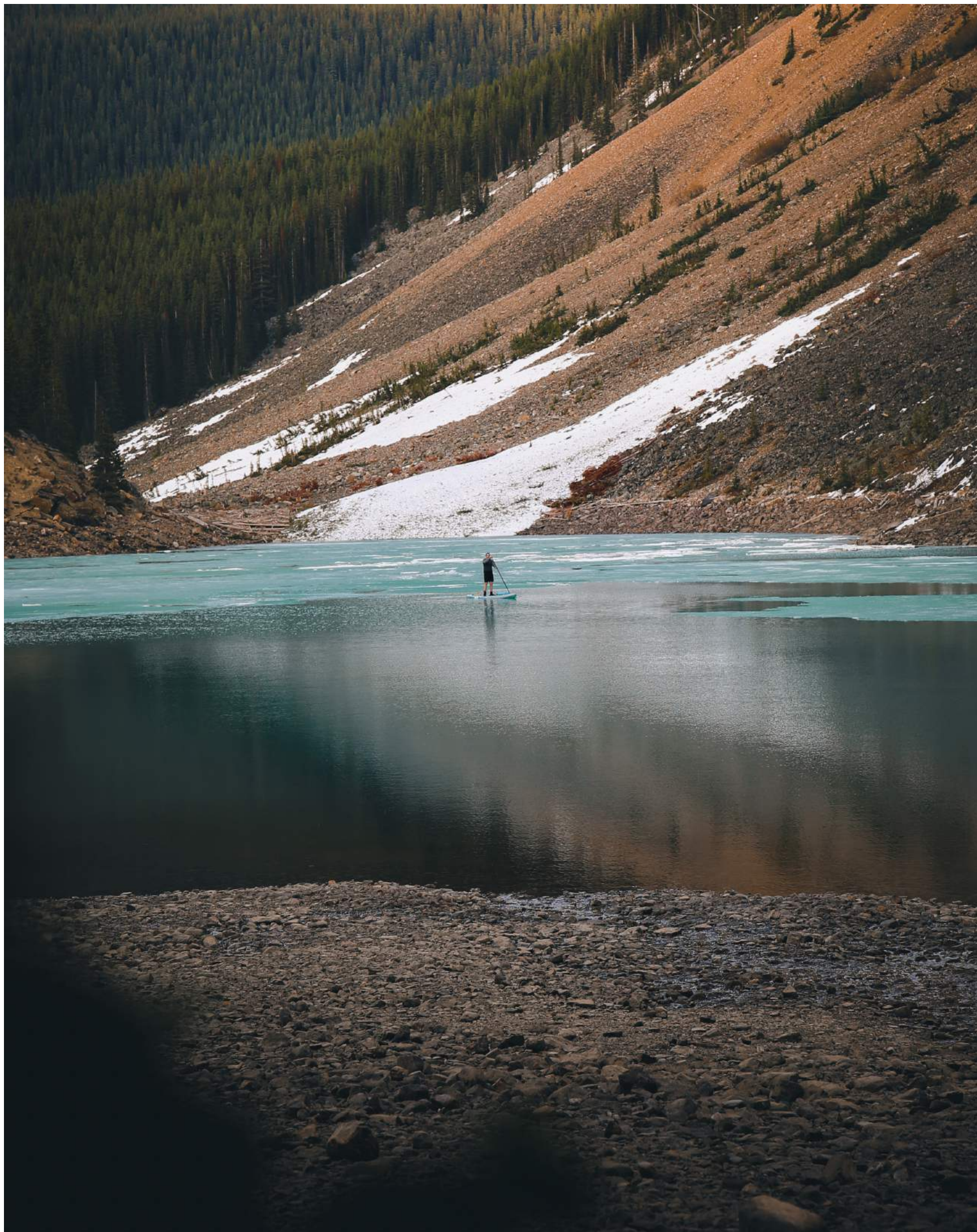




toph&her

December 2018 Issue 05





Anuja Shukla

[anujashukla.com](http://anujashukla.com)



# toph&her

December 2018 Issue 05

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Namsan Tower, Seoul



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2018

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## Editor's Letter

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My parents light up when they share their stories of growing up in South Korea. Since their immigration to the United States the treasured memories of the motherland had become a bittersweet dream to them. Starting a new life and raising a family in a foreign country plunged them many years forward too quickly unable to squeeze in a single visit back home. But these stories became lifelong dreams to me –to visit to the motherland and experience the heritage my parents spoke of.

