

What is Waif.

When that noise is so white you can't even hear it.

Messy hair is waif, but so are bangs.

Waped Veed is Vaify.

Waif is when you fall down the stairs but still can't scrape your knee.

Waif is when you play the piano & you don't know how to play the piano.

Waif is when you play piano really well. And drums. Because you were taught.

Kix is Waif. So is special K. Trix is not Waif.

Whores are Waif. Prudes are Waif. Dudes are Waif. Nudes are Waif.

Your Grandmother is Waif, only when she's knitting a hat for you, you Waif.

Waif is when your corn shows up later.

Gardening is Waif. Love your dead plants.

Waif is when you shave every single hair on your body. Waif is when you've never cut a single hair on your body since birth.

Talent shows are Waif. Throw a talent show. Invite us.

Arms that jiggle like hot jello are Waif.

Zit Scabs are Waif.

Chicken feet are Waif.

Beady eyes are Waif.

You can't spell Waif without I.

Leave the taps dribbling overnight if it's below 30 degrees fahrenheit.

You, me, all, we're all Waif. If we want to be. And we want to be.



is waif

waif

magazine

issue 03: refuse fashion

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NO!

This Nightmare Must

End:

In the Name of Humanity,

We REFUSE to Accept Fashion in America

FASHION



*** SEVERED HEADS**
Fashion was refused as Gucci models held their own severed heads on the runway. "Do they get to keep the heads?" We wonder, aloud.

*** THE BALACLAVA**
i rob in my calvins



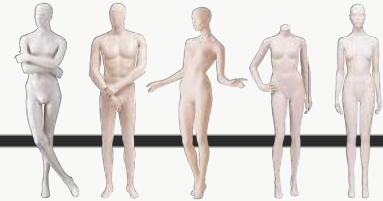
*** MIXED PRINTS**
Matching is for football teams! All the latest trends suggest: pair stuff with stuff that looks different from the original stuff



*** CARDI B**
the rapper exhibited admirable refusal of fashion by throwing a shoe. Have you ever thrown a shoe? They're very expensive.



*** OFFENSIVE SHIRTS FROM ABERCROMBIE**
Does Fashion Refuse them or do They Refuse Fashion?



*** MANNEQUINS**
Staples to the fashion world that don't get the attention they deserve. Wake up America; They're here to stay.

REFUSE

ACCEPT

*** BASKETBALL PURSES**
If i hold one does it count as working out? Working out is waif



*** YOUNG ARIANA GRANDE**
Nothing says refusal of Waif Culture like a Nickelodeon star.

*** HOUNDSTOOTH**
We're obsessed. Why? It's versatile, fresh and a little bit edgy. What's not to love?



*** MIXED PRINCE**
Prince's estate released an unheard album from 1983 called "piano and a microphone." Just when we thought this year couldn't get any better.



*** ADULT PIGEONS**
Why don't we ever see baby pigeons? Lets put our heads together and figure it out.



*** TRIX ARE NOT WAIF**



*** KIX ARE WAIF**



WAIF

***THE ART
OF THE
RETURN//***

By Zach Donovan

Some people pride themselves on the things they buy. But not me. You can return just about everything you buy. Keep your receipts, leave the tags on, be confident, and you're headed for a full refund. Here's a breakdown of some of my most favorite returns over the years:

Store: Kmart

Item: Set of Bedsheets

Cost: \$19.98

How Long I Had It: 3 months

State of Product at Return: I only needed a flat sheet to use as a backdrop for an art project I was working on. I got the ugliest set of sheets I could find because I was planning to glue full pages of newspaper to one side of the sheet. I then punched four holes in the top of the sheet as eyelets, through which I strung shoelaces. When I no longer needed the newspaper backdrop, I returned the shoelaces to the shoes I took them from, and ripped as much of the

newspaper off as I could before soaking the sheet in my bathtub overnight. In the morning, I peeled off the rest of the newspaper and glue, then washed and dried the sheet. I folded it up, put it back in its packaging, and returned it to Kmart.

Amount of Refund: \$19.98



Store: Nordstrom Rack

Item: Four white Calvin Klein Bralettes

Cost: \$12 x 4 bralettes = \$48

How Long I Had It: 2 weeks

State of Product at Return: The bralettes were worn once, maybe twice each, so there were no real signs of wear or tear, though I did notice while I was returning them that one of the bralettes had some light grey stains on it, but at this point, it's about confidence and an appropriate amount of ignorance. Additionally, one of the paper tags had ripped off from the plastic tag - does that make sense? So I just put the plastic back through the hole and repaired the paper with some packing tape.

