



Threading the Future

Adventure Book



START



At Aisha's school, fashion moves fast. Faster than homework deadlines. Faster than friendships sometimes. Every week, something new appears on TikTok, a silhouette, a color, a name, and suddenly everyone is wearing it, talking about it, posting it. If she doesn't keep up, people notice. She is Aisha. She is 17. And her closet is full.

Disclaimer: This main topic of this story is fast-fashion and the ambiguity it can produce in young people. For more information about ultra-fast fashion production and its impact on the environment, please read the cross-over story titled "The Influencer's Dilemma".



CONTINUE

The first thing Aisha hears when she sits down is the sound of nails tapping on a phone screen.

“Did you see MelBeauty’s live performance last night?”
She didn’t look up. She doesn’t need to. She already knows the answer, and it makes her chest tighten anyway.

“What did she do this time?” someone asks, pretending not to care.

“She brought back the overjeans skirt,” Mira says, leaning forward. “But, like, actually made it cool again.”

Around you, phones appear. Screens glow. Someone shoves theirs in the middle of the table. MelBeauty fills the screen, smiling, confident, holding up fabric like it’s obvious this is what everyone has been waiting for.



CONTINUE

"I bought two," a girl says casually.

"Same. They were so cheap."

"They're coming tomorrow."

Tomorrow. The word sticks in her head. Tomorrow means being on time. Tomorrow means not being the one who missed it. She nods along, even though her stomach feels hollow.

At lunch, she escaped to the bathroom. Aisha sits on the closed toilet lid and opens TikTok.

It takes seconds. MelBeauty's life reappears like it's been waiting for you. The young girl laughs, adjusts the camera, talks about how the overjeans skirt "works with literally everything." Comments fly up the screen. Hearts. Fire emojis. Obsessed.

The link blinks at the bottom. Five euros.

She thinks of her closet. She thinks of the pile on the chair in her room, clothes she meant to sort, clothes she stopped seeing. Her thumb hovers over the "buy" button. Not for long. Order confirmed. She felt a strange wave of relief, followed by something heavier. But she didn't name it. She closed the app.

CONTINUE

The package arrives the next morning, thin and light, like it barely contains anything at all.

"Another delivery?" her parents said from the kitchen. "Seriously, Aisha? How can you even afford this? We don't give you that much money."

She mumbled something and grabbed the parcel.

