

Dressing Over the Years

Written and Illustrated by:
Shaanazay Chaudhry

Dressing Over the Years

Acknowledgment

Foremost I would like to thank my mother for being a complete fashionista and my fashion icon. Her gracefulness and style are recognized by anyone and everyone that meets her. Not only her dressing sense but I also applaud her tender approach towards other people. Even though she may have suffered she did so in silence. I have watched her breakdown but gather all the pieces to smother a welcoming, radiant smile over her face. Her strength always put me in awe.

I would also like to thank my father for always giving me the freedom to express myself. Always sticking by my side over the petty arguments between me and my brothers helped me feel heard and protected. Allowing me to voice my opinions no matter how controversial. Along with expressing my emotions even if they are negative. All of which boosted my confidence. Giving me reassurance that I can overcome any obstacle. He did not always verbally express his support but my confidence is rooted in the fact that he will always have my back, no matter what.

Prologue

I have been friends with Shaanzay since High School. Not only have we but our families as well have grown to love one another. We have overcome many obstacles together which only makes our bond stronger. As far as I have known her, she has always had a great fashion sense. Having the ability to put together outfits and make them appear better than their original state always came easily to her. It comes as no shock that Shaanzay has decided to major in Fashion as she has always had a knack for it. Seeing myself being mentioned in a couple of her chapters really made me happy. Reading how she described our friendship made me gain even more love and respect for her.

Shaanzay was never really great at drawing. I was extremely impressed by the work she put in for this book. Really shows her determination and dedication towards excelling in her field. She is also the reason I chose to major in Marketing as well. The book as a whole shows how loving and caring she is. Reading how excited she gets over getting ready helped me realize why she takes her time in getting ready. The process itself is what makes her happier than the actual end product. Putting in time also makes it more likely that the end result will be good.

I have always known Shaanzay to be a strong, independent woman. She always takes care of things herself. Even if she is in trouble herself she will never let that get in the way of her being there for someone else in trouble. Especially me. She has always stuck by my side and helped clear my head in my times of need. She has always kept my trust. Shaanzay is the beacon of hope in my life. I know any time I am in trouble I can go to her. Her persuasive, calm, and positive nature helps me calm down even if I am reluctant. She always gives sincere advice to the best of her knowledge.

Nilufar

Table of Contents

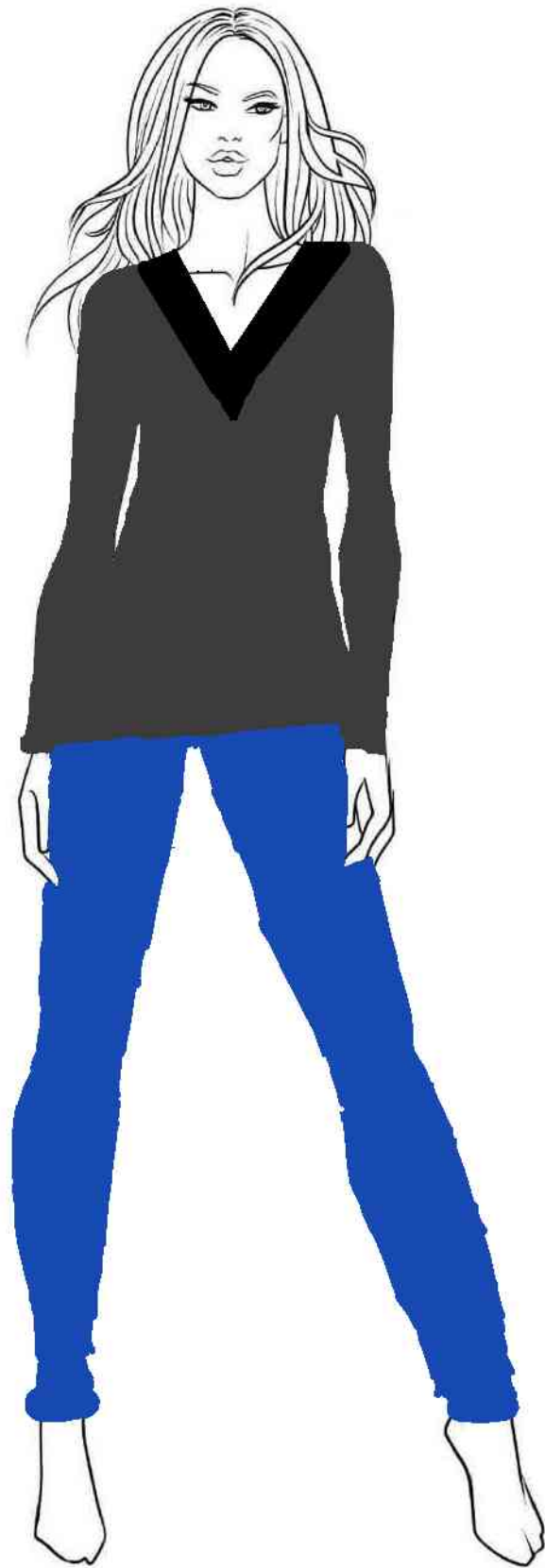
November 15, 2014.....	p.4
October 24, 2015	p.6
February 5, 2016	p.8
July 6, 2016	p.10
December 31, 2016	p.12
August 5, 2017	p.14
April 27, 2019	p.16
July 29, 2019	p.18
October 19, 2019	p.20
October 25, 2020	p.22
March 25, 2021.....	p.24
May 13, 2021.....	p.26
May 26, 2021	p.28
June 12, 2021	p.30
September 19, 2021	p.32

November 15, 2014

My family and I celebrated my older brother's birthday. For which we went to Taci's Beyti. Located on 1953–1955 Coney Island Ave #1 floor, Brooklyn, NY 11223. It is a Turkish restaurant for which my brother had to compromise as our parents did not want to go to some funky restaurant and wanted to play it safe so everyone can get something to eat and enjoy. My mother is an especially picky eater. It isn't that far from our house so the relief we all got from the lack of traffic was enjoyable enough.

At the time I was living every little girl's dream through the prison bars across my teeth. For which I had to *enhance by brushing* each individual cell in circular motions so that food particles will be removed. *Leaving behind a clean fresh look and taste in my mouth.* After which I had to utilize a special small brush made specially for the upkeep of said prison if brushing did not accomplish the task. After the torture was complete I giddily grabbed my favorite gray sweater that had a deep black bordered V-neck that *did not expose any skin.* Along with my favorite American Eagle blue skinny jeans. Then I went into my mothers room to *straighten* my hair. Extending the length of *my hair as the strands were pulled straight with the heat.* With each part of hair the straightener left behind a *distinct light burning scent.*

This sweater was my favorite because of the relaxed fit which flowed down my torso alongside the fitted sleeves. The contrast of the black V-neck on the gray sweater made it all the more appealing to me. Along with the fact that the length was a bit longer than all the other tops I had. It covered my hips and backside which I was not fond of flaunting at the time. This was a sweater I loved so much I wanted to wear it practically everywhere. It was so comfortable. While also being lightweight it kept me warm as well. Perfect for any and all occasions.



October 24, 2015

I celebrated my birthday with my high school best friend as her birthday was a day before mine. This was the first time I was ever going to have a combined birthday party. The plan was to have the party at my friend's house. Located on a dead-end street near Emmons Ave. Which rested at a 15-minute walk from our school, Leon M. Goldstein. Which is on 1830 Shore Blvd, Brooklyn, NY 11235. We were both going to invite our friends and I was to help pay for the utensils used and the cake.

I did not wear foundation at the time so I asked another friend of mine who was going to attend the party with me to come over to my house and *apply* her *foundation* on me. As she claimed we are both the same shade and it did in fact appear so. She was also my close friend so I entrusted her. Yet it was the first time I was going to wear foundation and the first time I was going to trust someone else with putting makeup on me. It was a tough pill to swallow as I am not fond of anyone touching my face. I sat counting down the minutes of her arrival at my house. Flinching to the sound of the bell of my apartment going off. My friend *applied* the *foundation* and *eyeshadow* which felt like the blink of an eye. Which I was not allowed to do as I was instructed on keeping my eyes shut. While she was *patting the foundation on me* it *felt like a whole new layer of skin which was rather dry being attached to my own*. I was not too thrilled over the feeling and the shade was a bit lighter than my color but it was something different. I put on my dress then *modified my height* by wearing my black heels which made me *appear 2 inches taller*.