So I finally went to Korea.

The nation had rapidly evolved but the culture was still very much present. Cafes were charming just as described, trends in fashion, food and lifestyle were present within all generations, and the history of this country stood prominent as cities were built around the remaining palaces from hundreds of years ago. My favorite being going to a *pojangmacha* on a cold day—food tents on the streets run by unofficial five-star chefs [mothers]. It was clear why my parents lit up when they spoke about their country. The small glimpse I got of the motherland gave me a newfound understanding of my parents and most importantly my Korean heritage.

*Topher Park*













# The Process

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Words by Nic Alves

Photos Edited by Moon Hee Lee

Growing up I always dreamt of being a shoe designer. However, when it came time to enroll in college I opted for a stable major in business and placed my passion on pause. Years after graduation I discovered an opportunity to return to my passion of shoes through a course in shoe design at a local art college down the street from my home.











The class offered students the resources to create their own shoe from scratch, so I created a pair of boots that I wished were out on the market. Though the development was a bit tricky, I was fortunate to land an instructor passionate in helping students develop their ideas to reality. Surprisingly, like me, he didn't have a formal education in shoe-making, but his love for shoes has led him to have a fulfilling career in the industry. His passion for shoe creation inspired me to continue to develop my own shoe beyond the classroom.

Because I wasn't a shoe company or legitimate business I was unsure if I'd be able to find a manufacturer willing to work with me. But to my surprise I landed a local manufacturer in Los Angeles willing to do just that. The entire process of creating a shoe from scratch has taken a lot longer than expected –granted this is my first run. Overall, it's been five months of going back and forth with my manufacturer in the sampling stages. Though the shoe is not complete, I have learned more in the process than I ever could have in a classroom. I've truly been inspired to learn more about shoe development and the possibilities of running a business in this industry.

The course and material costs of the class I attended came out to around \$800, but keep in mind costs will vary depending on the style of shoe, materials used, construction techniques, etc. The development of my boots with a professional manufacturer has cost me \$3,000 so far. This initial cost is only for the sampling process and can vary depending on what you are able to provide. Since the boots I designed we're very specific in regards to their shape, a custom last (the mold in which the shoe is constructed) had to be created adding to the overall sampling expense. Typically a business will provide a manufacturer all the designs and patterns required to develop a shoe, thus skipping the initial development process and going straight into manufacturing. Once a production deal has been negotiated, manufacturing can begin. The costs can range anywhere from \$30-\$60 a pair for shoes made in the US/Mexico utilizing basic construction and materials. The cost per pair really starts to fluctuate when high-end materials are used and the shoe begins to feature more labor intensive construction such as a welted or stitched sole. For a shoe created by hand outside of the US, utilizing high quality leathers and longer lasting construction techniques, can increase the cost per pair somewhere between \$90-\$180. Packaging and labeling is another expense to consider. However, well established businesses ordering thousands of pairs at a time can significantly decrease the costs since they're not as high of a risk to do business with. In my personal situation the manufacturer has agreed to do a small production run of 25-50 pairs. This is a rare case since most factories won't do a production run under several hundred pairs as it becomes unprofitable for them to use the labor on a limited project. Moving forward I expect to pay an additional \$2,000-\$5000 in production to have those 25-50 pairs made and prepared for delivery to customers. This would bring my total investment to around \$6,000-\$8,000 which still excludes additional business costs including customs fees, a website and marketing. In the end I would recommend an initial savings of at least \$10,000 to anyone considering starting a footwear company, keeping in mind there may be little to no initial profits.

All in all, I've learned a lot in the classroom and even more through this development. Though the process is long, demanding and costly, those passionate about shoes like my professor as well as brands started from shoe enthusiast like myself continuously inspire me to create. For anyone interested in creating their own shoe on a professional level I recommend studying as much as you can about the process before going into shoe development completely blind, as a lack of knowledge can end up costing you a lot more in time and money.

Nic is still in the sampling stages of the boot. Stay up to date on the entire process at [Abbruzzini.com](http://Abbruzzini.com).





# Black

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Photos by Oscar Ho

A series of looks with one of our favorite colors.