Amount of Refund: \$48



Store: Macy's Herald Square

Item: 2 boxes of Calvin Klein Men's Boxer Briefs Underwear (6 pairs total)

Cost: \$42.50 x 2 boxes = \$85

How Long I Had It: 2 weeks

State of Product at Return: I had to be pretty careful with this one, as many stores don't allow returns on underwear. I asked what the return policy was when I bought them and the cashier said, "They must be in saleable condition if you return them." Easy. I only needed 4 of the 6 pairs of underwear, so I had a good idea of how to fold them when I packed them for return. The underwear had only been worn once and for a brief amount of time at that - no pun intended. Again, stores do not care and cannot tell when you've worn something unless you absolutely ruin it. Washing machines cost so much because they know how much clothing you're going to wash and return. This was a high risk high reward return scenario.

Amount of Refund: \$85



Store: Best Buy

Item: Pack of Two Best Buy Brand 9-Volt Batteries

Cost: \$5.99

How Long I Had It:

2 days

State of Product at Return: Unopened, I did not use the batteries, which when I asked the sales associate whether they carried 9-volt batteries, he told me definitively they did not. He led me right to them when I asked if he was sure.

Amount of Refund: \$5.99



Store: Crate and Barrel - Soho Flagship Store

Item: 4 Acrylic Champagne Flutes

Cost: \$4.95 x 4 glasses = \$20

How Long I Had It: About 3 weeks

State of Product at Return: All four glasses cracked after my friends and I intentionally threw them onto a hardwood floor. I, of course, was upset they cracked, but in my head I figured - this stuff must happen at Crate and Barrel all the time. It wasn't like I was going to try to return 4 piles of glass shards, though I am tempted to try it. This is where confidence and semantics intersect. I walked to the register and let the cashier know I was making a return, placed the glasses on the counter, and very calmly told her, "These cracked." In the words of George Washington: I cannot tell a lie. We also borrowed 4 fake ice cubes from this same Crate and Barrel, which so far have been free.

Amount of Refund: \$20 ♦



THE GOODWILL WAIF//

*Lorin Anderberg, 24, has a closet made up of clothes from thrift stores across America,
but you can't even tell the difference*

Photos by Brigette Lundy-Paine















DIRTY WHITE SHOES//

why get new ones when your filthy old ones look so cool

Photos by Lorin Anderberg

Story by Misha Brooks

From the Author:

This is a first draft. Since this one, there have been two more - each cleaner and more refined. The third and final draft is completely free of spelling mistakes or grammatical error. It boasts a tight narrative as well as a clear and supported thesis. I have asked Waif Magazine to publish this version instead, and they have generously obliged. Subsequent to this introduction you will find something messy, stained, potentially unfinished. It will not be a difficult read, but there may be speed bumps. The prose may falter at points but I assure you there is soul here that cannot be sharpened through drafting and must exist in its unadulterated form. I trust it will not be a bother. Enjoy.

- The Author





It's February 1999 and I've just turned six years old. I've returned home after a winter break abroad.

My parents had sent me on a pre-kindergarten winter work exchange just north of Lake Tahoe - fifteen miles from Reno and five from the Nevada border. It was a family tradition to send the kids off at an early age. Six years earlier, at the age of five, my brother had been sent for the summer to pick coffee beans in Costa Rica. It was lesson, meant to instill in us children the confidence of solitude and, more importantly, the understanding that there is no greater satisfaction on earth than a hard days work. It wasn't a particularly effective message. My parents were decidedly out of touch with reality, misunderstanding that the month long journeys, while grueling, were essentially vacations: an escape from the strict hand and prying eyes of my ever-loving folks. It was in our upper class DNA to shirk responsibility. My brother had spent most of his

time, not in the fields, but in the pigpen. He'd lied to his host-family about a disability sustained from a leg infection during infancy, so spent his days lounging comfortably against the belly of a large sow, carefully combing over a leather-backed Spanish-

English dictionary learning flirty phrases to ensnare his 45 year-old host sister, Luisa. My sister, the eldest and the trial run for this experiment, had been sent close by to Napa. She was to crush grapes for four weeks and learn a blend of Californian and French viniculture techniques. But upon arrival she learned her feet were too small for the task and ended up sitting by nearby pond each day pegging ducks with the unripe grapes she'd rip from the vines out of boredom. That was in '89.