I got a body-con dress for the first time because my best friend and I were supposed to both wear red dresses. I did not have one so I had to go earlier in the day before the event to get a red dress and that was the only dress I found. It was a nice bright red with short net sleeves that had embroidered flowers on them along with flowers spaced across the dress. Along with a border-like division running down from the top to the bottom of the dress. Then again across my stomach. Although it was really pretty it was just as suffocating. I was really uncomfortable. I felt like I looked really bad. All my friends knew me as the “dancer” so they blasted music to which I was not even able to dance. As I felt like my organs were attaching to one another. The dress was my size but the feeling of *cloth grasping onto my skin* was extremely unpleasant. I had added another layer of skin onto my face that day along with another body on top of my own. Felt like an outsider in my own body.

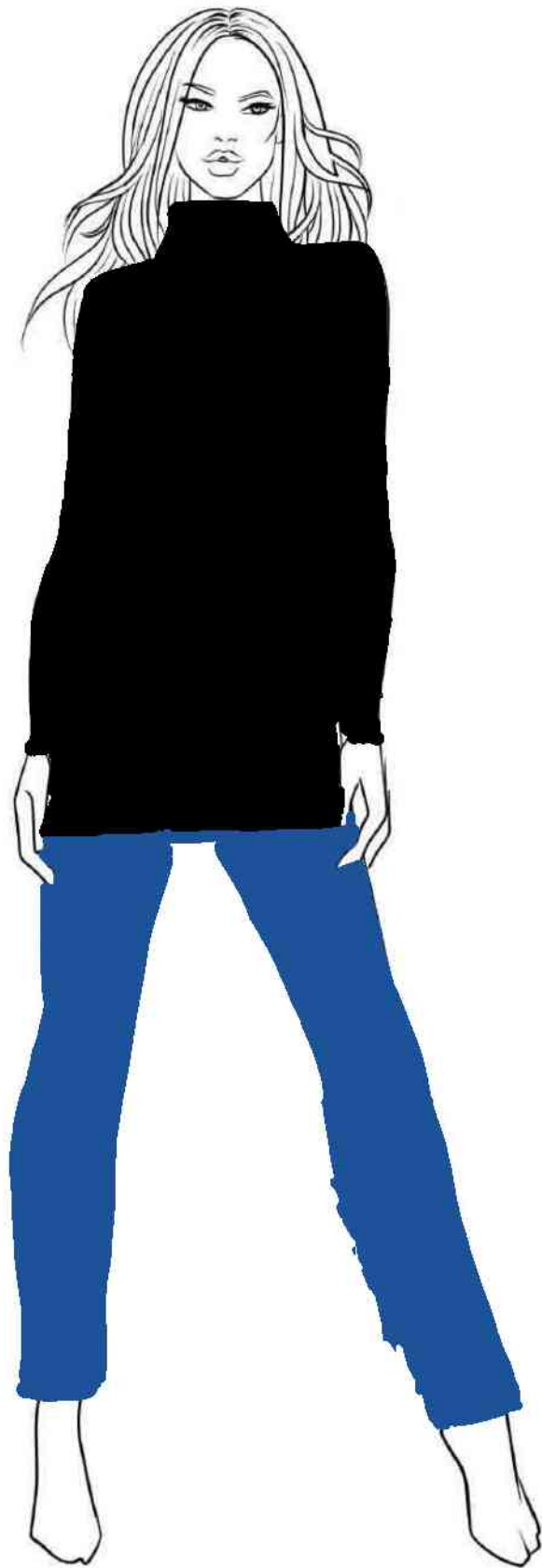


February 5, 2016

This was the first time I was going out on a date. At times I feel as though I remember it like it was a couple of weeks ago. We went to watch the Bollywood movie Fitoor starring Katrina Kaif and Aditya Roy Kapur in the leading male role. At the Farmingdale multiplex cinemas at 1001 Broadhollow Rd, Farmingdale, NY 11735. Prior to this we had met up once before but stayed local so it did not seem as bad but this time we were going to travel 45 minutes away from my house being just the two of us.

By this time I owned a foundation of my own. Which I only wore on special occasions. This was one of those moments. I *applied primer* which *added a smooth hydration to my face*. After which I *dabbed* small amounts of my Maybelline *foundation* and *patted it across my face* one section at a time starting with my left cheek. As my friend had for my birthday a year ago. Followed by *spreading* one light white color eyeshadow *across my lid making them about five shades lighter than my natural shade*. After this I *added length to my lashes* by *applying Loreal's mascara*. Then I went ahead to put on a Hollister black turtleneck and American Eagle blue skinny jeans. The turtle neck *looked really elegant* and it had cuts from the hips. Which was freeing as it did not *clasp onto my skin*. So it was a bit long but was not stuck to my body. In addition to which it was really warm and soft. Paired with the *attachment of 2 inch black H&M booties*. *Adding height and sound to my gait*. Hearing the sounds of my heels two to three minutes prior to my entry.

The intensity of the butterflies in my stomach only grew stronger with each passing second. I was so afraid of going out with someone I did not know very well. After all, what if he turned out to be a psychotic killer? We had spoken for a while beforehand but what if that was all to set a trap so I would trust him. What would I do while being 45 minutes away from my house? No one in my house knew where I was going either. The knots in my stomach tightened pondering over the possibilities of this guy's mental instability. Ultimately I decided to let my older brother know just to be on the safe side. When we finally met he looked just as nervous as I was. He greeted me and smiled so I did the same. It was as if he pulled out all the knots. I felt calm. He looked calmer as well. We went to watch Fitoor. Which was not as interesting as we had hoped. I kept catching him looking over at me. On our way home he said, "you look beautiful." My heart lit up. I felt even more amazing in my outfit.