Adidas - Running Quarter Zip





t&h - Hat





TAG Heuer - Aquaracer 300m 41mm





Adidas - Thrasher Snapback





Calvin Klein - Essential Sweatshirt





H&M - Skinny Ripped Jeans











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# The Review

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Photos Edited by Oscar Ho

A review in fashion, health and travel.



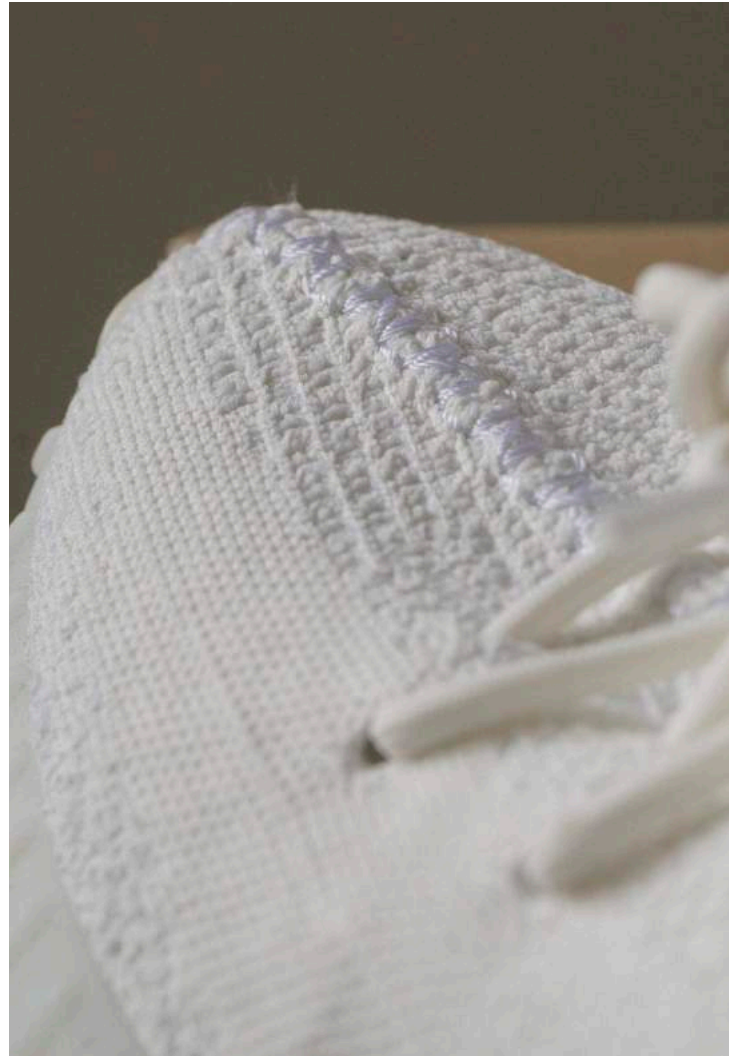


# Yeezy Boost

Kanye West's collaboration with Adidas gave birth to Yeezy Boosts, a highly successful shoe line. The unmatched demand and short supply for these sneakers made it nearly impossible for the average consumer to get their hands on a pair let alone at retail price. Limited inventory with no restock resulted in computer bots cleaning out online shelves within milliseconds and resale prices reaching four digits leaving the average consumer with no chance at acquiring a pair. Additional options included winning raffles at your local Foot Locker or on the Adidas app but chances of winning the Lottery was more likely. It wasn't until later this year that Kanye began re-releasing a few pairs with enough stock for everyone to purchase. Safe to say we were finally able to cop a pair of the Yeezy Boost 350 V2 in Triple White.







### *Expectation*

Yeezy Boost 350's are known for their unique knit style and incredibly comfortable technology known as Boost. I've had tons of sneakers that passed both the comfort and style test but they didn't have hype like Yeezys. The impossibility of acquiring these shoes led me to believe that Yeezys were the pinnacle of footwear—they were stylish, indescribably comfortable, and so high in demand that seeing an authentic pair on the streets was like seeing a unicorn.

### *Reality*

The shoe is much bigger than I expected. Only seeing the shoe online, it appeared to have somewhat of a slim figure but seeing it in person, the wide width is quite noticeable. The rubber heel comes up a bit high into the shoe and the opening of the shoe seems too generous. As far as fit, these shoes are snug. The Boost really provides a soft bounce with every step and the overall shoe hugs the foot nicely. However, because the shoe was designed as a knitted piece there is no structural support to maintain consistent stability should I decide to utilize them in a workout. Most shoes have a tongue under the laces, but this shoe does not. I prefer to tie my laces tight enough for a snug fit but that comes at the cost of comfort - the rather large stitching that holds the shoe together travels along the top of the shoe. Tightening the laces pulls the stitching down into the top of the foot creating discomfort.