But here I am, ten years later, returned from my own harrowing trip. I had been sent to what my parent's call an "old folks' home." It was a terrible place named *Willow Estate*. Brand new, *Willow Estate* was the pride and joy of the little Californian border town I had been stationed at. Minimalist Portuguese architect Eduardo Souto de Moura had designed it four years previous- his only design to grace the American landscape. As a young

man, not yet establish in the world of architecture, he'd exchanged the design for complementary housing for his aging grandmother who'd immigrated to the area in her sixties to teach Portuguese at UN Reno. The building had a huge flat front. Much longer than it was wide, it looked akin to a matchbox turned sideways. Rather than the blood spots that pock a matchbox's striking side, there were small windows punched out in an orderly fashion. Each window seemed black as midnight, for among all the other bizarre features what stood out most was it's unyielding whiteness. I learned later that the color of the paint de Moura had settled on was named Halloween White and could only be manufactured by crushing hundreds of thousands of Ghost Beetles: a common sugarcane pest found in Southeast Asia. Tucked inside the white façade was the one entrance to *Willow Estate*: an equally opaque door impossible to distinguish from the rest of

"What was special was that any person on earth, young or old, could connect to the Divine – they need only to have a pair of sneakers."

the building save for the shadow cast by the sun hitting the doorknob, which extended only a few inches from the door itself. The doorknob was worth noting as well, as it was the first sentry at the gates of *Willow Estate*. Carved out of ivory then dipped in de

Moura's milk-white dye, the doorknob was a statuette of Nike, goddess of victory. Her eyes were blank. Her hands sprouted upwards towards heaven, open and receiving. Her wings were spread wide behind her like elephant ears for easy handling. Perhaps those wings were de Moura's only olive branch towards visitors - the only piece of the building that conceded to the curvy whimsy of utilitarian ease. This elegant gesture was a red herring, however. Nike was not a gift to the visitor, or even the hundred and fifty or so elderly residents of *Willow Estate*. No, the doorknob was a nod to the benefactor behind the *Estate's* development.

As bizarre as it sounds, the multi-national, billion dollar shoe company Nike had, in the late eighties, bought up a few thousand acres across the United States under a shadow marketing strategy known among the company as *FutureSimple* led by current CEO





Mark Parker. Parker had witnessed in his time at Nike an ongoing and undeniable trend in fashion: the recycling, reincorporation, and overall adoration of past styles. The 90s emulated the 70s, much like the 70s longed for the 50s. Anyone well versed in fashion knows that style has a life cycle, the final stage of which is rebirth. Parker's plan was simple. He knew if he could only control the trends of the past, he could control the trends of the present. And thus *FutureSimple* began: a real estate branch of Nike's already massive marketing wing. Its mission was to buy up land, develop "old folks' homes" and inject a style into the past. Parker hoped the disoriented, mentally fading octogenarians under his supervision would be easily manipulated - their thrifty hands quick to snatch any free gym shoes thrown their way. Then, by disseminating media that included seniors wearing Nike apparel, Parker believed he could induce a false nostalgia inside the psyche of the country. Of course the plan worked. Most notable was when Jerry Seinfeld, at the height of his career, bought a pair of Nike Air Tech Challenge II in a stark white, supposedly offset by the almost indistinguishable pigment, "cement." If the brainwashed-dying-generation had dug the grave for Parker, Seinfeld had put the final nail in the coffin.

At my young age I was particularly impressionable. My grandparents meant the world to me. And simply because of my height, and the uniformity of apparel amongst the aged - all retirees at *Willow Estate* reminded me of Meema and Poppy. I hurried around the facilities on little legs, changing sheets and bedpans, serving meals, bathing demented men and women. My young eyes would look into their old eyes knowing the world we saw could not be the same. Our fashion could be though. Each day my admiration for the poise and bravery with which the residents faced their immanent death grew. And with it grew my admiration for their shoes. I became obsessed with them: Air Tech 4s, with their Escher-esque strappings. Air Max 90s, that looked like goose-down pillows. The Dunks and the Janoskis, with their ankle squeezing elegance. The Air Trainers and the Air Jordans, with their thick soles and thicker souls. Tinker Hatfield was my Gandhi. But