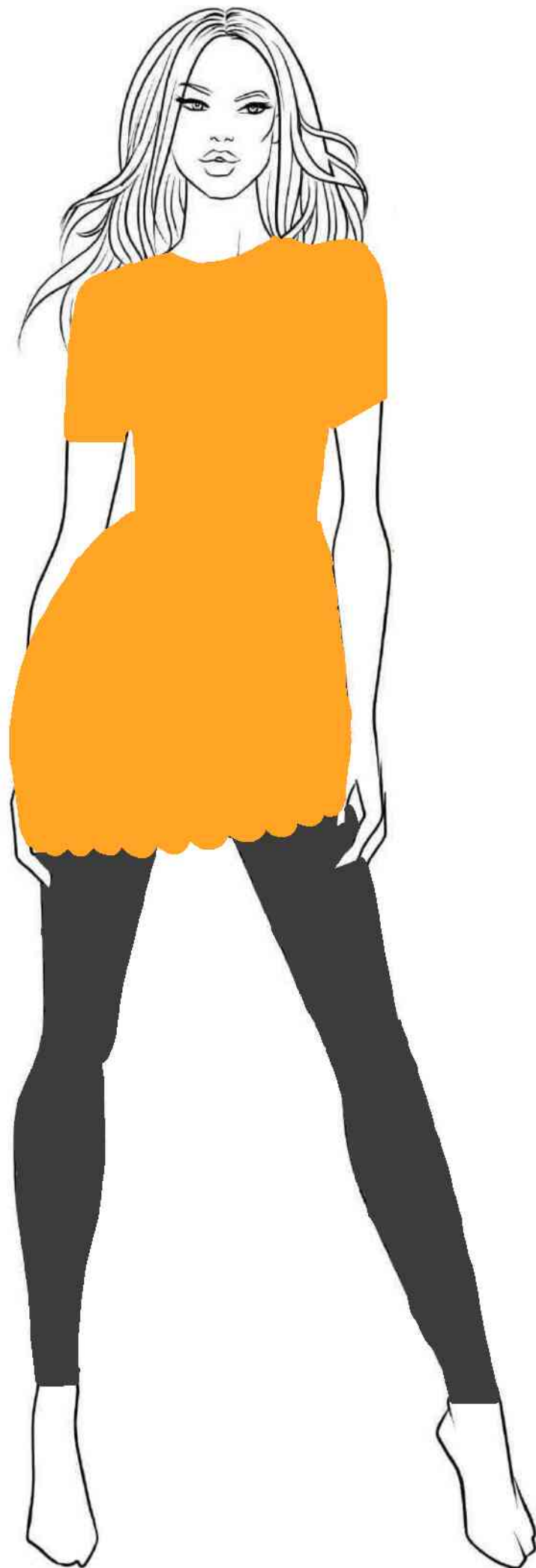


July 6, 2016

My mothers younger sister Asiya, who I refer to as Asiya Khala along with her children, came over to visit a month earlier . Khala is an urdu word which translates to aunt. She has two daughters. One who is 9 months older than me, Almas and one 9 months younger than me, Verdah. Along with a son, Abdullah who is three years younger. At the time I was 18 years old. My younger brother Saif's birthday was in 6 days but they would have gone back to Canada by then. So we all went out and took a ferry from Pier 6 in Brooklyn Bridge Park, near the intersection of Furman St. And Atlantic Ave to Governors Island to celebrate.

For the special occasion I took out my brand new yellow dress. Which had a fit and flare style. It was tighter on my waist so that it was *accentuated. Giving me a more feminine look.* The cotton made fabric *felt light and breezy* on the blazing hot summer day. It had short sleeves so I *enhanced my arms by shaving them.* Once the razor blade *cut the hair off a fresh layer of skin was exposed.* Since it was an outing for Saif's birthday I further *adorned* my nails by *spreading white polish across my nails. Adding life and shine to my bland nail beds.*

The feel of the wind blowing through my hair and the swaying of my dress on the ferry made it feel like summer. I felt as though all my stress and worries were being blown away. To add the cherry on top of the cake was the smell of the water with the sun kissing my skin which was blissful. Laughing with my family only made it all the more memorable. We rented bikes and rode around the island. Hearing all the other families gathered around enjoying their time as well along with the delicious scent of bbq made it all feel like a dream. I felt blessed.

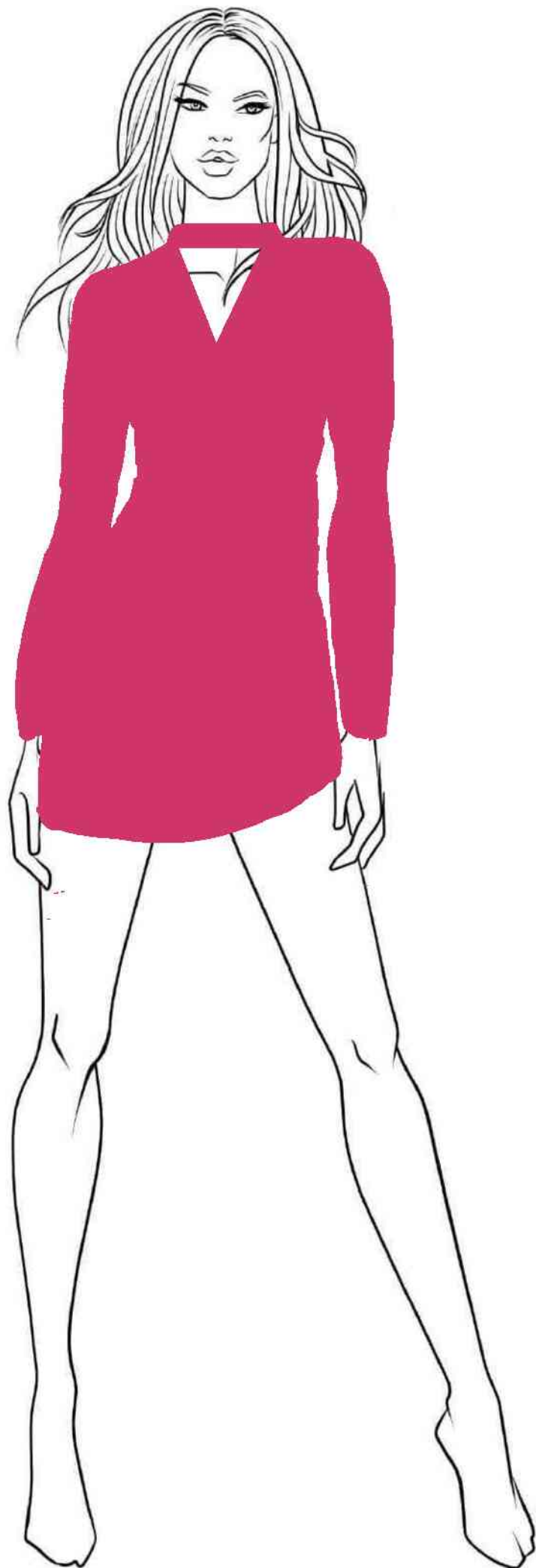


December 31, 2016

This was the first New Years Eve I celebrated with my boyfriend, Usman. We started the evening off with going to eat at Affys. Located at 1909 Coney Island Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11230. After which we went to a hookah lounge owned by his best friend at the time it was called Manjaros. It was not that far from Affys on 1624 Coney Island Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11230.

To celebrate the occasion I *adorned* my body with my new pink dress. It had a mock high neck with a mini cut on the chest. *Which made it very modern and classic at the same time.* It was an easy to wear dress that I could spend the entire night in. It became one of my favorites as it could be dressed up or dressed down according to the occasion. *I dressed it up for the night by embellishing my face with makeup.* I patted a Huda Beauty light pink eyeshade onto my lid. *To create a flirty look.* Then *outlined* my lid with NYX Matte black eyeliner. What made my makeup even more special for the night was that I *attached Kiss fake lashes onto my eyelids. Increasing the thickness and length which added a fullness to my lids.* After which I *modified my height* by wearing 2 inch heel black H&M booties.

This was the first time my mom let me go out to celebrate New Years Eve. Belonging to a Pakistani background, my mother had always been a bit of a stickler for time. She did not like me nor my brothers to stay out late at night. Having permission to stay out now birthed a new sense of freedom in me. Which was very enlightening. That along with the fact that this was the first time I celebrated New Years Eve with Usman made it all the more special. Indeed the fireworks were not in the sky that night but rather, in my heart.

