplicity and comfort. With the cinched waist, the dress accentuates the natural curves of the body, creating a charming *silhouette*. The soft *texture* of the cotton fabric draped gently against my skin, inviting touch and admiration. Its subtle mauve hue evoked a sense of romance, complementing the joyous atmosphere of the occasion. As the dress rustles softly with movement, it emits a subtle sound of celebration, adding to the enchantment of the moment. Overall, this dress embodied both beauty and innocence, capturing the essence of childhood charmingly and elegantly.

The mauve pink dress, crafted from *soft cotton* fabric, flowed gracefully past my knees, appropriate for attending a family wedding. Its ruffled edges and tank top straps released a charming innocence, while the cinched waist added a touch of sophistication. As the dress draped delicately against my body, it provided both freedom of movement and a flattering feeling, ensuring comfort throughout the wedding and party. My mom paired it with a pink bag featuring a single large pocket flap enclosure *adorned* with a purple butterfly, creating a whimsical touch. My bag's *attachment* to my body offered practicality while maintaining the overall elegance of my childhood dress. Together, my dress and bag created a delightful ensemble that captured the joyous spirit of the occasion while showcasing my youthful sunniness.

My mauve pink dress, with its ruffled edges, cinched waist, and charming tank top ruffled straps, instantly transports me back to a cherished memory of my childhood in Ireland. It was my first family wedding abroad, and I remember feeling a mix of excitement and nervousness as I carefully selected this dress to wear. The soft cotton fabric draped elegantly past my knees, making me feel like a princess as I twirled around in front of the mirror. Paired with the pink bag featuring a purple butterfly, it was the perfect accessory to hold my little treasures throughout the day. As I reminisce about that special occasion, I am flooded with a sense of coziness, recalling the laughter, love, and joy that filled the air on that magical day. This dress holds a dear place in my heart, symbolizing not just a moment in time, but a cherished chapter of my childhood filled with love and unforgettable memories.



## Chapter Three

### *Velour*

Christmas was always a special time for my family. Given we are of Italian and Irish descent, and come from a Roman Catholic family, Christmas meant something celebratory. During this year, I remember begging my parents to wear a Mrs. Claus outfit. We bought the dress from Kohl's, at Caesar's Bay in Brooklyn, New York. I was eager to wear this dress because we were visiting Ireland again with family, the year was 2006. I paired this dress with a Santa Claus hat as well, adding to the Christmas spirit. My favorite time of the year, besides summer, is Christmas. The feeling of joy throughout families is a beautiful memory to have growing up.

The girls' Santa Claus dress my parents bought for me at Kohl's was a true delight, capturing the essence of the holiday season with its vibrant colors and festive *design*. The bold *red* velour dress, with its straight *silhouette* and long sleeves, gives a sense of cheer. The velour white shoulder coverage adds a touch of elegance, reminiscent of Santa's iconic suit, while the shoulders flap over gracefully, lending a playful flair to the ensemble. *Adorned* with a silver bedazzled brooch, the dress sparkled with festive charm, reflecting the joy and magic of the Christmas season. Its *soft* velour *texture* invited *touch*, evoking a sense of warmth and comfort in my body. As the fabric rustled softly with movement, it emitted a subtle *sound* of holiday merriment, filling the air with anticipation and excitement. Overall, this Santa Claus dress was a delightful celebration of the holiday spirit, embodying the magic and wonder of Christmas for girls like me to enjoy forever.

My Santa Claus dress enveloped a festivity of charm, with its velour *white* collar and shoulders cascading over into a straight, long-sleeved red velour dress. The collar delicately encircled my neck, offering a snug fit, draping over my shoulders. As the shoulders of the dress flapped gently over my arms, they created a playful *silhouette* that mirrors Santa's iconic coat. *Adhered* with care, a shimmering silver bedazzled brooch *adorned* the dress, while it caught the light adding a sparkling accent to my attire. Added on top of my head was a velour, *white*, and *red* Santa Claus hat, that tied the entire outfit together in its entirety. The dress fits my slim frame flawlessly, with the velour fabric draping softly against my skin, ensuring both comfort and style. Overall, this Santa Claus dress captivated the holiday season purely with purpose.