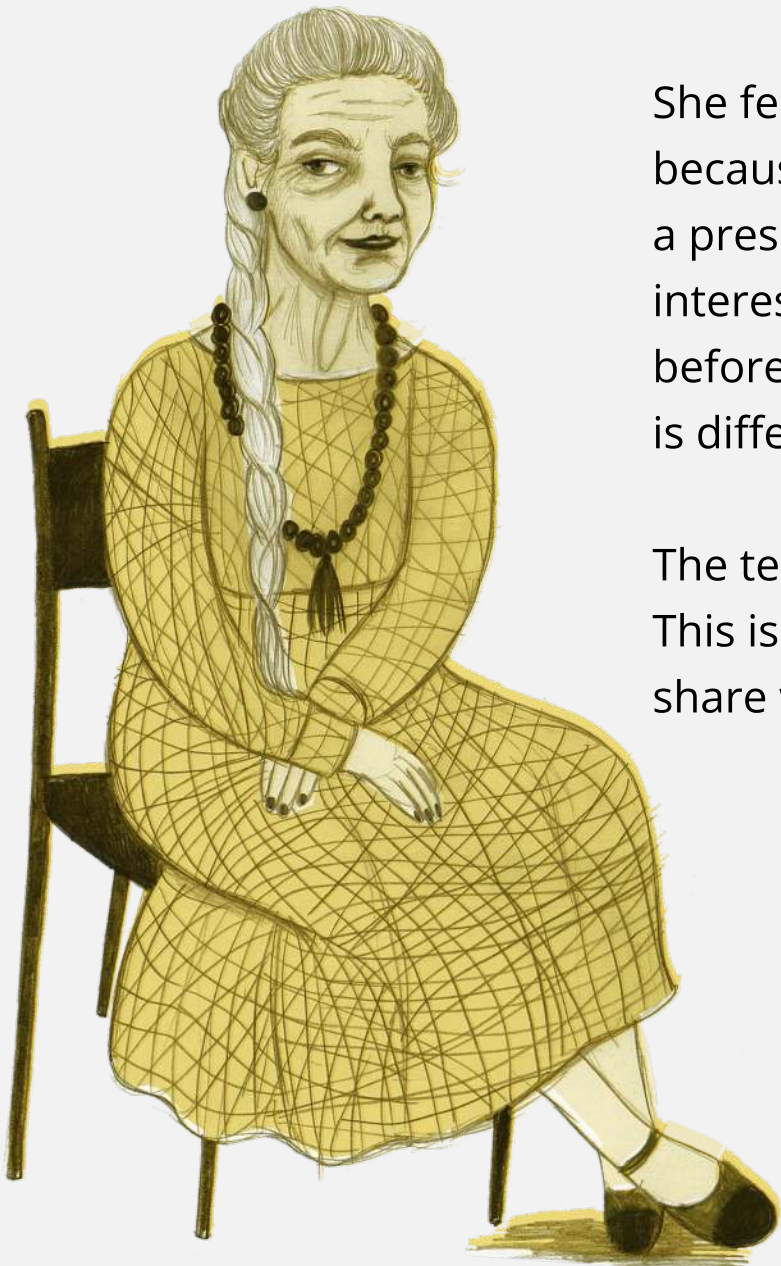
"You already bought jeans last week," they add.

Aisha doesn't explain that jeans don't cost the same anymore. She can buy a tshirt for 3€ now. In her room, she tears the plastic open. The fabric smells new and synthetic. It's thinner than she expected and almost transparent. She pulled it on immediately.

She doesn't check the mirror properly. She doesn't ask herself if it fits well, or if it feels like her. She just adjusts it until it looks close enough to what she saw on her screen.

At school, Aisha catches her reflection in a window. Skirt. Jeans. Same as the others. No one compliments you. No one questions it either. And for now, that's enough, She doesn't stand out for being different and she is content.

CONTINUE



She feels a ripple of anticipation as she walks into humanities class because since the beginning of the semester, every Friday someone gives a presentation under the theme of “The future of our planet”. It has been interesting so far but it has brought its sum of climate anxiety. Now, before the classes, the usual chatter feels hollow, meaningless. Something is different.

The teacher claps her hands once. “Class, today we have a special guest. This is Leo and his great-grandmother, who has something important to share with us.”

CONTINUE

Leo sits a little straighter than usual. She noticed his fingers fidgeting with the edge of his notebook. His grandmother is small and poised, her silver hair pulled into a neat braid. There's a calmness about her that makes the air feel heavier, as if she can't speak carelessly. The old lady begins to talk, her voice quiet but steady. It rises and falls like a rhythm Aisha can't ignore.

"Every choice we make," she says, "affects the seven generations before us and the seven generations to come. Think of it as threads. If a thread breaks today, the pattern will be damaged tomorrow." She glances around. Her classmates nod politely, some scrolling under their desks. Mira's expression is polite but dismissive.

She glances around. Her classmates nod politely, some scrolling under their desks. Mira's expression is polite but dismissive. The words sink slowly. Threads. Seven generations. She feels a pang of guilt, almost absurd, like it doesn't apply to you. And yet... her closet flashes in her mind. The pile of unworn clothes. The tags are still dangling. The sneakers with scuffed soles that she barely remembers buying.

CONTINUE

Her voice drifts over you. “Ask yourself: who is she choosing for when you make a decision? Yourself? Someone else? The future?”

A shiver runs down her spine. Aisha thought she was choosing for herself when she clicked ‘order.’ But now it feels... different.

Mira smirks at something Leo whispers, then turns to you. “Interesting, right? But come on, we’re just teens. Fashion is self-expression. That’s how it’s always been.”