most sacred of all the shoes on display at *Willow Estate* were the Air Force Ones. Those uniform dots, like de Moura's windows, were windows into my heart. The armorlike build seemed to protect some sort of precious jewel - perhaps a jewel like the titanium insignia strapped ever so snugly onto the bottom lace emblazoned with the name of Victory herself. Oh I wanted them so bad. (After months of intense negotiations, Nike had softened to de Moura's wish for the employees of *Willow Estate* to wear all black, in contrast to the residents and in compliment to his building. Thus white shoes were not in my cards.) What made my want even stronger was my daily task of cleaning these angelic objects. The orders came from on high: the shoes are free, but must be kept spotless. My child fingers were the perfect instruments for the job, and thus I spent the majority of my stay buffing and scrubbing the most beautiful things I'd ever touched. I understood the need for absolute cleanliness. These shoes were the gateway to heaven. I saw it with my own eyes almost every day at the *Estate*: the lights would go out in the head of some ninety-five year old, but his shoes would shine on forever. And what was special was that any person on earth, young or old, could connect to the Divine - they need only to have a pair of sneakers.

So I concocted a very simple plan: First, I would steal cigarettes from the residents. (This was the easiest part, for - as I was brainwashed by Nike - these past-prime Mad Men and Women had been brainwashed by Phillip-Morris during their own youth. Packs, although officially banned, were oftentimes tucked neatly away inside a hollowed-out bible or beneath a bedside lamp.) Then, I would take the cigarettes out into the dark streets of town. The county had banned tobacco products in the 80s when lung cancer rates exploded, but people needed their fix. Who was I to deny them? Plus, at six years old, no one suspected a thing. Finally I'd take the money I earned and send away for my very own pair of Air Force Ones. Like Parker's plan, my plan was a smashing success. I made the money in four days, and by the end of my second week of work I had my Nikes.

Of course I wouldn't wear them. If an orderly had spotted me out of uniform, I





would've been sent home immediately. Back to the sharp reprimand of my parents. The shame would drip down my face like syrup as I opened up our door two weeks early. My parents' experiment would've have been ultimately deemed a failure. I couldn't do that to them. But I wanted to wear my Nikes so bad. After three patient days, I folded. I slipped them on, one foot at a time. Savoring each second of lace-threaded glee. I stepped meekly into the courtyard sun, trying not to arouse suspicion. But inside I was beaming. Basking in the glow of my maker. The feeling lasted only a moment, until a disruption came in the form of the breakfast bell. Orderlies burst out from all directions heading towards their first tasks of the day. Most passed me unnoticed, but one halted abruptly. She didn't see the shoes at first, but she could tell something was off. She looked up. Nothing. She looked left. Nothing. She looked at my face and scrunched up her own. Then, as she started to look down, I felt my skin grow slick with the sweat of embarrassment. I had shown no self-control. I had shown no family pride.

It just so happened that near my foot was a puddle – two feet deep, filled with mud. It was a vestige of a rainstorm that had happened when I first arrived at the *Estate*, but had stubbornly hung around, demanding workers avoid it and residents succumb to it. I thought about my white shoes - their glory. I thought about facing my family – giving them the worst news imaginable. And finally, before the orderly's blue eyes traced their way down to my fresh kicks, I thought: *just do it*. And I dunked both feet into the puddle.

To describe how I felt in that moment is to describe the fall of an empire. A surge, a rush, a bad decision, and finally a collapse. The puddle was two feet deep. I was four feet tall. The humiliation did not stop at my ankles. I stood in the mud up to my bellybutton. The orderly bristled and moved on wordlessly. I tugged my legs away from the soft earth. I balked at what I knew was coming: two corpses tied lovingly to my feet. What was it all worth? I didn't get a new pair. Not only was it too risky, but I had not finished grieving the first pair. They were dirty, which at the time made me feel dirty. As though, somehow, I'd soiled my relationship to God. I didn't recover quickly.

I meandered about the campus for my remaining weeks, wandering aimlessly, doing half-assed work. I skipped meals. I watched men and women die. And eventually I went home, depressed.