### *Price*

Yeezys are famous for reselling for hundreds if not thousands of dollars above retail price, but coping this pair at the retail price of \$220 is still not quite justifiable. There are lots of other options that provide similar comfort, structural support and sleek style all within \$100-\$150. The Yeezy Boost 350 V2's may not be the best option if you're looking for comfort, style and practicality but if you're only aiming for style this pair is a decent choice.





# Aesop

Growing up with two sisters I've always been around facial skincare products but never actually used them. I didn't care much for skin care until my face really began to feel the effects of poor maintenance – breakouts became frequent, cracked skin every morning and overall daily discomfort. I resorted to my local pharmacy products but my skin felt as if the care was only daily instead of long term. In search of products made of quality ingredients that would help build healthy skin for the long haul, I came across Aesop.



### *Expectation*

From the price alone, I expected Aesop products to produce far better results than my previous cleansers and moisturizers. Good reviews from my trusted sources like Mr. Porter, GQ (though they promote products) and YouTube were consistent and the Aesop website provided sufficient info to convince me that their products would provide the results I was looking for. I wasn't expecting the holy grail of skincare but the culmination of all this information automatically held them to a higher standard.

### *Reality*

Aesop's products broke up my regimen into three stages: cleanse, tone and hydrate.

**Cleanse:** I've tried the Amazing Face Cleanser and the Parsley Seed Facial Cleanser. Both were superb on the skin and provided a soothing deep clean finishing off with traces of a pleasing herbal aroma. A little drop of the cleanser was more than enough to sufficiently clean my face and last me a solid five months of use for a 3.4 fl oz bottle.

**Tone:** To prepare my skin to receive the maximum amount of hydration, I applied a couple drops of the B & Tea Balancing Toner right after cleansing my face. Now before I added a toner to my regimen I didn't think it would make that big of a difference from what I was already doing. My first round with exclusively Aesop's cleansers and moisturizers always kept my face clean, hydrated and healthy. Adding the toner, my face felt pretty much the same. If there was a difference it could be that my face became more hydrated but not enough for me to notice a difference. The toner also came in a 3.4 fl oz bottle and after seven months of use once a day, I still have about 50% percent left.

**Hydrate:** To finish off I've tested a couple hydrating creams and serums including the Camellia Nut Facial Hydrating Cream and the Lightweight Facial Hydrating Serum. The cream was a bit heavy and took some time to sink into my skin whereas the serum quickly dried up as soon as I applied it on my face. The Camellia nut felt like it kept my skin hydrated a bit longer than the serum but at the end of the day both products kept my face feeling well hydrated and healthy. The Camellia nut came in a 2.1 fl oz jar and lasted me about four months of daily use. The serum came in a 3.4 fl oz bottle and provided me about five months of daily use.

My skin didn't have allergies to any of the ingredients Aesop used in their products so I was able to get the maximum benefit from each product. Aesop has been great about providing samples so I recommend trying out different products before diving straight in.