My Santa Claus dress, adorned with a velour white collar and shoulders gracefully cascaded into a straight, long-sleeved red velour dress, holds a profound emotional attachment tied to my earliest memories of holiday festivities. I recall the excitement and anticipation bubbling within me as I slipped into this attire for the first time. The soft touch of the velour fabric against my skin, coupled with the elegant collar framing my face, instantly transported me into the magical world of Santa Claus and his joyful celebrations. The silver bedazzled brooch shimmered with every movement, adding a touch of sparkle to the cherished ensemble. Wearing this dress filled me with an overwhelming sense of holiday cheer and wonder, igniting a lifelong love for the festive season and its cherished traditions. Even now, reminiscing about that

magical moment fills my heart with happiness, reminding me of the pure joy and innocence of childhood.



## Chapter Four

### *Gems*

In high school, I attended the Mother-Daughter fashion show my high school held. I was super excited for this show to celebrate my mom and me having an amazing relationship, but I was also super thrilled to be a part of the fashion show. My high school partnered with nearby boutiques to make this show happen, allowing students to borrow dresses to wear in the fashion show. It was a wonderful day for mothers and daughters to come together and celebrate womanhood. The fashion show was held in May, around Mother's Day.

The dress I chose was from the brand *Jovani*. I remember feeling like a million bucks wearing a *Jovani* dress. My stunning two-piece *Jovani* dress represented sophistication with its sleek all-black design contrasted by vibrant, colorful gems *adorning* the neckline. The lace top half adds a touch of elegance and allure, delicately accentuating my neckline and shoulders. Transitioning seamlessly, the satin bottom half cascades gracefully, enhancing the silhouette with its luxurious sheen and fluid movement. The combination of textures created a mesmerizing visual appeal, while the playful pop of colors on the neckline added a delightful contrast against the classic black backdrop. This dress was a perfect representation of timeless glamour, making it a standout choice for any special occasion, especially a mother-daughter fashion show.

The stunning two-piece *Jovani* I wore showcases a mesmerizing blend of *body enhancements* and exceptional design features. *Adorned* with vibrant gems meticulously *attached* along the neckline, each gem sparkles like a constellation against the dress's deep *black* backdrop. The lace upper section, delicately *adhered* to my body form, elegantly enveloped my torso with its intricate motifs, adding to its allure. The *proportion* of the dress was a fitted silhouette that extended out into a mermaid train in the lower half. The satin lower half *suspended* effortlessly, and its graceful flow enhanced by body modifications ensured a captivating movement. Representing a seamless fusion of innovative body *adornments* and haute couture craftsmanship by *Jovani*, my dress captivated its enchanting beauty and avant-garde sophistication.

My black *Jovani* dress holds a profound emotional significance for me, resonating deeply with the cherished memories of a mother-daughter fashion show. As I slipped into its sleek *silhouette*, I felt a surge of confidence and connection, knowing that it symbolized not just style but also a bond between generations. Every seam, every stitch seemed to echo the moments we shared, from the laughter backstage to the proud smiles as we strutted down the runway together. The dress became more than just fabric; it embodied the love, support, and shared dreams that united us. Wearing it felt like enveloping myself in a cocoon of familial warmth and empowerment, and its memory continues to evoke a sense of nostalgia and joy, reminding me of the timeless bond between a mother and her daughter.





## Chapter Five

### *Rhinestones*

High school prom is a memory that will always stay with me. I went to an all-girls Catholic school, so prom was taken seriously throughout the entire school. The girls in my grade made an Instagram page, posting everyone's dresses for prom, in case anyone had the same one. When prom dress shopping came around, I always wanted a dress that stood out from the rest. Prom dress shopping wasn't as easy as it seems, especially when you're 5'11 as a woman, the tall section of dresses becomes your best friend!

My *Sherri Hill* prom dress for high school prom embodied sheer elegance and luxury, blending contrasting *black and white* tones to craft a visually striking piece. Embellished with dazzling rhinestones *adorning* both sides, the gown exudes glamour at every turn. Enhanced by a low-cut open back, it exudes allure and intrigue, perfectly harmonizing with its impeccably tailored form that hugged my body flawlessly. The careful craftsmanship ensures a seamless and flattering fit, accentuating curves and captivating attention with its mesmerizing *silhouette*. With its timeless design and attention to detail, this *Sherri Hill* creation poised an unforgettable impression at my prom, exuding confidence and style with each graceful movement I took.

My *Sherri Hill* high school prom dress embodied a captivating fusion of body modifications, seamlessly blending contrasting *white and black hues* to sculpt a mesmerizing *silhouette*. *Adorned* with radiant rhinestones meticulously *adhered* along both sides, the gown sparkled with glam. Each gem was *suspended* like stars against my body. The low open back, carefully *wrapped* around my body frame, added a captivating touch. It perfectly enhanced my *silhouette's proportions and structure*. Impeccably designed, the dress hugged my body flawlessly, its *silhouette* sculpted to perfection, while the intricate *texture* of the fabric added *shape* and dimension. My *Sherri Hill* prom dress created a memorable statement at my high school prom, radiating confidence and style with every step I took.