My parents didn't notice. They were thrilled that for the first time they'd found the perfect fit. "The very best guys are only hitting 33% of the time!" my dad used to say, as we watched the Yankees. My parents were batting 1 for 3 now and they were content. In their eyes, the plan to send away the kids before school was a novel and successful idea. They were parenting pioneers. The glow with which they buzzed about the kitchen and house overshadowed any negativity I'd tracked in on my shoes. They talked about publishing a book on child-rearing. I sulked in my room, looking through Nike lookbooks – dreaming of a sanctified pair – cleansed by the hand of god. The salt in the wound was our neighbors. Plenty of kids my age lived on the block, and due to the success of *FutureSimple*, white shoes were everywhere. Instead of running through winter fields, playing flag football, kids would sit on their stoops each day cleaning their sneakers. I was laughed off play dates. Kicked out of basketball games. One boy – George Santos – told me his mom said he couldn't play with me anymore because I had "whack trainers." But then it all changed.

It's February 1999 and I've just turned six years old. I'm sitting on the old maroon sofa in the living room. My parents have gone out for the evening. They have a 7 pm dinner at Agro Dolce and a 9 pm showing of "October Sky." In one hand I have a can of Pepsi. In the other, the remote. I flip through channels – my eyes sugarglazed over. Nothing. Nothing. Nothing. Then: a ballerina. Thin. Fair skinned. Dark hair. She's a dancer – or wait –. Her head's thrown back. Her eyes are closed. She spins on a platform like the ballerinas in the boxes. Her arms are outstretched like Christ. And she's in a beautiful fallen-powder white dress. As she spins two mechanical arms begin to come alive. They look her up and down with a curiosity that uneases me. I'm not used to robots. After they are done looking they begin, with no courtesy at all, to paint this woman's dress. Defile its purity with total disregard. Black paint leaked like graffiti on the