### *Price*

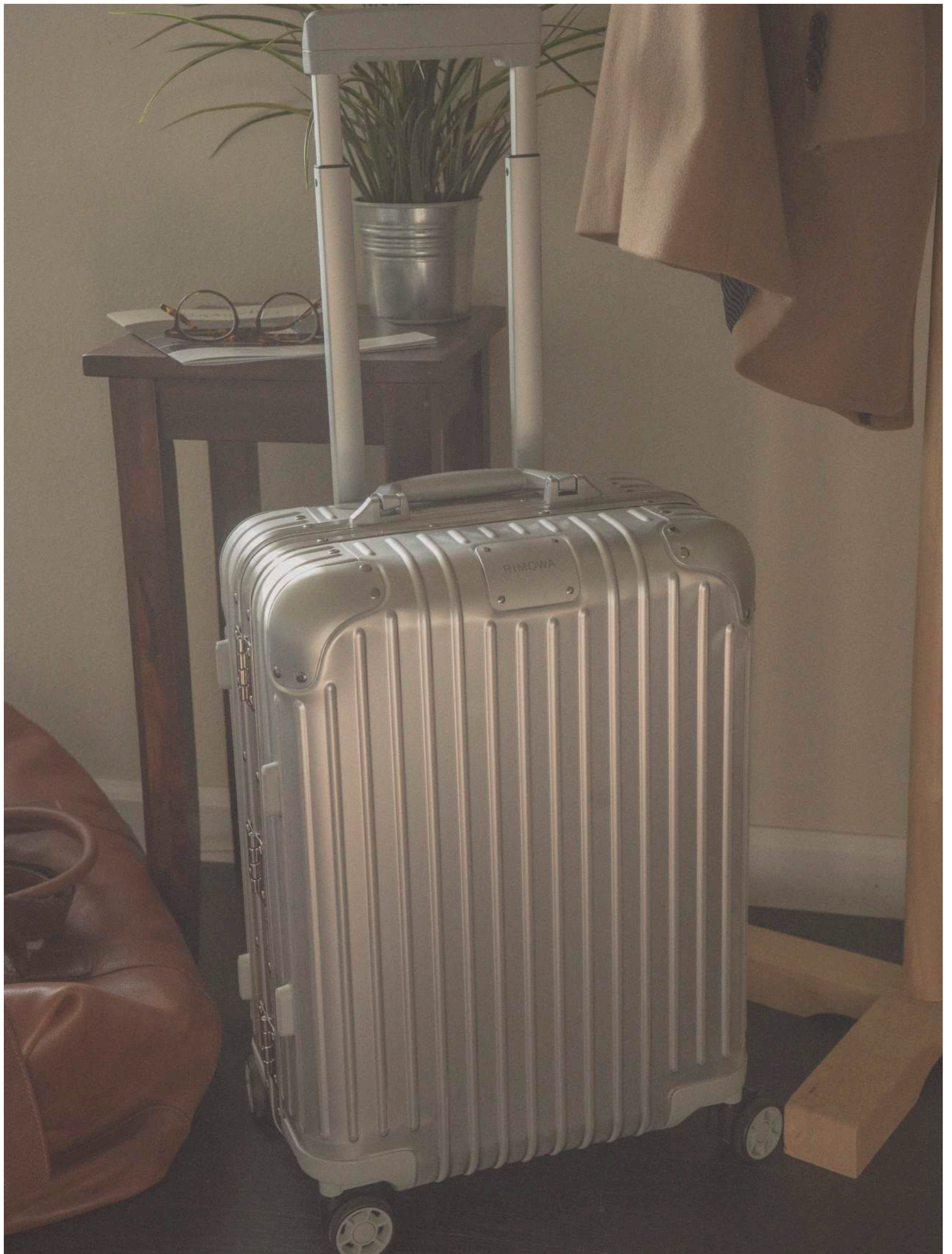
The Amazing Facial Cleanser retailed at \$30, the Parsley Seed Facial Cleanser at \$43 and the B & Tea Balancing Toner went for \$35—all were for the 3.4 fl oz bottle. The Camellia Nut Facial Hydrating Cream ran at \$49 for the 2.1 fl oz jar and the Lightweight Facial Hydrating Serum began at \$65 for the 3.4 fl oz bottle. Besides the cream, most products are available in larger sizes but the smaller option is more than enough. Aesop's skincare products may cost a bit more than your local pharmacy go-to's but at the end of the day this is for one of the most important parts of your body—your face. Aesop has definitely proven their worth. Safe to say, I've become a repeat customer.





# Rimowa

I've had my eye on various suitcases but never pulled the trigger on them because I always resorted to duffle bags. But after years of carrying them I realized I didn't want to lug around hoards of bags anymore so I bought my first suitcase. During the search I looked for key features such as durability, style and of course price. I've considered many brands but after months of contemplation and research my heart became set on a Rimowa. I realized I wasn't purchasing just a suitcase. I was making an investment in a product that I would feel proud to own. As corny as this may sound this suitcase was going to be making memories with me through all my new adventures—like a companion. Through this perspective it was easy for me to decide to go with Rimowa.













### *Expectation*

Rimowa is a bit higher on the price range. The reputation of this brand allows it to retail at higher prices but in terms of practicality, I expected it to hold my belongings and keep it safe just like any other suitcase would. The online reviews highlighted the smoothness of the wheels, the convenient TSA locks, the helpful compression divider inside and the “seamless” handles, but as a first time suitcase-buyer, I wasn’t able to compare my experience with other suitcases, so I expected to go about my business without encountering any inconvenience I would have had if I didn’t have these features.