The emotional attachment to my white and black *Sherri Hill* high school prom dress runs deep, intertwining with the cherished memories of that special night. Every time I see it, I'm transported back to the dance floor, where its flawless silhouette hugged my body with grace and confidence. The rhinestones along both sides shimmered like stars, reflecting the excitement and anticipation that filled the air. The low open back added a touch of femininity, mirroring the exhilaration of my womanhood. Wearing it felt like stepping into a fairytale, where every moment was painted with magic and possibility. This dress not only symbolizes a night of celebration and joy but also serves as a vital reminder of the friends and memories made, encapsulating the essence of my youth at 18 years old.





## Chapter Six

### *Kaleidoscope of Color*

When I was 17, I went to the Dominican Republic on vacation. This trip was my first tropical vacation by myself with my friends. I loved dressing in stand-out pieces with multiple colors. Before the vacation, my friend and I went shopping in the Hamptons, where her family had a vacation house. We went into a small boutique on our shopping spree, and I found this gorgeous, colorful dress that screamed my style. Although it was on the pricier side, I knew this dress would last me for years and never go out of style.

My vibrant maxi dress translated memories of blissful days spent on a tropical vacation in the Dominican Republic. Its kaleidoscope of colors, reminiscent of a sunset over the ocean, instantly brightened up the island's atmosphere. The halter neck, fashioned like a twisted rope, added a touch of chic charm, echoing the nearby swaying palm trees and the gentle lapping of waves against the shore. It flowed effortlessly with each step, capturing the essence of relaxation and freedom, mirroring the carefree spirit of the vacation. From exploring the beautiful resort to lounging by the crystal-clear waters, my colorful maxi became a symbol of adventure and indulgence, leaving a lasting impression of paradise.

My colorful maxi dress, with a rope-style halter neck, exuded tropical charm through a harmonious blend of *body modifications*. Adorned with a spectrum of colors reminiscent of exotic flora, the dress captivates with its flowing *silhouette* and intricate *texture*. The rope halter neck, expertly *wrapped* around my shoulders and neckline, evokes a sense of delicate elegance, perfectly complementing my body form. *Suspended* effortlessly, the dress accentuates the *proportions and structure* of my body, enhancing my natural curves with each movement. Its vibrant *colors* mirror the vibrant surroundings of lush jungles and blue waters, while the rope detail adds a touch of whims, capturing the essence of an island paradise with every sway.

My emotional connection to my colorful maxi dress with its rope-style halter neck is deeply rooted in the cherished memories of my tropical vacation. Whenever I look at it, I'm instantly transported back to the sun-kissed beaches, where its bold colors reflect the array of emotions I felt. The gentle movement of the dress as I swayed echoed the whimsical ambiance of those carefree days, while the rope halter neck embodied the resilience and strength I discovered amidst the palm trees. Wearing the dress felt like enveloping myself in a piece of my special vacation—a tangible reminder of laughter, adventure, and utter happiness. It's more than just a dress; it's a conduit for nostalgia, encapsulating the essence of those unforgettable moments and preserving them as precious memories to be forever cherished.



## Chapter Seven

### *Floral*

On my 18th birthday, I went out with my friends to Sugar Factory for the first time. My 18th birthday was very special to me because it was my first year as a college student. I remember going shopping for my outfit, wanting to match the color scheme of Sugar Factory, following a colorful candy theme. I went to the Kings Plaza Shopping Mall in Brooklyn, New York, in search of something that jumped at me to fit my birthday theme. Forever 21 was always a decent store to find colorful dresses, and luckily that's where I found mine!

The white dress I wore for my 18th birthday at the Sugar Factory Restaurant in NYC was a vision of elegance mixed with playfulness. *Adorned* with floral patterns of *pink, green, and orange hues* scattered throughout, it released a sense of joy and celebration for my birthday. My sweetheart-shaped chest was accentuated by an underwired V-neck nestled between my cleavage area, adding a touch of enticement, given it was my 18th birthday. Delicately attached with spaghetti straps on my shoulders, the dress offered both support and grace. The peplum fit at my waist extended outward, enhancing the *silhouette*. As I danced and celebrated amidst the thrilling atmosphere of the restaurant, this dress became more than just attire—it became a symbol of newfound adulthood and the beginning of a memorable chapter in my life, 18.