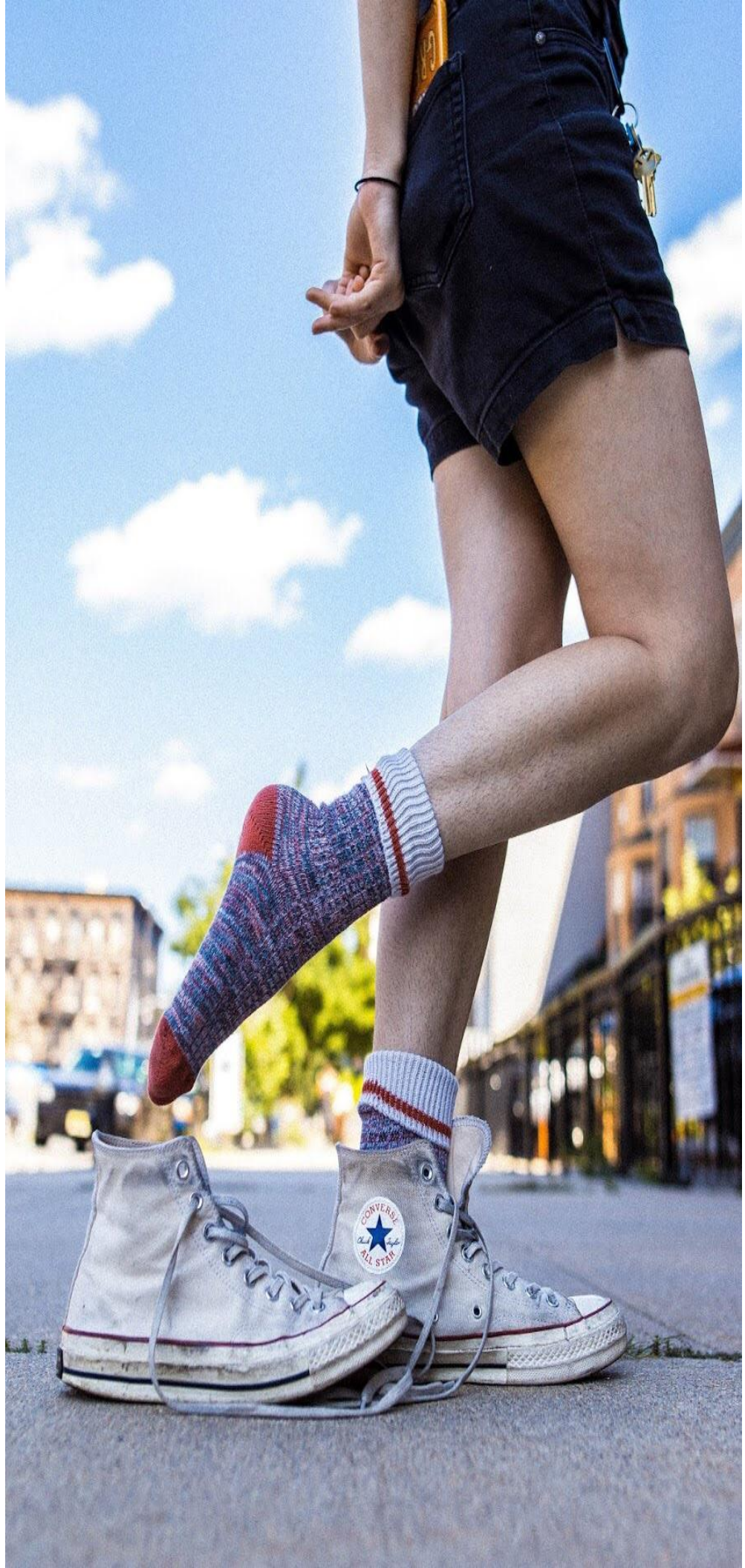


work of art and my mouth dropped open. I wanted to save her, to save the dress. But what started as horror transformed to revelation: the dress without the paint was incomplete. It was not the product. It was the canvas – waiting for spontaneity and reckless abandon to paint the strokes. She had been utterly transmogrified into something a factory could not produce. Something that could only be produced by chance.

This event was of course Alexander McQueen's Spring/Summer fashion show of 1999. The model was Shalom Harlow. McQueen shook my idea of fashion, but not yet my peers'. No matter how strong McQueen's vision, Nike's persuasion was stronger. The neighborhood kids still buffed their shoes. They still snickered when I walked by. But now I knew something they didn't. Their white shoes were as blank as their minds. As blank as the dying minds of those residents of *Willow Estate*.

The quote "Cleanliness is next to Godliness" is often misattributed to the Bible. Maybe that too is a byproduct of *FutureSimple*. Because what McQueen showed us never stuck. In 2002, rapper Nelly would release his mega-hit "Air Force Ones." And onwards until the present, the clean white sneaker would permeate culture and impose itself as essential and classic: a Little Black Dress for your foot.