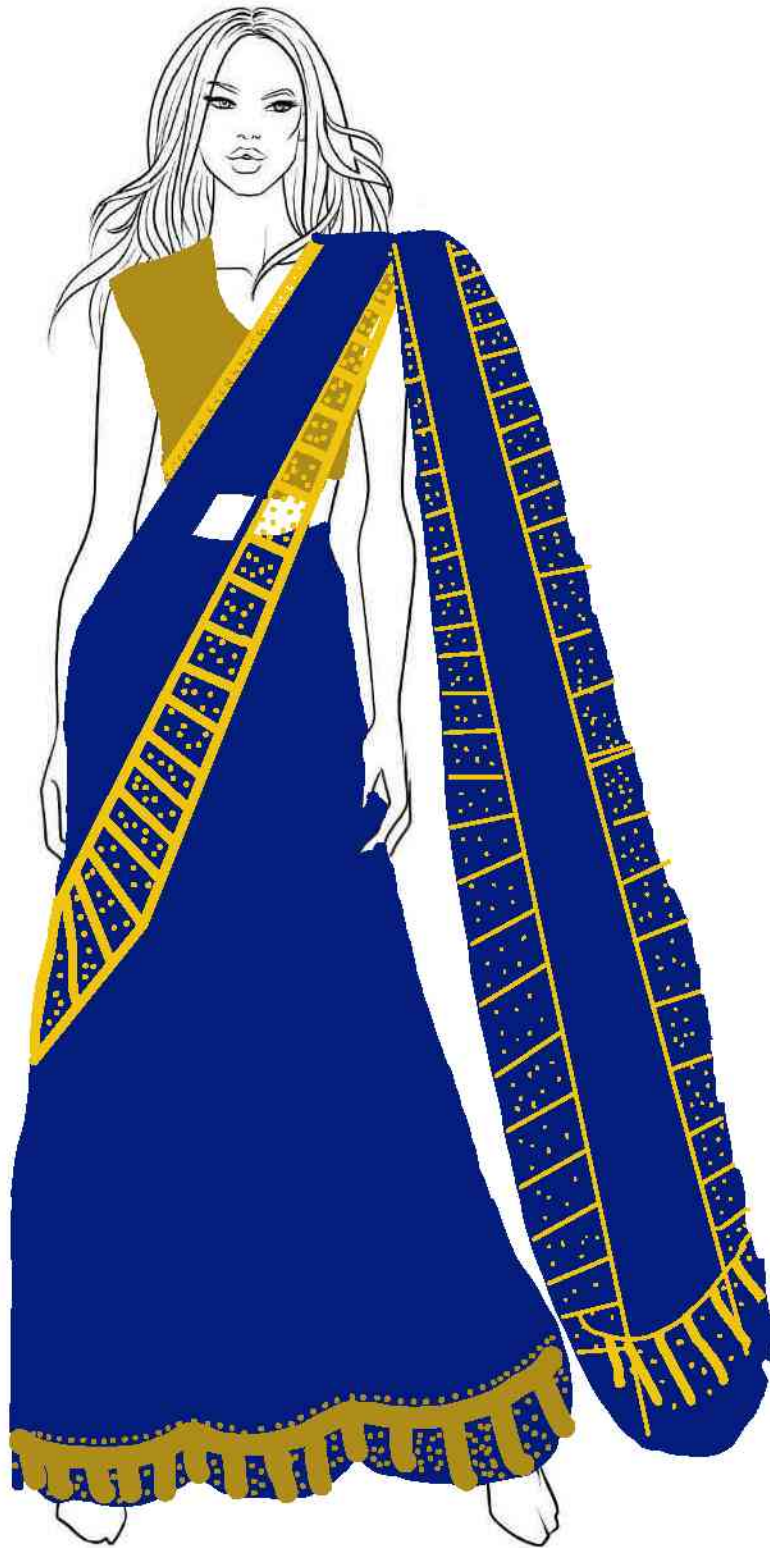


August 5, 2017

Went to London with my mom and older brother, Safi bhai. Bhai is an urdu word which means brother. Used for siblings and cousins who are 4+ years older than oneself. We were invited to my mom's first cousin Nina Khalas youngest son, Ali bhais wedding. All events were to take place in their mansion like home. Which was the last house on a dead end road on West Road in Kingston Upon Thames.

It was my first time wearing a sari. It was royal blue and had golden *embellishments* on the borders. *Making the colors pop out*. I wore the blouse with ease but *draping* the sari was where tensions rose. The clock kept ticking bringing the event closer and I was not even *dressed up*. I ended up getting into a fight with my mom. After much struggling the deed was done. I went on to *straighten* my hair. Then *pierced* two beautiful *jhumka* earrings into my ears. *Their weight pulled down my earlobes*. My cousin Almas gave me a royal blue traditional *ornament*, a bindi to stick to my forehead just above the distance between my brows. *Providing decoration to my face* that makeup alone could never accomplish.

I had to be extremely careful and cautious of how I walked and carried myself because I could easily trip off of myself and fall. Embarrassing myself in front of all my relatives. Once I got over my fear of failure I felt like a real life Pakistani princess. Being born and raised in Brooklyn never really gave me many opportunities to fall in love with my own culture but this was one such moment in time where I felt truly proud of belonging to a Pakistani family. I looked around and felt proud of the dress and culture of my country.



April 27, 2019

It was my friend Nilufars 20th birthday. She holds a very special place in my heart as she is a friend I have known since the second grade. One of those friends that become family. In fact, my mother loves her as if she were my birth sister. The plan was for us to get ready separately in the comfort of our own homes. After which Nilufar would come to pick me up around seven in the evening. Although that was the plan she ended up not actually coming to get me until three hours later. Once she finally arrived we had no option but to go eat somewhere nearby. As time was of the essence. I was going to sleepover at her house afterward but as any mom would, her mom wanted us home at a reasonable time. I suggested one of my favorite Turkish restaurants, Opera. Located on 2255 Emmons Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11235. It seemed the perfect option as its interior is very aesthetically pleasing. Fit for celebrating a birthday and was situated at a six-minute drive from her house located in Brighton Beach. Even if our food took a while to come we could still relax and take our time to truly enjoy what was left of the day. Another plus point was that they brought out a slice of cake with a flaming candle to the tunes of Happy Birthday echoing across the restaurant.

I had envisioned my outfit days in advance for that night. Started pampering off by *patting* a Huda Beauty eyeshade across my entire lid. Which resulted in *enhancing* my eyes with *a pop of color and shine adding a tint of silver with glitter*. I then *applied* NYX black eyeliner. Since it was a special occasion I decided to *wing the liner giving my eyes a more cat look*. Although many people can pull off simple looks I am not as blessed in this department as I look sleep deprived without it. I *spread* my Anastasia liquid lipstick in the shade of Sarafine. It gave a *matte deep red finish*. Making my *lips appear fuller*. I then *slipped* into my snake print shirt. Then practically *attached* a black leather bodycon mini skirt to my waist and thighs. The skirt was so airtight it became my skin for the night.

Waiting for Nilufar made me feel like I was exploding as I was ready before the agreed-upon time and she was late. Taking a look at my makeup helped me calm down though along with many, many deep breaths. Along with the constant self-reminder that it was her birthday, no day for negativity. My makeup really added a glow to my face and I was really proud of my work as I struggled with getting used to makeup and creating new looks. Although the snakeskin shirt was fitted it was extremely soft to the touch which made it really comfortable. The skirt on the other hand made me feel really self-conscious as I had never wore a mini skirt before. Along with the fact that it was sucking the life out of me. I spent the entire night pulling my skirt down as I did not feel comfortable with that much of my legs being displayed to the public. The soul snatching stares from random men did not help ease my discomfort in the slightest. Their creepy smiles as they started my legs up and down made it seem as though they were being sexually pleased just at the sight of my legs. This made me sick to my stomach. I could almost feel pieces of my food traveling up my esophagus.



July 29, 2019

Asiya Khala, Almas, Verdah, and Abdullah were visiting us again over our summer holidays. During which my mom's cousin, Asad Mamu invited us all over to celebrate his and his wife's wedding anniversary. Mamu is an Urdu word that is used for one's maternal uncle. Attchi Mamu was also staying with us. He is my mom's younger brother whom I have loved dearly since I was a child. I remember sneaking away into a separate corner of the room when he would be on call with my mom so she would not see me or hear our secretive conversations. Which only included us asking each other how we were doing. The celebration took place in Asad Mamu's apartment in Manhattan located on the Upper East Side. Although he is very welcoming to my siblings and I have not spent much time with him growing up. So there is always a level of disconnect. Whenever we meet it's as if we all have to be reintroduced. Normally my mom drove us to our destinations over the course of the break but this time we were going into the city. Finding parking in the city is like finding a needle in a haystack. To save everyone the trouble we decided to travel on the B train from Ocean Parkway.

I began *getting dressed by wrapping* myself into my light beige dress that had horizontal lines across it. It was extremely lightweight and simple but I *dressed it up with my makeup*. I started by *rubbing* a light beige eyeshadow from my Kylie kit. My cousin Nadia gave it to me as a gift on my birthday. The light beige eyeshadow was *draining my skin of its color* so I *patted* Maybelline Fit Me blush in pink right under my cheekbone. Then further *highlighted* my cheekbone with Maybelline FaceStudio Master Chrome Metallic Highlighter. This *added a youthful glow* to my lifeless face. My look still seemed to lack something so I *clasped* my golden Guess watch onto my left hand. Even though the head of the watch was not of significant size, it *added elegance* to the look. It was a sunny day so before heading out I added a pair of *brown-tinted shades* from a nameless brand that *framed my face*.