She nods, but her words don’t land. They bounce off a wall she didn’t know was growing inside her.

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

⇒ She can’t stop thinking about the speed of production, the waste, and what her choices mean for the future. (Go to page 10)

⇒ She tells herself that this is normal, that fashion has always been part of identity, and there’s nothing wrong with following trends. (Go to page 8)

She decided not to overthink it. Everyone does this. Everyone buys, wears, discards. She's just living her life like everyone else. That's all there is to it.

But when she opens her closet later, the walls seem to close in. Clothes lean against one another like bored strangers. A skirt with the tag still attached, a hoodie that smells faintly of perfume from last season, jeans that stretched out before she even wore them properly. All of it stares back at her.

Aisha scrolls through her phone during the late afternoon lull, half-watching TikTok feeds, half-staring at the messy pile of clothes on her bed. Trend videos loop endlessly, new silhouettes, new names, new "must-haves." She feels tired, though you've barely noticed it until now. A notification catches her eye: an article shared by someone she follows. The headline reads: "The Influencer's Dilemma: When Ethical Fashion Meets Fast Fashion."

The story is about a young influencer, someone around her age, who built a following by promoting second-hand clothes, sustainable brands, and careful consumption. Now, a massive fast-fashion company is offering her a huge partnership. Only a tiny fraction of their clothes are sustainable; the rest flood landfills, exploit underpaid workers, and pollute rivers.

CONTINUE

Her dilemma is clear: take the money and amplify her voice within a system that's mostly harmful, or refuse and risk losing everything she's built.

She skims the numbers. Tonnes of textiles burned or dumped, rivers dyed purple, workers paid barely enough to survive, mountains of cheap clothes flooding the world in a single week. She reads how the influencer debated deleting honest comments from her followers, critical voices questioning the ethics of the partnership.

Aisha put down the phone and looked at her jeans-and-skirt combo, the one she bought yesterday. The fabric is soft, cheap, perfect for Instagram. But something in her chest tightens.

WHAT WILL YOU DO?



She decides it's easier to keep scrolling, keep ordering, keep blending in. Comfort and social safety win for now. Maybe she'll think about change later - maybe not. (Go to page 27)



She decided not to follow the trends blindly. She wants her choices to mean something, even if it makes her stand out. Maybe it's a small thing at first - learning to repair, swap, or upcycle - but it's real, and it honors both she and the world around you, like Leo's ancestor said. (Go to page 10)

Now she can't stop thinking about what the Seven Generations principle meant. Days, weeks, maybe months - it takes that long for a trend to appear, be designed, produced, shipped, and worn. And yet you're buying it in minutes. How is that possible? Who decides what is made? Who pays for it? Who suffers?

Leo notices her hesitation. "Hey," he says quietly after class. "If you want, I can show her something. It's... different."

Difference is an understatement. After school, he leads her to a repair café, tucked into a small side street. The smell hits her first: warm coffee, waxed threads, the faint metallic tang of sewing needles. People sit at tables surrounded by mountains of fabric scraps, scissors, and half-finished clothes. No mirrors. No one is watching anyone else.



CONTINUE



Aisha sits down hesitantly, and Leo hands her a needle and thread. At first, it felt awkward. The thread tangles. Her fingers ache. But gradually, a rhythm forms. Stitch by stitch, she mends a hole in a sweater. She patches a torn seam. She folds, cuts, and refashion.

It takes effort. Real effort. She feels the weight of what goes into every garment you've ever bought. For the first time, clothes aren't just items to keep up with trends, they are stories, labor, care.

CONTINUE

For the school exhibition, she decided to present this. Upcycling. Repair. Transformation. She even wears a piece she made herself, proud of its imperfections.

But Mira notices. She laughs lightly, the kind of laugh that makes a room feel colder. "Nobody wears that anymore," she says. "It's kind of... lame to cut up clothes and sew them back together."

Her words sting, sharper than she expected. But something inside her twists - a small, defiant fire.