The white dress I chose for my 18th birthday celebration at the Sugar Factory Restaurant in NYC embodied a captivating blend of body modifications and vibrant design elements. *Adorned* with vibrant floral patterns scattered throughout, it radiated youthful exuberance and charm. The sweetheart-shaped chest, expertly *inserted* with underwired V-neck detailing fell between my cleavage. *Suspended* delicately by spaghetti straps on the shoulders, the dress maintained its *silhouette* with poise. Its peplum fit at the waist, *structured* to extenuate outward, created a captivating *silhouette* that accentuated *proportions* with playful flair. As I celebrated my birthday festivities of the night, this dress not only *shaped* my figure but also embodied the essence of joy and celebration.

The bond I share with the white dress I chose for my 18th birthday celebration at the Sugar Factory Restaurant in NYC is profound, intertwined with the cherished memories of an unforgettable event. Each intricate detail, from the vibrant floral patterns adorning the fabric to the sweetheart-shaped chest featuring its underwired V-neck, holds a special significance, evoking moments of joy and importance. Although I don't have the dress anymore I remember the rush of excitement and anticipation as the spaghetti straps gently embraced my shoulders and the peplum fit highlighted my waist. As the night went on, filled with laughter and surrounded by loved ones and friends, the dress transcended its role as mere attire, becoming a tangible representation of the milestone occasion—a reminder of the happiness and a treasured memory that will be with me forever.





## Chapter Eight

### *Bandage*

My 20th birthday came around before I knew it. At this time, I was working in fashion retail for two years. My style became more important to me when it came to special events. My close friends planned for us to see Nicki Minaj at a club in Manhattan. My friend had a bandage hot pink Bebe dress in her closet that she gave me to borrow since I loved the color and feel of it on my skin. Bandage dresses hug the body and emphasize curves. I loved this dress for many reasons, the color, the fit, and the double strap that allowed collarbone exposure.

In my hot pink bandage Bebe dress, symbolizing friendship and style, I celebrated my 20th birthday in the heart of Manhattan. With its captivating gold zipper running down the middle, the dress shimmered under the city lights as I made my way to the club to see Nicki Minaj perform. The delicate spaghetti straps crisscrossed over my shoulders and across my chest area, added an air of elegance to the evening. Amidst the vibrant energy of the city, the dress hugged my curves in all the right places, exuding confidence and sophistication as I danced the night away. It was a memorable birthday celebration, marked by friendship, fashion, and unforgettable moments.

*Wrapped* in my borrowed *hot pink* bandage Bebe dress, I felt a sense of excitement as I prepared for my 20th birthday celebration in Manhattan. The *pre-shaped silhouette* hugged my curves with precision, its *structure* enhancing my *proportions* and adding *volume* to my frame. Delicate spaghetti straps, meticulously *inserted*, crisscrossed over my shoulders and across the chest area, providing both support and style. The *gold* zipper running down the middle *adhered* seamlessly to the fabric, adding a touch of glamour to the ensemble. Amidst the pulsating music of the club, the dress exuded *texture* and sophistication, embodying the perfect balance of *shape* and *structure* as I danced the night away to Nicki Minaj.

Wearing the hot pink bandage Bebe dress borrowed from a dear friend for my 20th birthday in Manhattan created an emotional attachment I'll cherish forever. As I slipped into its vibrant embrace, I felt a surge of excitement and gratitude for the special moment it represented. The gold zipper running down the middle and delicate spaghetti straps became more than just embellishments; they were symbols of friendship and shared memories. With each step taken toward the club to see Nicki Minaj perform, the dress became a tangible reminder of the love and support surrounding me on this milestone occasion. Its presence that night not only enhanced my confidence but also etched a lasting memory of joy and celebration in my heart.





## Chapter Nine

### *Floral Pt. 2*

My best friend traveled abroad to Florence, Italy during the spring semester of 2019. During this time, I took advantage of going and visiting her, along with booking Greece afterward. Before this trip, I knew I wanted to buy new clothes. One item that I remember getting was a long blue maxi dress with white flowers and green stems throughout. The reason this dress resonates with me is because of the back, it had multiple straps running across, which made it different to me.