Since I was not very close to Asad Mamu it was very difficult picking out an outfit. I interchanged between several outfits before finalizing the beige one. It was very hectic and the constant back and forth in and out of clothing gave me anxiety. Initially, I had my heart set on another dress but my mom said it was too tightly fitted. Which made it look indecent therefore rendering it unfit for a family gathering. There were also butterflies in my stomach as Asad Mamu has a tendency to pry into people's lives which makes me feel very uneasy. As though I am standing in a jury box. Thankfully Attchi Mamu was there as he eased the tension. Overall I fell in love with my look and I got some great photographs as well. Really felt like a model that day.

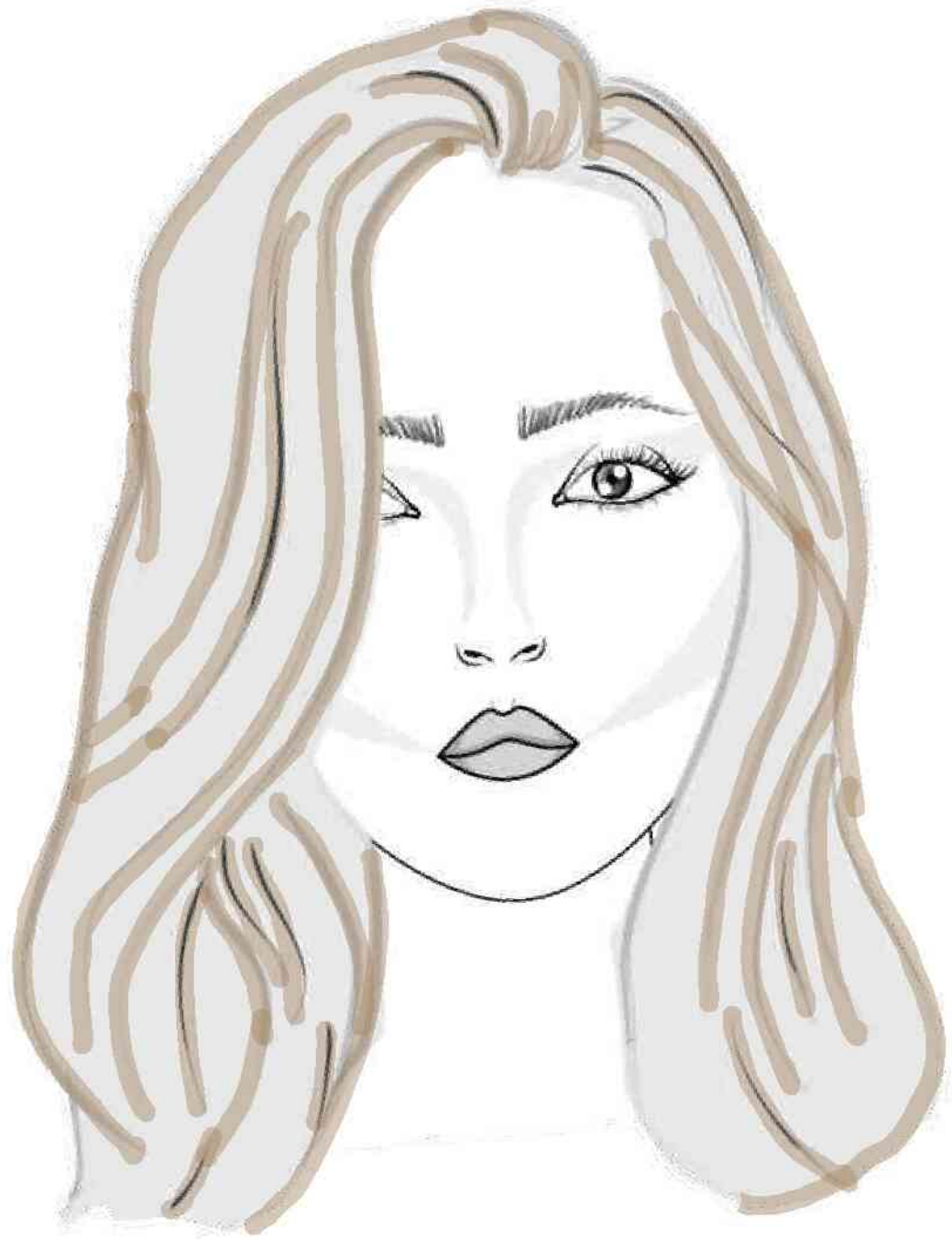


October 19, 2019

It was two days before my twenty-first birthday. There is just something about that birthday that makes everyone want to go over the top and do something different. Then again, that could be due to the fact that the majority Christian society has made this birthday especially as important as one hits the legal drinking age. That did not hold true in my case. A month prior I saw an advertisement for balayage on my Instagram after which it became my obsession to a certain extent, I had to have it. So I made an appointment for this date at 1103 Brighton Beach Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11235.

I went to the salon so I could attain a new look. The process took around three hours which was very exhausting. I did not want a *cluster of colors* but individual thin caramel coloring flowing throughout my hair. Like highlights but more *subtle*. That is why I decided to go modify my hair through a balayage. The time had come for what felt like *my hair was being pulled out while removing the aluminum foils from my head* to reveal the final product. My hair was *enhanced* not only through the coloring but it was also *washed, blow-dried, and then curled*. All of which *added extra volume and life to my hair*. It had strands of a *bright yet soft shade of caramel*.

This was the first time I ever got my hair done in a salon. Before this, my cousin tried doing a balayage on me but the color barely showed up. Also the first time I was going to a salon without my mom. I was filled with stress and anxiety. There was a whole butterfly kingdom fluttering around in my stomach. The process itself was a huge risk that would either be a success or a total failure. Thankfully once the aluminum foils were ripped out I was relieved. I loved the results and regretted not having done this sooner.