WHAT WILL YOU DO?



She laughs it off, decides it's easier to avoid conflict. (Go to page 28)



She stands her ground and explains that this is how people can express identity, respect labor, and learn skills. (Go to page 13)

She felt her chest tighten. She wants to sink down, disappear. But something in Leo's steady gaze reminds her why she tried this in the first place.

"Actually," she says, taking a breath, "I think it matters. You can express who you are, and you can learn something in the process."

Mira raises an eyebrow, smirking. "Learn something? Like what, that needle pokes her finger?"

Aisha laughs nervously but keeps going. "Not just that. It's about respecting the effort behind clothes. Someone made this, and it doesn't come from a factory that treats people like machines. You don't just throw it away after a few wears. You can fix it, change it, make it yours."

Leo nods behind you, his smile small but proud. "She's right. It's skill, creativity, and... You actually think about what you wear instead of just buying the next trend."

Mira scoffs. "So what? Everyone's buying new things. It's fast, it's easy, it's what people like. Who cares if it comes with a story or not?"

Aisha feels heat rising in her ears. "Because it does matter! Clothes aren't just decoration. They're work, they're history, they're creativity. And we can choose to respect that instead of... just following every micro-trend that pops up on TikTok."

CONTINUE

A few students are staring now, silence hanging in the air. Mira's smirk falters slightly.

"Does she think everyone will care?" she asks rhetorically to her friends. "I mean, people barely notice what they wear anyway."

"Maybe. But even if only a few people notice, it's better than doing nothing. I'd rather make something real, something I can feel proud of, than keep buying things I don't even like because everyone else does."

Leo steps closer. "And who knows? She might even inspire someone else. One person seeing this could be the start of something bigger."

Mira rolls her eyes but doesn't say anything. For a moment, the tension hangs, and then she shrugs and turns away.



CONTINUE

Aisha exhales, feeling her shoulders relax. It's not perfect, you're not suddenly popular for it, and the teasing might come back, but for the first time in a while, she feels like she's standing on her own ground.

Leo claps lightly on her shoulder.

"See? That wasn't so scary."

She grinned, holding up her patchwork skirt. "Not at all. And this isn't the last one I'll make."

Encouraged by Leo, she decide to:

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

⇒ Start a repair and sewing club at school. (Go to page 16)

⇒ Launch a digital and analog campaign to denounce the pressure from firms put on young people to buy ultra-fast fashion. (Go to page 21)

The idea doesn't explode into existence. It grows quietly. That evening, She sat on her bed with her patchwork skirt folded beside her and opened the Notes app on her phone.

"Repair Club?" she types.

It looks small on the screen. Almost ridiculous. She imagined it anyway. A classroom after school. Windows are slightly open. Tables pushed together. Students bring torn jeans, old hoodies, and forgotten shirts from the back of their closets. No one asks, "What brand is that?" Only asking, "What can this become?"

The next day, she tells Leo. He grins immediately.

"Yes. Absolutely yes."

"You're too confident," she says.

"I just know my grandmother will love this."

She blinks. "Her grandmother?"

"She has friends," he says. "Retired tailors. People who've been sewing for fifty years. They complain that no one wants to learn anymore. If we invite them once a month, like a masterclass? They'd come and we'd get to learn so much better!"

The idea shifts and expands. This isn't just a club anymore, it's a connection.

She swallows. "Okay. But first we have to convince the school."

CONTINUE



Her and Leo stand outside the vice-principal's office three days later, holding a messy proposal they wrote during lunch break: a short description of the club, the environmental impact of textile waste, a list of materials needed. The idea would be to have an empty classroom one hour during lunch break, twice a week.

Her hands sweat as she knocks. The vice-principal listens quietly while she explains. Her voice shakes at first. She talks about waste. About skills. About creativity. About community. She expects an interruption. Instead, she leans back and says, "And you two would run this?"

"Yes," Aisha says. "With Leo. And... some guest mentors once a month."