*Adorned* in a strapless *light blue* dress with delicate straps cascading along the back, I felt the essence of summer elegance as I strolled through the picturesque streets of Ios, Greece, on my vacation trip. The dress, adorned with whimsical floral and bird designs, mirrored the beauty of the island's lush landscapes and blue skies, creating a harmonious connection with my surroundings. Crafted from a light, airy material, it fluttered gracefully in the gentle Mediterranean breeze, keeping me cool and comfortable under the sun's warm embrace. With a subtle leg slit adding a touch of allure, I moved with effortless grace, feeling as though I was dancing amidst the enchanting beauty of the Greek Isles. This dress became more than just a garment; it became a cherished memory of idyllic days spent exploring the timeless charm of Ios.

*Wrapped* in my strapless light blue dress *adorned* with whimsical floral and bird designs, I felt a moment of timeless beauty during my vacation trip to Ios, Greece. The *pre-shaped silhouette* hugged my figure with impeccable *proportion*, accentuating my *shape* with effortless grace. Straps ran across my back and were *clipped* on both ends, providing both *structure* and style to the ensemble, and adding a touch of essence to the light material that draped softly around me. As I explored the enchanting streets of Ios, the dress's airy *texture* fluttered gently, creating a sense of *volume* and movement with each step. With a subtle leg slit revealing just a hint of skin, the dress exuded an air of sophistication, mirroring the captivating charm of the Greek island paradise.

My emotional attachment to the strapless light blue dress I wore on my vacation trip to Ios, Greece, runs deep, as it represents not just a garment, but a cherished memory of a special time. Adorned with delicate floral and bird designs, it captured the essence of the island's natural beauty, intertwining with my sense of joy and wonder. As I explored the enchanting streets and breathtaking vistas of Ios, the dress became a part of me, a tangible reminder of the unforgettable experiences and adventures shared. Its light material and subtle leg slit symbolized freedom and spontaneity, allowing me to embrace every moment with grace and elegance. Wearing this dress, I felt not only beautiful but also deeply connected to the magical spirit of Greece, making it a treasured keepsake imbued with sentimental value.







## Chapter Ten

### *White Bodysuit*

When I visited Greece, I felt like I was in a dream by the beauty around me. Before traveling, I usually buy specific pieces to wear in a specific place that will create a memory for me. Before traveling to Greece, I placed an entire Shein order online that was made up of many outfits I was planning to wear on my trip. One specific dress in that order was a white bodysuit dress that had a sheer overlay. This dress meant complete grace to me and offered a meaning of freedom.

Adorned in a white maxi dress crafted from sheer, mesh material, I embraced the effortless elegance of Santorini, Greece, during my vacation. The dress, with its attached white bodysuit underneath, provided both comfort and style as I explored the picturesque island. Its flattering v-neckline accentuated my silhouette, adding a touch of sophistication to my seaside adventures. With delicate crisscross straps adorning the back, the dress exuded a sense of romance and charm, mirroring the enchanting beauty of the Aegean Sea. Wearing this ethereal ensemble amidst Santorini's breathtaking vistas, I felt like a vision of timeless beauty, creating cherished memories that will last a lifetime.

*Wrapped* in the ethereal beauty of a white maxi dress, crafted from sheer, mesh material, I felt a moment of timeless elegance. The dress's *attached white* bodysuit underneath *adhered* seamlessly, ensuring both comfort and confidence as I moved. With a flattering v-neckline, the dress accentuated my shape with perfect *proportion*, creating a *silhouette* that exuded grace. Delicate crisscross straps ran along the back adding structural detail, enhancing the dress's enchanting charm. Amidst the gentle breeze of Santorini, Greece, the dress's airy *texture* fluttered softly, creating a sense of *volume* and movement with every step.

My emotional attachment to my white maxi dress with its sheer, mesh material and attached white bodysuit underneath runs deep, woven with memories of enchanting moments and cherished experiences. Each delicate crisscross strap adorning the back represents not just a design detail but a connection to the elegance and beauty of Santorini, Greece, where I wore it. The dress's allure and graceful fit evoked feelings of confidence, freedom, and joy, encapsulating the essence of my vacation in its fabric. As I reminisce about the breathtaking views and seaside adventures, the dress becomes more than just a garment; it becomes a symbol of the memories and emotions woven into its very threads. Its presence in my wardrobe serves as a tangible reminder of the happiness and enchantment I experienced while wearing it, making it a cherished keepsake imbued with sentimental value.



## Chapter Eleven

### *Blue Haven*

After I got back from my vacation in Italy and Greece, my 21st birthday was coming that week. I wanted to wear a dress that reminded me of my vacation. I went shopping with a few friends in Soho, hoping to find a dress in person. I, unfortunately, had no luck in the stores finding the exact dress I was hoping for. I wasn't always a huge fan of ordering online due to my height, I always felt nothing would fit me perfectly. My friends at the time always ordered from Fashion Nova and told me to give it a shot, after I received my shipment and was more than happy. The dress I chose was a baby blue v-neck ruched mini dress.