### *Reality*

A suitcase is definitely much more comfortable – especially on longer trips that include flying. All the key features mentioned in reviews served their function well including the wheels- the suitcase felt like it was gliding at the airport and much smoother than I expected outside. The Rimowa was tossed around by cab drivers, smashed by bigger suitcases on busses and took a few hard hits to the wheels when navigating through the aisles on the plane but none of it was enough to affect performance and looks.

### *Price*

The Rimowa Original Cabin ran me a total of \$1,259 including California sales tax of \$109. As a high-end aluminum piece, I didn’t feel comfortable ever having to check it in so I decided on the carry-on size. For future trips that require more baggage, I would also bring a larger suitcase but in the more “check-in friendly” polycarbonate option. So far my experience has been on par so a second piece from Rimowa is likely.











# Ms. Moon Hee Lee

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Ms. Lee guides us through her fall picks.

Shot in South, Korea.









Shesmiss - Fall 18 Hood Long Padding - SMDJPI42030\_DN





Shesmiss - Fall 18 Handmade Coat - SWHHCI42020\_BR



Laurenhi - Bubble Raglan APS Round Knit in Cream





Lookpine - Chic Piercing Cap\_A064 in Black



t&h - Long Sleeve in White











# Mr. Nic Alves

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Photos Edited by Moon Hee Lee

Saturday afternoons around town with Mr. Alves.

Shot in downtown Los Angeles.





Abbruzzini Footwear - Azul Boot (Prototype)







Iron and Resin - Rambler Jacket in Charcoal Grey



Taft - Jack Boot in Tan









DSTLD - Slim 12.75 oz Raw Denim Jeans In 24 Dip Indigo Grey





ASOS Design - Muscle Fit Long Sleeve T-shirt with Roll Neck in Black



H&M - Slim Fit Blazer in Grey









COIN



# Two Thousand Eighteen

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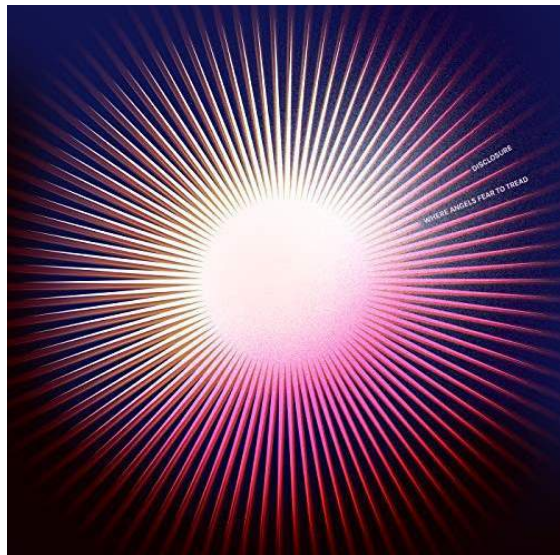
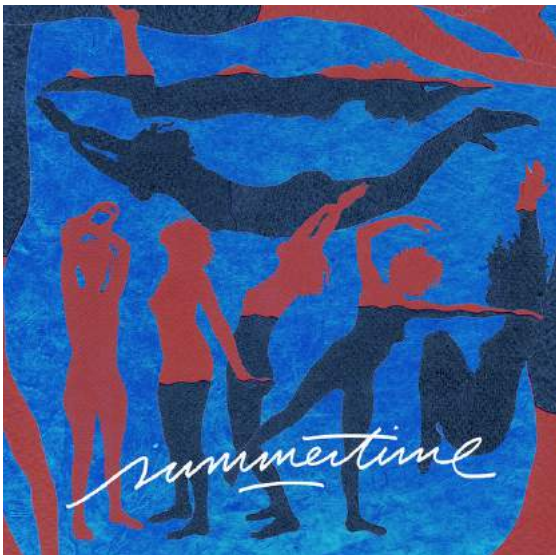
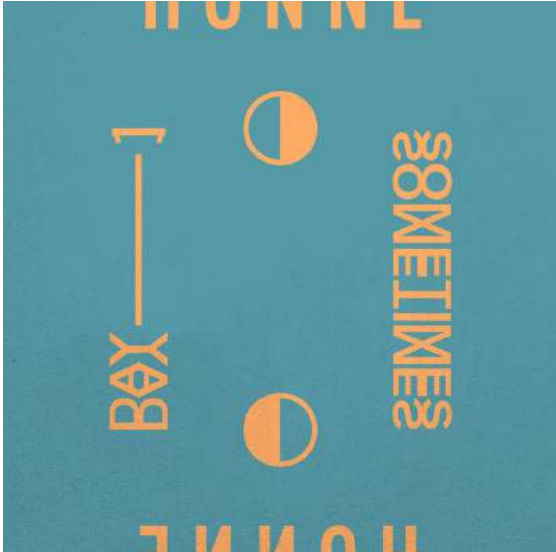
Words by Mary J. Park