The vice-principal raises an eyebrow.

CONTINUE



“Leo’s grandmother and her friends,” he explains. “They’re experienced and they’d teach techniques. For free.”

There’s a pause and then:

“We can try it for one term.”

Leo and she almost jump from her seats. They did it ! The first step is made. Now she has to actually gather people and get people to come. So they make posters and place them everywhere. She puts a big empty box at the entrance of the canteen for given items.

After a few days, she starts collecting things: three old t-shirts, a teacher brings in a box of thread spools from her attic, Leo’s grandmother arrives one afternoon with a suitcase. When she opens it, it’s like unveiling treasure. Metal scissors worn smooth by decades of hands. Wooden spools. Chalk. Measuring tapes soft from use. “These tools have stories,” she says quietly.



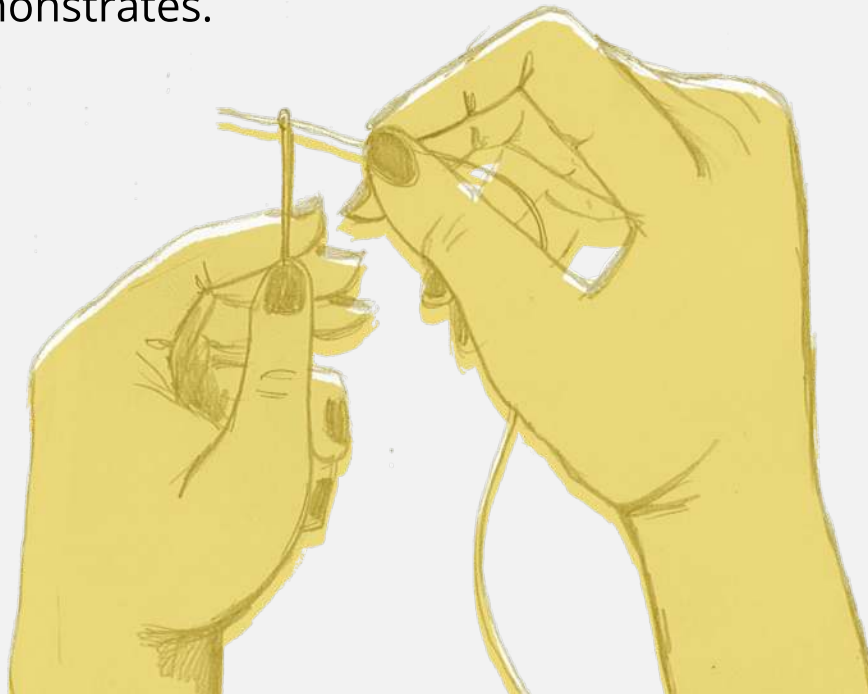
CONTINUE

The First Meeting

Six students show up. She pushes tables together. Lay out fabric scraps. Arrange needles carefully.

"Okay," she says, trying to sound confident. "Today we're just learning basic stitching. Nothing fancy."

Her fingers tremble as she demonstrates.
In. Out. Pull. Tie.



CONTINUE

One of the students, a boy from her math class, mutters, "I've never sewn before."

"Neither had I, " she admitted, "I just started a few weeks ago!"

Leo steps in next, showing how to crop and reshape an oversized shirt without ruining it.

There is laughter when someone stitches their sleeve shut by accident. Concentration when someone repairs a tear they thought was hopeless. A quiet pride when a girl holds up her patched jeans and says,

"Wait. I actually like this better."

At the end of the hour, no one asks about brands.

They ask: "Is this every week?"

She glance at Leo. He smiles.

"Twice a week even!"

The Masterclass

One month later, Leo's grandmother returns. This time she brought two friends.

They teach invisible mending. Decorative embroidery. How to replace a zipper properly instead of throwing the whole garment away.

Threads stretch across tables. Conversations stretch across generations. She looks around and realizes something quietly extraordinary: She is no longer chasing identity. She is building it. Thread by thread.