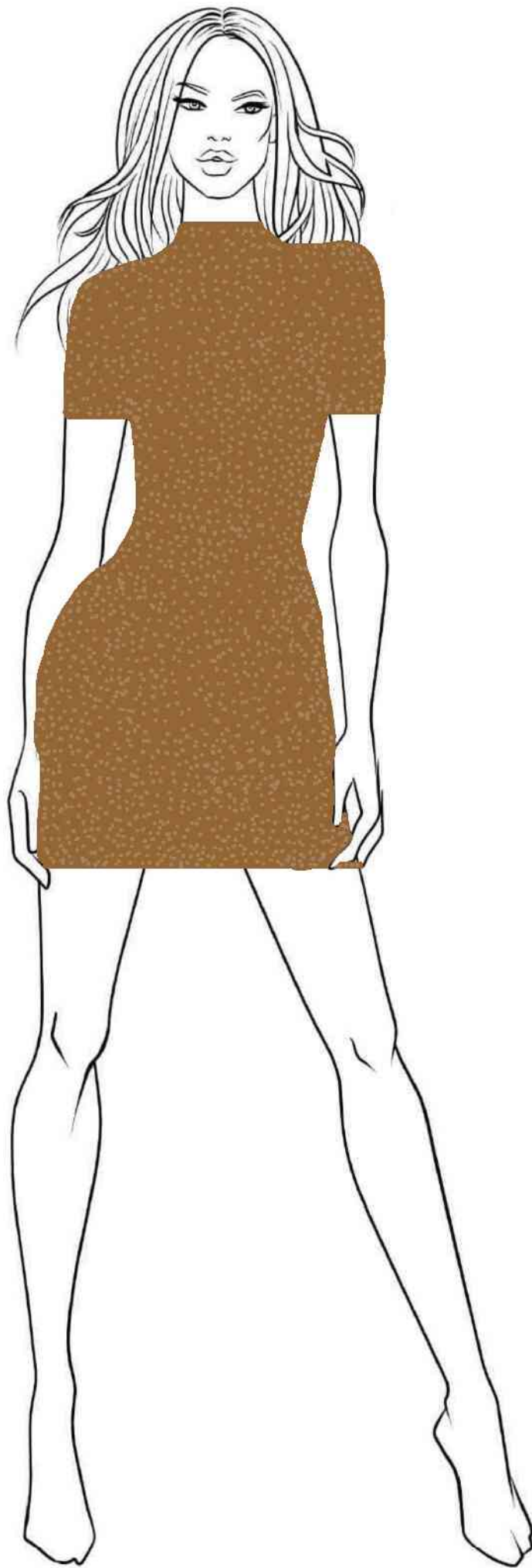


October 25, 2020

My first Pakistani friend at the start of the course of my college career, Ramsha, planned on throwing me a surprise birthday. We met during my first semester at the City College of New York in 2016. At the time we got close but then drifted apart afterwards as we did not have classes together. We kept in touch online here and there. Then in 2020 we made a plan to meet up to rekindle the friendship. It worked as we got extremely close and met up more frequently. As we got closer my birthday came around. She planned a surprise birthday party for me in the basement of her house located in Queens. Unfortunately the surprise was blown before the actual event as another person attending the party spilled the beans to me.

Initially I was informed that me and our mutual friend at the time were invited over to Ramshas house for dinner. For which we were instructed to dress up. Following orders I took out my dress which I had set aside in my closet for New Years Eve. As her mom was stricter than mine when it came to dressing I had to *dress modestly*. I took out my brown dress *embellished with glitter all over it*. The *color of the dress was dull* and fit in with the fall season but *the shine given off by the glitter added glamour to the look*. To get ready for the event I *spread glitter brown eyeshadow across my lids*. To further enhance the glamour given off by my dress. After which I took out my favorite NYX Matte Eyeliner to *paint on black eyeliner, winging it to create a cat eye look*. The short sleeves of the dress left a lot of room to spare leaving my arms looking bare. I *clasped* my golden Guess watch to my left hand along with a Juicy Couture crown charm bracelet. Now my right arm *appeared empty* so I *slipped on a set of three black and golden bead bracelets*. Adding balance to the look. My face still needed some assistance. I *smearred Anastasia liquid lipstick* in the shade Bloodline. *Adding a matte blood red glow* to my lips. *Making them appear fuller*.

This was the first time I was going over to her house so I felt nervous. As far as she told me, her family was stricter than mine. It was going to be my first time meeting them. It was lessened as my outfit came together. I loved the way the dress looked but there was an itch under the armpits. Which was very frustrating. It made me cautious and hesitant of putting my arms down. The cause was the glitter that was irritating my sensitive skin. Thankfully, the dress itself had a great fit. Along with being really comfortable, I did not want to take it off at the end of the night. My jewelry flowed in harmony with the outfit making me feel more confident and happy. Even though the surprise was spoiled.



March 25, 2021

I had been feeling depressed for a while before. About two months had passed since I last went out with friends. I decided to pull myself out of my rut and go out with my childhood friend, Alexis. We met at Leon M. Goldstein Highschool. When we both shared English class in sophomore year with Ms.Latalladi. For the hangout, we decided to meet at SEA. Located at 114 N 6th St. We both had dinner at the restaurant before so it was an easy pick. It is one of the few restaurants that we both fell in love with and enjoyed not only the food but the atmosphere as well. It has a very aesthetically pleasing interior. The lights are dimmer which adds to the ambiance leading to a relaxed environment.

After being isolated from friends for a while I felt like experimenting with my makeup. Before doing so I *stuck on my Acuvue One a Day clear contacts to my pupils. Granting me a clear vision.* Proceeding, I *utilized my Huda Beauty eyeshadow to first press on a rather daring shade called Maneater on the outer corners of my eyelids. A bold red with light glitter brought a pop of color and danger to my eyes.* The color encouraged me further to *pat on the shade Risque to the inner lid. So the color would not spill and stay in its allocated location.* I did not want to go overboard so I only used a small amount. This *shade added a fun vivaciousness that balanced out the red.* As usual, when dressing up for a special occasion, I *winged my liner. I highlighted my cheekbones with Bobby Brown's rose gold highlighter. Allowing a rosy glow to spread across my face.* I *slipped into my plain little black dress. To bring the outfit to life I paired the dress with a light beige patterned blazer. I pierced big silver plain hoops to enhance my ears as they looked empty before.* Finished the look off by *spreading Huda Beauty liquid lipstick in the shade Maneater. Distinguishing my lips with the addition of a blood-thirsty shade.*

While adding the bold colors I was afraid. Hoping I would be able to put the shades out without making them look cakey. The goal for my makeup was to create a new, unique look. Not ended up having to redo my whole face. Although it was not a declared special occasion it held just as much importance in my heart as I pushed myself into picking myself up and going out to lift my spirits. When the colors came out almost exactly as I had hoped I was filled with excitement and happiness. It made me realize how the little things really do make all the difference. My outfit was the cherry on top. It was exactly the look I was going for. A relaxed yet dressed-up hipster style. Thankfully I kept my older brother Safi Bhai's blazer because that was what brought the whole outfit together.



May 13, 2021

Eid is a religious holiday that is celebrated twice a year by Muslims all around the globe. This time around it was Eid ul Fitr. It is celebrated at the end of the holiest month, Ramadan. During which Muslims fast for the entirety of the month. Muslims observe fasts for all 30 days with a set timing to eat before the fast begins– Sehri. Which decreases a minute each day and opens at– Iftari the timing of which increases a minute each following day. Our plans ended up getting ruined so we had to settle for an intimate family celebration. My mother, younger brother Saif and I went to Milk and Honey Cafe on 1119 Newkirk Ave, Brooklyn, New York 11230. Followed by a visit to my older brother, Safi Bhai's apartment near Prospect Park. Ending the night by having dinner at Shaheen restaurant located on 253 S Broadway, Hicksville, NY 11801.

I wore a black suit I got custom-made from Attchi Mamu who lives in Pakistan. As the majority of my Pakistani clothes are. It was also fit and flare but the flare was nice and big. It has handmade block print patterns on it and the sleeves are fitted. Made out of lawn fabric it was the perfect choice for the warm sunny day. Since my outfit was dark I *did not want to darken my complexion further by adorning dark eyeshadow. I spread a light gray eyeshadow evenly across my lids. Then elongated the length of my eyes by applying my eyeliner a little further away from the natural end of my eye. Wore a bright red matte lipstick. It added color and stuck out brilliantly against my black outfit.* On the other hand, it also *dried my lips out a bit* so I had to *lightly pat on some Vaseline* to moisturize them. I do not like *straightening my hair* because they end up waving up as soon as I leave my house. Per my mother's request, *I applied heat to evenly parted sections of my hair to straighten out the strands. Increasing the volume and length of my hair.* For the hour or so that they lasted in such a state.

It was a rather hot day so the comfort of the lawn fabric allowed for a light breeze to flow through my outfit. I am not a fan of the heat so it was perfect for me. Despite the fact that black attracts heat. So, it felt like an even balance. Once I put on the pishwas I felt majestic. Every Eid since I was a kid, I stand by one condition, that I will only wear clothes designed by my uncle. Not only do his designs make me feel like a princess each time, it's also as though I can feel the love with which he specifically designed the clothing for me. The time and consideration spent in the production makes it feel as though he is present with us each Eid. Even if he is not able to be physically present and celebrate with us. It is not the dress itself but also the sentimental value attached to each, unique piece.