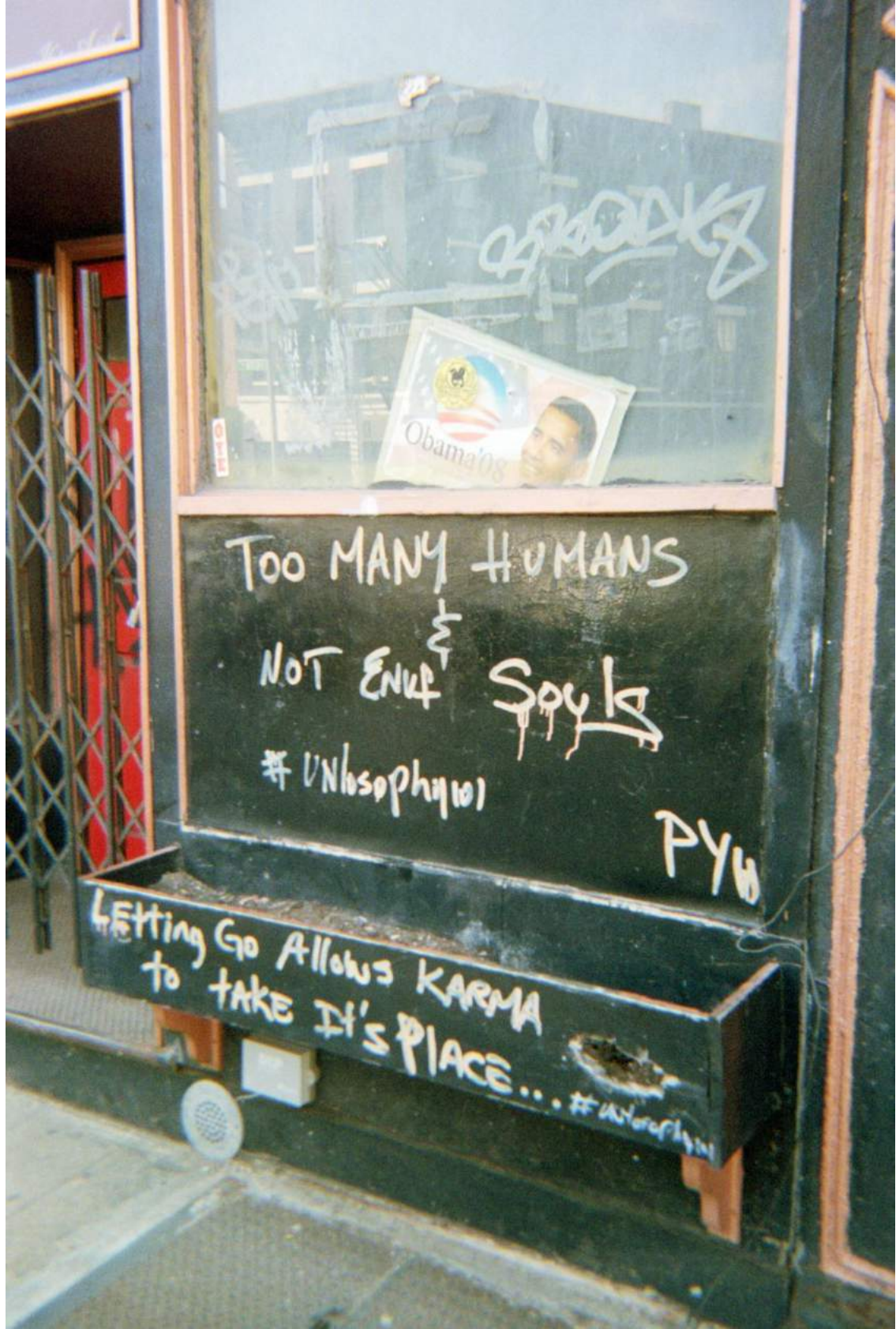
What I once thought was a connection to the Divine I realize now is actually potential for a connection to humanity. I still buy white shoes, but now I'm not precious. My life stains those shoes just as it stains my soul. I may not remember every pair, but they make me who I am. ♦