As much as we have been tested spiritually, mentally, physically and emotionally, there has been a better sense of togetherness and closure in 2018. People are taking an extra step to listen and realize that at the end of the day we all want the same thing, love and understanding. Whether that is in relationships with partners, friends, family, strangers or even yourself.

This year has been a hell of a ride for me. I've been hard on myself about many things. But I've decided to let go and not stress over things out of my control. Who knows what the future will hold? It's time to enjoy the ride cause if I don't, I'm going to get wrinkles faster. And nobody wants wrinkles.

So with that being said, this playlist encompasses the theme of closing out 2018 on a warm, comfortable, mellow, sweet note. The synth-y reverberations, hip-hop and soulful jazz were songs that resonated with me this year and I'd like to think of this playlist as the groovy, melodic rollercoaster of emotions of 2018. Hope you enjoy the ride into a brand new year.





1. *Doesn't Matter* – Jeff Bernat
2. *Summertime Magic*– Childish Gambino
3. *Where Angels Fear To Tread* – Disclosure
4. *Lucy* – Still Woozy, ODIE
5. *Don't Let Me Down* – Sabrina Claudio, Khalid
6. *Feel It Still*– Portugal. The Man, Medasin
7. *Something About Us* – Daft Punk
8. *Love If We Made It*– The 1975
9. *Hannah* – COIN
10. *Home* – Medasin
11. *Bemysel*– Parcels
12. *Until* – Steven James
13. *Loving Is Easy* – Rex Orange Country, Benny Sings
14. *Easy* – Mac Ayres
15. *All My Friends* – Snakehips, Tinashe, Chance the Rapper, PREP
16. *Egyptian Luvr*– Rejjie Snow, Aminé, Dana Williams
17. *Day 1* – HONNE