Dressed in my baby blue v-neck ruched mini dress, I felt the embodiment of elegance and growth as I celebrated my 21st birthday in Manhattan. The delicate hue of the dress radiated a sense of youth and growth, perfectly complementing the excitement of the occasion. Its figure-flattering ruched detailing accentuated my curves along with the v-neckline. Paired with heels and statement jewelry, the dress effortlessly transitioned from a celebratory dinner to a night out at a glamorous nightclub, ensuring all eyes were on me as I danced the night away in style. With each step taken through the bustling streets of the city, the dress became more than just an outfit; it became a symbol of the unforgettable memories created on this milestone birthday celebration.

Dressed in my *baby blue* v-neck ruched mini dress, I felt a moment of pure joy as I celebrated my 21st birthday in Manhattan. The *silhouette* accentuated my curves with perfect *proportion*, while the delicate ruched detailing added *texture* to the fabric. With each step taken through the West Village in Manhattan, the dress exuded confidence, its *structure* enhancing my confidence for the evening ahead. Paired with heels and statement jewelry, the dress seamlessly transitioned from a celebratory dinner to a night out at a glamorous nightclub remembering the night forever. My dress will always be special to me for allowing me to feel confident throughout my special evening.

My baby blue v-neck ruched mini dress I wore for my 21st birthday in Manhattan holds a special place in my heart, entwined with the cherished memories of that milestone celebration. Each delicate ruched detail and the gentle hue of the dress evoke a sense of nostalgia, transporting me back to the excitement and anticipation of that unforgettable night. From the intimate dinner to the vibrant nightclub, the dress became more than just an outfit; it symbolized confidence and empowerment, embracing me with its graceful silhouette. As I danced into the night surrounded by laughter and love, the dress served as a tangible reminder of the bonds and joy shared with friends. Even now, seeing the dress hanging in my closet brings back the warmth and happiness of that memorable evening.





## Chapter Twelve

### *Flannel*

My height all my life has played a big part in the way I dress. I never was comfortable in a normal mini dress off of a rack, I always would buy clothing in the “tall” category. I went on vacation to Ireland, England, and Germany in September and went shopping for a few items beforehand. I went to Soho to go boutique shopping and found this flannel dress in Necessary Clothing. I remember this dress so well because this was one of the first mini-dresses I bought straight from the rack. It was a red, white, and black flannel dress that I paired with a snake-print belt and tall black boots.

Draped in my long-sleeved flannel mini dress adorned with bold red, white, and black patterns, I embarked on an adventure during my vacation in Germany. The dress's flowing silhouette captured softness mirroring the picturesque landscapes and vibrant energy of the beautiful country. Paired with a sleek black snakeskin belt cinched around my waist, the dress exuded a touch of urban chic. Completing the look were tall black boots, adding a hint of edge and practicality as I explored the charming streets and historic landmarks of Germany. Wearing this dress, I felt effortlessly stylish and ready to embrace every moment of my European getaway with flair and confidence.

*Wrapped* in my flannel flowy mini dress adorned with vibrant *red, white, and black* patterns, I embraced the spirited energy of Germany during my vacation. The dress's flowing *silhouette* provided ample *volume* and *shape*, allowing me to move with ease and grace as I explored the charming streets. With a sleek black snakeskin belt *inserted* around my waist, the dress achieved perfect *proportion* and *structure*, enhancing my *silhouette* with a touch of urban chic. Completing the look were tall black boots, their sturdy *structure* and *texture* adding both style and practicality to my dress. Wearing this outfit, I felt both stylishly adorned and comfortably equipped to immerse myself fully in the wonders of my European adventure.

My emotional attachment to my flannel mini dress colored in vibrant shades of red, white, and black, paired with a sleek black snakeskin belt and tall black boots, deepens with each memory of my vacation in Germany. This dress became more than just clothing; it embodied the essence of my journey, reflecting the spirited adventures and cultural experiences I encountered. From strolling through historic cobblestone streets to exploring green landscapes, the dress served as a faithful companion, adapting effortlessly to every moment and mood. Its comforting texture and familiar silhouette became a source of reassurance amidst the unfamiliarity of travel, grounding me in a sense of confidence and self-expression. Even now, reminiscing about the sights and sounds of Germany, the dress remains a cherished keepsake, symbolizing the joy and discovery found in every corner of the world.