is waif

**SUN-
DAY
BEST
?//**

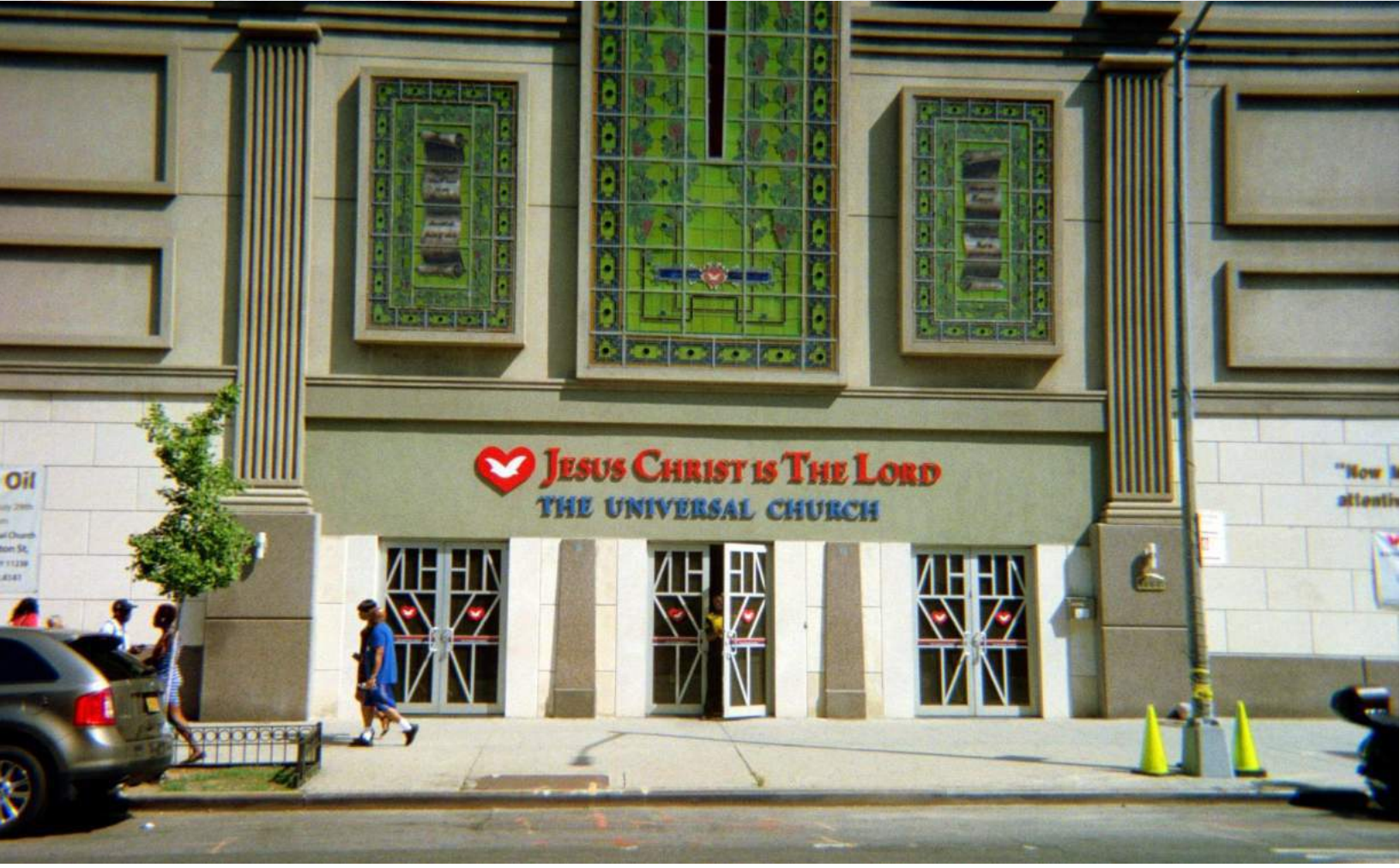


A piece on Sunday Fashion,

from Clinton Hill in Brooklyn to Hillsong NYC in Midtown Manhattan



GOD
IS
DOPE.







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ENFORCED





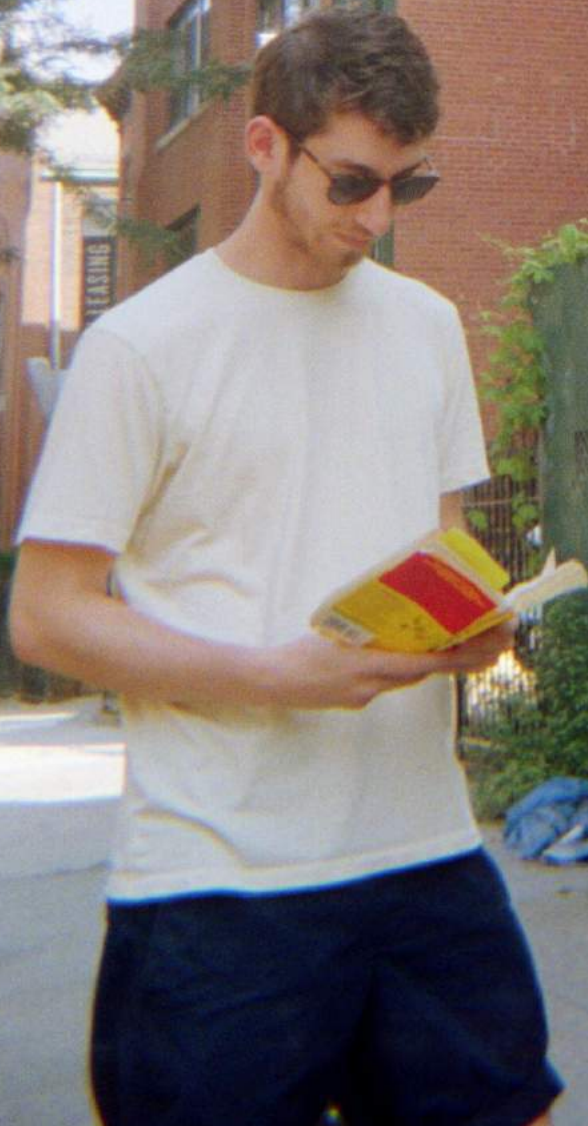
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 Tuesday
Friday
8am - 9:30am




LEASING





Thank you for reading Waif Magazine issue 03.

Issue 04 will be released in October - we've got some new faces and some old faces for this issue.

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