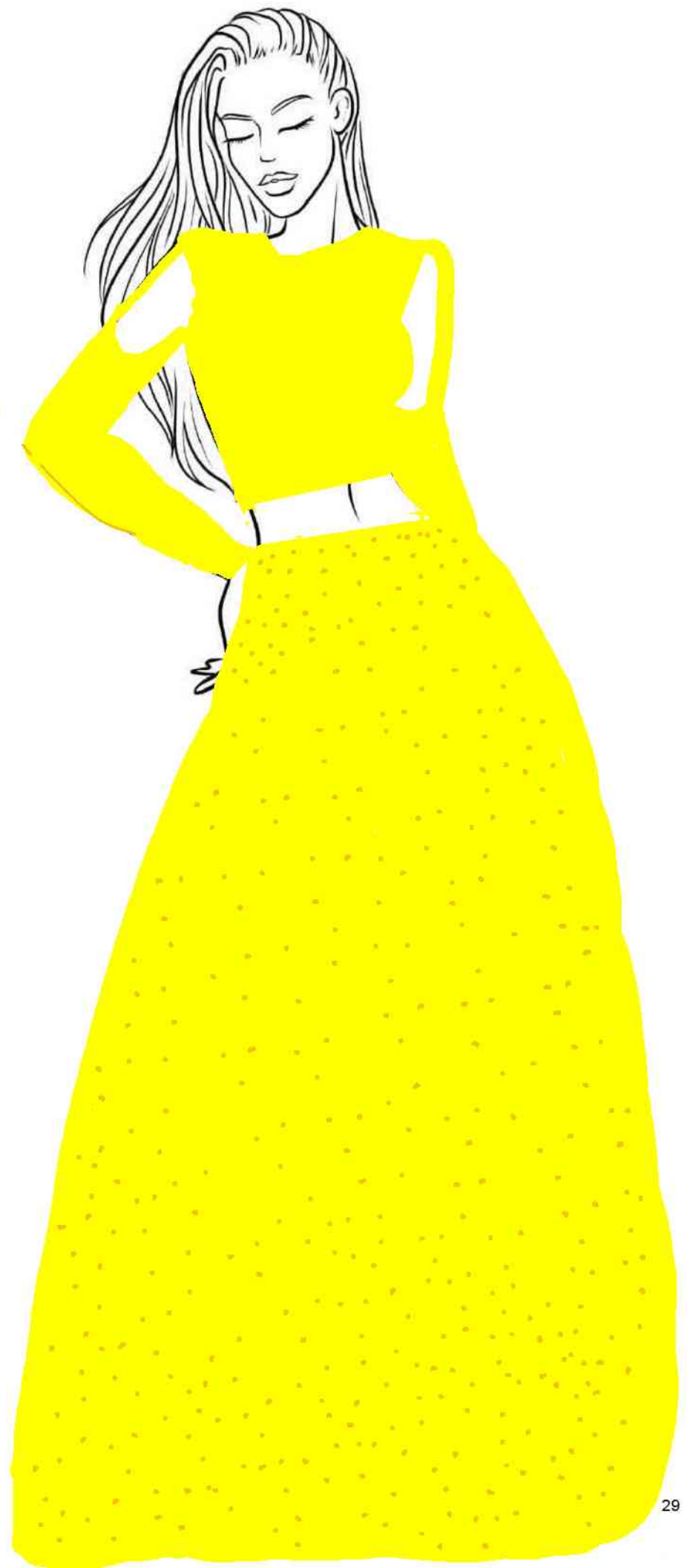


May 26, 2021

The first time I met Amna was at my friend Amber's wedding. Who I had met at the City College of New York as she was the instructor of the dance group that I had tried out for. I did not make the team but it sparked a friendship amongst us. She had told me I had the right moves but she noticed how I got nervous and started forgetting the sequence. While attending Amber's wedding I met Amna and a new friendship kindled there as well. We did not become extremely close but she was a dear friend of Ambers. This mutual friendship led to my invitation to Amna's older sister, Aqsa's wedding. There are mutual functions that take place to celebrate one's wedding. One such event was the *Mehndi* otherwise known as the Henna function. Which took place at The Royal Palm located at 2143 Boundary Ave, Farmingdale, NY 11735. At a previous event, Amber and I pumped up the party with our dance moves which Aqsa fell in love with. So she requested us to perform at the *Mehndi*.

Since the event was taking place in a hall I had to take out an appropriately fancy outfit. Of which I did not have many as I do not typically wear traditional Pakistani clothing often. So I took out the yellow *lengha* that I originally got shipped over from Pakistan for my cousin, Nadia's wedding. A *lengha* is similar to a skirt but it is *fuller and gives more of a ball gown look as there is stuffing underneath which extends the width*. Unfortunately, my *stuffing had flattened out* this time around but it still had some life left to it. A *lengha* is floor length so it is *paired with the Western equivalent of a crop top*. For modesty reasons, the crop tops are usually not that short. This was the first time I got mine made in *velvet fabric shorter than usual with cold-shoulder sleeves. It was soft to the touch, kept me warm while adding a more modern touch to a traditional outfit*. I once again *winged my eyeliner for a cat look*. This is my go-to for special occasions as I have small eyes and this *style accentuates them. The bright yellow color of my outfit brought a lively glow to my face*.

Normally the drive to the hall should take about an hour, factoring in traffic as well. Yet, on this day it felt like the whole world was out. Cars were bumper to bumper throughout the whole route. Totaling up to a two-hour drive. That was nerve-wracking to the point I began to feel claustrophobic. Wanted to run out of the car. Even though I was extremely nervous for the dance performances Amber and I prepared, I felt like royalty in the *lengha*. I distracted myself by taking selfies and watching the rehearsal videos to maintain my sanity. It gave me a boost of inner confidence which made me feel free when I eventually got onto the dance floor. My outfit helped me overcome my fear of performing. As it made me feel alive and truly happy. Which increased my ability to face my fears and put myself out there. Something I had failed to do years prior at the dance audition at the City College of New York.

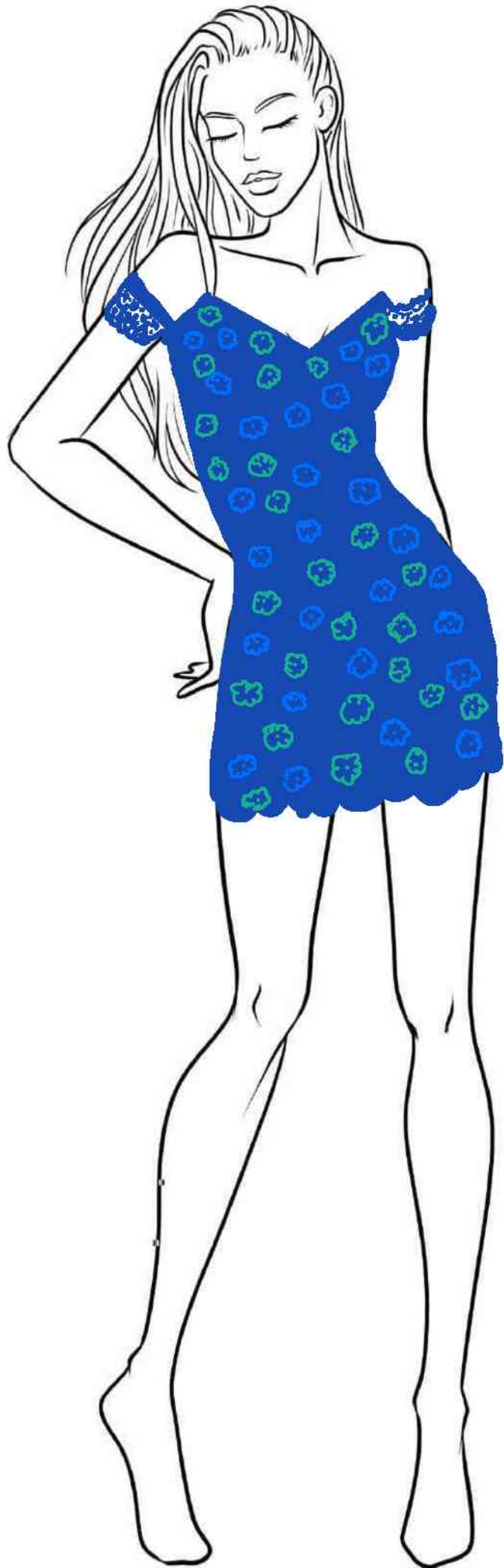


June 12, 2021

As mentioned in the preceding chapter, on April 27, 2019, Nilufar is one of those friends that became family. It was now one of the biggest days of her life. Her boyfriend of three years, Anar, was going to propose to her today. Although it was supposed to be a surprise she ended up finding out somehow. The proposal took place on a rented rooftop at 177 Prince Street. He took the car so that he could bring the videographer, photographer, his sister Narmin and her boyfriend at the time. So I got ready two hours earlier so I could Uber over to Nilufar's house on Brighton Beach Ave. I knew she liked the Dragon Fruit drink from Starbucks so I took the Uber there first to get the drink then walked ten minutes to get to her house. After which we waited in her house for Anar to text me to leave the house. The text arrived an hour later so we headed out on an Uber to get to Prince Street.