## Chapter Thirteen

### *Satin*

My cousin moved to New York City from Ireland and got engaged. When they were planning their wedding, they wanted something small with only close family and friends. Since the wedding was during summer, I wanted to go with a lightweight dress. The dress I chose was a champagne satin long-sleeve mini dress. The dress felt and fit like a glove, allowing me to feel free but also secure at all times.

Dressed in my champagne satin long-sleeve mini dress, adorned with a flattering v-neckline that hugged my body, I radiated elegance at my cousin's wedding in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, New York. The lustrous sheen of the fabric added a touch of opulence to the occasion, while the sleek silhouette of satin along my body. As I mingled with family and friends amidst the setting, the dress became a symbol of celebration and joy, reflecting the love and warmth of the moment. Its design and details perfectly complemented the romantic ambiance of the event, ensuring that I felt both stylish and trendy throughout the festivities. Wearing this dress, I felt like a vision of refined beauty, ready to toast to the happiness and love shared by the newlyweds.

*Wrapped* in the *champagne* satin long-sleeve mini dress, its sleek *silhouette adhered* to my body, accentuating every curve with perfect *proportion* and *shape*. The v-neckline added an elegant *touch* to the dress, while the lustrous *texture* of the satin fabric felt fresh and soft. As I attended my cousin's wedding in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, New York, the dress's impeccable *structure* and *volume* ensured I felt confident and poised throughout the celebration. Its sleek design and intricate details perfectly complemented the romantic ambiance of the event. As I danced the night away in the enchanting setting, my champagne satin long-sleeve mini dress became more than attire; it was a symbol of love, joy, and cherished memories shared with family and friends.

My emotional attachment to my champagne satin long-sleeve mini dress I wore to my cousin's wedding in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, New York, is profound and enduring. Every time I see the dress, memories of that special day flood back, filling me with warmth and happiness. It was more than just attire; it was a symbol of love, celebration, and cherished moments shared with family. The way it hugged my body with perfect proportion and shape made me feel amazing the entire night, enhancing the joy of the occasion. Wearing that dress, surrounded by the laughter and love of my relatives, I felt truly beautiful and embraced by the magic of the moment.







## Chapter Fourteen

### *Kaleidoscope of Color Pt. 2*

I've always loved bold colors in general when it came to dressing myself. I was always drawn to colorful pieces of garments when it came to styling myself. When I was 22, after the COVID-19 pandemic, my best friend and I went on a girls' trip to Miami. Before the trip, I had this stunning dress in my closet that I never had the chance to wear, that I was saving for a special occasion or vacation. The dress was multi-colored, with a cinched waist, and thin straps, and flowed down to above my knee.

Draped in my multi-color spaghetti strap dress with a cinched waist, I embraced the vibrant energy of Miami, Florida, during my vacation. The playful hues and flowing silhouette of the dress perfectly captured the carefree spirit of the city, allowing me to move with ease and grace as I explored its sun-soaked streets. Its loose-fitting design provided comfort and freedom, while the cinched waist added a touch of definition to my dress. Whether strolling along the beach or dining at waterfront cafes, the dress was a versatile choice that effortlessly transitioned from day to night. Wearing this dress, I felt like a vision of summertime bliss, radiating joy and exuberance with each step taken in the sunshine-filled paradise of Miami.

Dressed in my *multi-color* spaghetti strap dress with a cinched waist, I felt embraced by its playful hues and loose-fitting *silhouette* as I explored the vibrant streets of Miami, Florida. The dress's flowing *shape* and *structure* provided ample *volume* and movement, allowing me to dance freely in the warm ocean breeze. Its cinched waist *adhered* to my body with perfect *proportion*, adding a touch of definition to my dress. As I wandered through Miami, the dress's *texture* and vibrant *colors* mirrored the lively energy of my surroundings, evoking a sense of summertime bliss and adventure. Wearing this fun dress, I felt effortlessly stylish and ready to embrace every moment of my sun-soaked vacation in Miami.

My connection to my multi-color spaghetti strap dress with a cinched waist that accompanied me on my Miami vacation evokes cherished memories of carefree days and memorable adventures. It transcended mere attire, symbolizing freedom, joy, and the unforgettable moments shared under the Florida sun. Its loose-fitting silhouette draped gracefully over my body, reflecting the lively spirit of Miami and infusing me with a sense of vitality. With each wear, the dress became a tangible reminder of the laughter, spontaneity, and unforgettable experiences that colored my time in Miami. Wearing it, I felt not only stylish but also deeply connected to the energy and vibrancy of Miami's lively atmosphere.