# The LAbron James Effect

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Words by Andre Datyelian

Illustration by Monica Kang

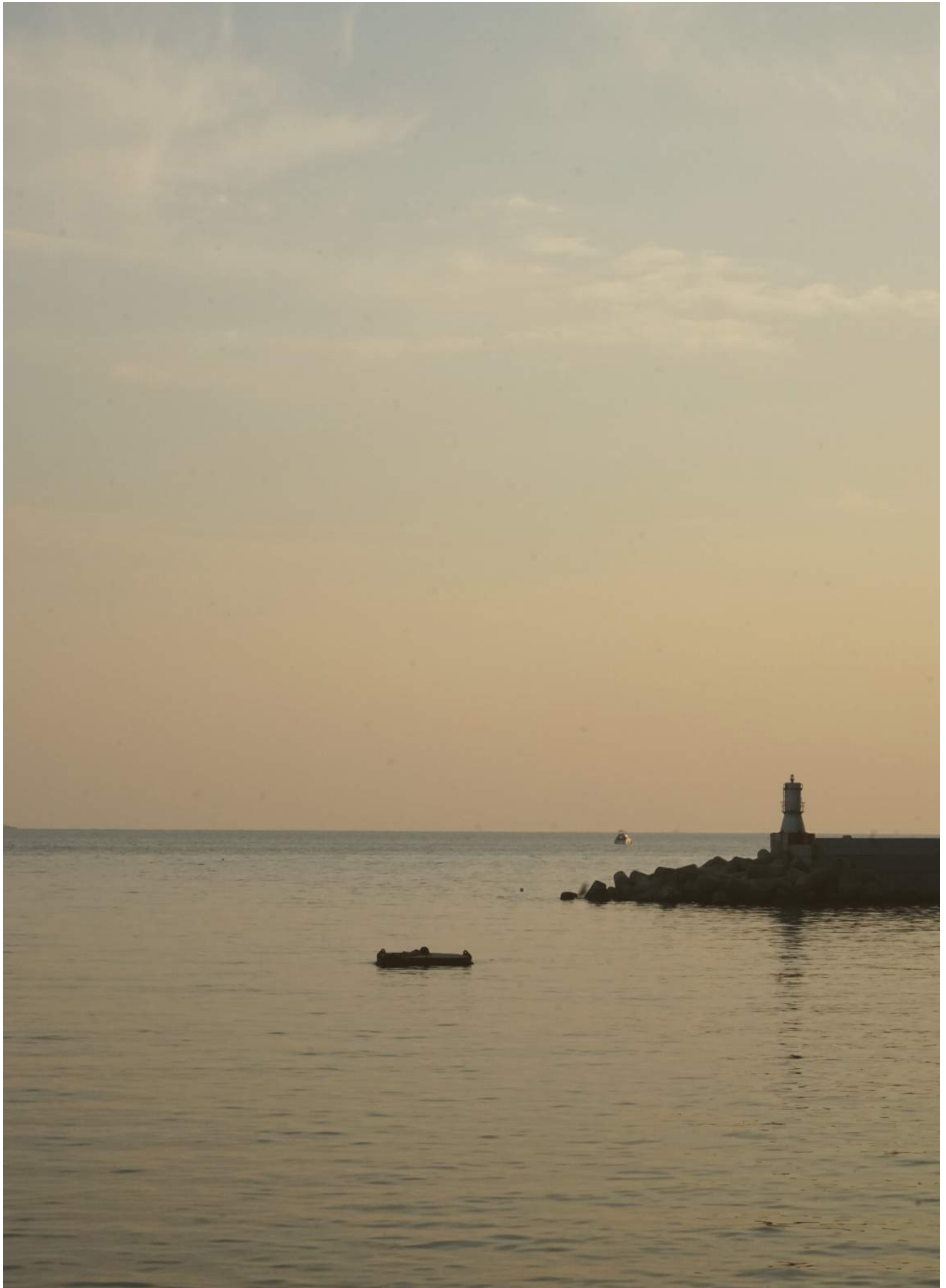
LABron, how did he end up here with a cheesy nickname befitting a comedy on NBC? DRAFT.

LeBron James is in Los Angeles. A common statement you'll hear around Southern California is "it's weird to see him in a Lakers jersey." At a certain point LeBron couldn't believe he was in LA either, well at least he forgot what he got himself into when he said "I almost cracked" with the earlier struggles in the season. Now LeBron's Lakers are settling in, earning victories and growing with every game. LeBron has brought meaning to the Lakers games. The talented youth we have with Lonzo Ball, Brandon Ingram, Kyle Kuzma and Josh Hart are now playing in games that actually matter. The expectation of LeBron and the pressure to win affected our youth early in the season- missed free throws, turnovers and lackluster defense hurt us early; however, the addition of veteran rim protector Tyson Chandler (who we only got because of LeBron's connection to the Phoenix Suns front office) has helped steady the boat. LeBron has taken less talent to the finals, granted on the East coast, with other contenders in the West coast facing their own issues we can see that happen again this year. LeBron hasn't been perfect himself but from a basketball perspective this season is a major improvement from the last handful of years.

From an LA perspective we see the trend of NBA interest and basketball jerseys sales increasing. The people of LA live for trends and more importantly creating them. LeBron's influence on LA has meant tons of billboards referencing number twenty-three, increased shirt and bootleg jerseys sales and the surge of screaming fans who don't know what a *travel* is but insist the other team travelled. Now for Laker fans that have existed since the beginning of time, so they say, there has been some weird feelings and conflict. Murals of LeBron can't be completed because fans ruin it and comparisons to past Laker greats seem inescapable. Just as much as LA supports trends they also hate them. LeBron is a trend that will face love and hate from LA citizens. Some of the hate justifiable, like for his free throw shooting. Some of it is not justifiable, like for not being Kobe Bryant. LeBron is the talk of the town and everyone wants to share this opinion. With that said I am excited, not only to see LeBron continue to dominate the league in a Lakers jersey but also to see his presence excite and expose the citizens of LA.

I am willing to admit I was a LeBron hater for no reason at all until he joined the Lakers this past season. Now I hope he becomes my favorite player by bringing titles to our city. It will be a fun year.





Haeundae, Busan

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