The proposal was supposed to take place around 3 pm. So I kept my makeup light, also seeing as it was not my day. At first, I was not even going to wear any makeup so all the attention will be on Nilufar but she insisted that I should. So I *squirted out some BB Cream* onto my beauty blender to *dab across my face. Adding a slight tint of color to my complexion. I spread a light white eyeshadow* from my Kylie Jenner palette *across my lids. To highlight my eyes I patted on a light gray shade* from my Huda Beauty palette. After which I *smearred blush along the sides of my cheekbones. For a rosy glow. The color on my eyes looked uneven compared to the color on my cheeks so I tweaked my eye makeup by adding a thin layer of eyeliner.* In order to finish off the look I *plumped my lips* with Anastasia Beverly Hills Dusty Rose liquid lipstick. *Exemplifying the fullness with a mauve pink color.*

I was so excited and nervous at the same time as if it was going to be my proposal. We met in High School. It felt as though we blinked and here we were, getting ready for one of the biggest milestones in Nilufar's life. Thankfully my dress was lightweight. I had begun to sweat running around and being nervous. Holding back my tears while Anar got down on one knee was the hardest thing I had to do. I knew if I cried Nilufar would come over to console me and I did not want any attention to be taken off of the couple. It was their big day. My dress was nice and fitted but flowy as well. I felt so comfortable and relaxed in it. Being able to look nice and comfortable at the same time is the ultimate joy in life. Normally I wear high-waisted boots with short dresses but this time I did not. I felt cautious of how I looked at first but then grew to love it.

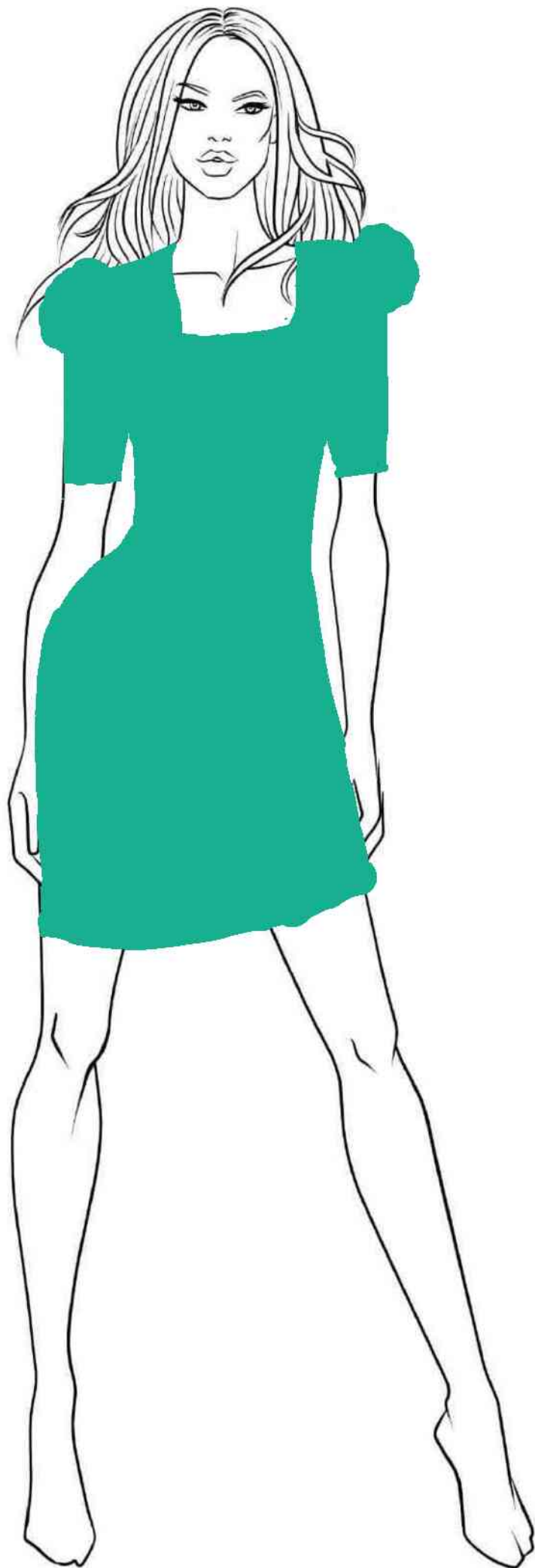


Sep 19, 2021

My mother's birthday. The celebrations began at 12am when Saif brought a generous size muffin and lit candles on it. Saif, my father, and I began singing the ritualistic Happy Birthday song. As I recorded his entrance into the living room from the kitchen with the muffin in hand resting on a plate. Later in the evening, we were initially going to a French restaurant for which Safi Bhai made reservations in the city. Unfortunately, the plans were spoiled as time was of the essence but traffic got the better of us. Since it was a Sunday the restaurant was packed so we lost our table as there were many parties waiting to be seated. Tensions rose in the car as my mother's birthday was going downhill, fast. She became upset with my father as he took his sweet time getting ready as well. I quickly began searching and calling out possible restaurants for the relocation of the birthday festivities. At last, I managed to convince my dad and in turn my mother, to go to Rocca Cafe. Located on 2712 Emmons Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11235. Thankfully there was no wait to be seated and we were able to score a table by the water. My mother was pleased.

For her birthday I took out my brand new green bodycon dress. The dress has a rectangular lower cut chest with ruffle sleeves. *I added a tint of color to brighten and even out my skin tone with Maybelline Fit Me foundation. Exposing my cheekbones with a highlighter. Accentuating it with a hint of brown to the glitter. I clipped on a silver Swarovski necklace. It enhanced the outfit by making the outfit appear richer. As elegance shone on my neckline. To extend onto it I clasped a matching green bracelet and my silver Guess watch. The bracelet has green circular gems with a silver band running across both sides holding them together. Gems, although not real, were shining as bright as diamonds. The joy of the perfectly paired accessories brought a radiant glow to my complexion. I did not pay much heed to my eyeshadow and simply outlined my water lines with black NYX eyeliner. Once I saw the complete look in the mirror my cheeks ripped across my face exposing my not-so-pearly whites radiating love and happiness.*

I was overjoyed to discover a matching bracelet that paired perfectly with my outfit. Any cause of celebration ignites a spark in my heart. In addition to that, wearing a new dress spreads the spark like wildfire. It was as if I could feel my serotonin levels raising through the course of the day especially as I was getting ready anticipating the celebration. At that moment I felt as though I could conquer the world. Once I was fully dressed I felt like I was worth a million bucks. With class oozing out of every inch of my existence.



Authors Blo



My name is Shaanzay Chaudhry. I was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. Belonging to a Pakistani heritage I have been able to navigate between two different worlds. Which helps me dabble in both Fashion worlds. Along with the ability to utilize knowledge gained from both sides of my identity. I am currently studying for a Bachelor's degree in Business of Fashion and Technology at the New York City College of Technology. I hope to join the Fashion world through the scope of Marketing.