## Chapter Fifteen

### *Tie-Dye*

My current boyfriend and I met in July 2021. We met through mutual friends, and like we still say, have been attached at our hips ever since. The third time we met, we and our mutual friends decided to go to the Jersey Shore all together for the weekend. I recently went shopping at the mall and got this tie-dye dress. It was a casual dress, with ruched sides that were adjustable with ties, and was colored pink, and white. My boyfriend now wore a yellow and white tie-dye shirt, and we couldn't stop laughing at how we unintentionally matched the entire day.

Dressed in my pink and white tie-dye spaghetti strap dress, I embraced the carefree spirit of summer with each step. The adjustable ties running down the sides allowed for a personalized fit, ensuring comfort as I basked in the warmth of the season. Matching my boyfriend's yellow tie-dyed shirt, our coordinated outfits created a colorful and joyful memory of our time together. As we wandered through the boardwalk and explored the beaches and restaurants, the vibrant hues of our attire mirrored the radiance of our shared moments. Wearing this dress, I felt not only stylish but also deeply connected to the carefree joy of summer and the love we shared.

Upon wearing my spaghetti-strapped tie-dye dress colored in playful *pink* and *white* hues, I embraced the vibrant colors of summer with joyous feelings. The adjustable ties running down the sides *adhered* seamlessly to the dress's *structure*, allowing for a customized fit that accentuated my *shape* with fitted *proportion* and *volume*. Matching my boyfriend's yellow tie-dyed shirt, our coordinated outfits created a colorful symphony of love and laughter, etching a cherished memory of our first summer together. As we wandered through Jersey Shore's boardwalk, the *texture* and *color* of my dress felt soft and allowed comfort on our beach adventures. Wearing this dress, I felt not only stylish but also deeply connected to the vibrancy of summer and the bond we shared.

My emotional attachment to my spaghetti-strapped tie-dye dress, adorned in playful pink and white hues, runs deep, entwined with the cherished memories of a summer day spent with my boyfriend. Each time I see the dress, I am transported back to that moment of joy and connection, matching my boyfriend's yellow tie-dyed shirt as we laughed and embraced the carefree spirit of the season. The adjustable ties running down the sides of the dress symbolize not only its versatility but also the bond we share, adjustable and adaptable to the ebbs and flows of our relationship. Wearing this dress, I felt not only trendy but also deeply connected to the love and happiness that colored our shared experiences, creating a memory that I will treasure forever.







## About the Author



Dominique Whelan, a vibrant and ambitious 25-year-old, is currently a senior student at New York City College of Technology, where she is studying Business and Technology of Fashion. Hailing from the diverse borough of Brooklyn, New York, Dominique brings with her a rich cultural background of Irish and Italian descent. As a first-generation daughter with an older brother, the family has always been at the center of her life, influencing her values and aspirations.

From a young age, Dominique harbored dreams of becoming an actress, fueled by a passion for storytelling and performance. However, as she grew older, her interests expanded to include fashion, leading her to pursue a career that combines both her love

for the arts and her fascination with style. With her sights set on the future, Dominique hopes to find a way to intertwine her passions for fashion and acting, creating a unique path that fulfills both of her childhood dreams.

Beyond her academic pursuits, Dominique's interests are as diverse as the city she calls home. When she's not buried in textbooks or attending lectures, she finds peace in the company of her family and friends, cherishing the moments spent laughing, sharing stories, and making memories together. Dominique also finds joy in the quiet moments, curled up with a captivating book, allowing her imagination to roam freely within the pages of a well-written story. Her love for adventure extends beyond the confines of her borough, as Dominique often finds herself drawn to the hustle and bustle of New York City. From exploring hidden gems in Central Park to discovering quaint cafes in Brooklyn, she revels in the vibrant energy and endless possibilities that the city has to offer. Dominique's curiosity knows no bounds, and she eagerly embraces opportunities to immerse herself in new experiences, whether it's attending Broadway shows, trying out local cuisines, or simply wandering the streets in search of inspiration.

Looking ahead, Dominique is fueled by a sense of purpose and determination to pursue her passions in the fashion industry. With a keen eye for style and a natural flair for creativity, she envisions herself at the helm of her fashion empire, where innovation and inclusivity coexist

immersively. Dominique dreams of creating a brand that not only showcases her unique vision but also uplifts and empowers individuals from all walks of life. Through her dedication and unwavering commitment, she aims to leave a lasting impact on the world of fashion, inspiring others to chase their dreams with unwavering courage and confidence.