CONTINUE

The hallway empties slowly after her conversation with Mira. Her heart is still racing. She didn't shrink. She didn't apologise. But as she walks home, something keeps circling in her head. It's not just about clothes. It's about pressure. The constant drop. The countdown timers. The "Only 3 left!" notifications. The influencers unboxing like it's oxygen.

She stop walking.

"They make it feel urgent on purpose," She says out loud.

Leo looks at you. "Who?"

"The brands. The apps. The ads. They know we're scared of being left out."

He nods slowly. "That's the business model."

And suddenly she saw it clearly. It's not that teens are shallow. It's that the system is engineered. The trends aren't random, they're manufactured scarcity. Manufactured anxiety. She turns to Leo.

"What if we exposed the pressure? It's not right how the clothes are made, of course, nor the conditions in which they are created. But it is also not right that we are constantly tricked into buying them!"

That night, she didn't scroll. She researches. She looks at marketing strategies. Limited drops. Micro-trend cycles. Targeted ads for teenagers. Algorithms that track how long she stares at a skirt before showing her five more. She screenshotted everything. Then she opened a blank document.

CONTINUE

That night, she didn't scroll. She researches. She looks at marketing strategies. Limited drops. Micro-trend cycles. Targeted ads for teenagers. Algorithms that track how long she stares at a skirt before showing her five more. She screenshotted everything. Then she opened a blank document and write.



WHO PROFITS FROM YOUR INSECURITY?

The next morning, she and Leo stand outside the vice-principal office. A proposal titled:

“Campaign Against Ultra-Fast Fashion Pressure.”

She explains: how brands use artificial urgency, how social media algorithms amplify insecurity, how teens are specifically targeted, how overproduction fuels environmental damage.

“But we’re not attacking students,” She clarifies quickly. “We’re questioning the system. The messaging. The manipulation.”

CONTINUE

The vice-principal frowns slightly. "Do you understand this could be controversial?" "Yes," she says, "that's kind of the point." There's a long pause and then: "You may run it as part of the exhibition week but posters must be approved first and well sourced."

She convinces Leo and some friends to help her design all that she learns for her research into digestible posters. Without diluting the facts, Aisha tries her best to make them readable. As she sets up the exhibition after class, Mira confronts her in the hallway.

CONTINUE

“So now you’re attacking fashion?” she says. “You think you’re better than everyone?”
She swallow.

“I’m not attacking people,” she replies. “I’m questioning why we’re made to feel like we’re never enough.”
She rolls her eyes, but less confidently than before.

Behind Mira, two students scan one of Aisha's QR codes. They stand in front of the poster for a long time, scrolling through her annotated screenshots on their phones. Mira notices. She doesn't say anything. She walks away.

CONTINUE



The Exhibition

The exhibition opens officially the next morning. Aisha arrives an hour early to set up, taping the posters in sequence along the back wall of the main hall, double-checking that the QR codes still work.

WHO PROFITS FROM YOUR INSECURITY?

THE TIMER IS THE TRAP.

LIMITED. EXCLUSIVE. LAST CHANCE.

For the first hour, Aisha thinks nothing is happening. People drift past, glance, drift on. Even one person, she tells herself. Even one.

Then a girl from the year below leans close to the algorithm poster and says quietly to her friend, “Oh. So that's what they're doing.” She takes a photo. She walks away with her phone open, scrolling.

After her, more. Two boys from the football team scan a QR code and stand together for a long time. A teacher reads the whole sequence from start to finish, frowning, then writes something in a notepad.

Three girls from Aisha's own year argue in front of the “manufactured scarcity” poster, not at her, with each other. One of them points at her own phone, embarrassed and fascinated at the same time.

CONTINUE

By the end of the day, the digital campaign has been scanned ninety-seven times. Aisha sits on the steps outside the exhibition hall with Leo and shows him the analytics. He laughs the kind of laugh that's mostly relief.

"You did it."

"WE did it."

"Yeah. But you did it first."

Across the courtyard, Mira walks past with her usual group. She doesn't stop. She doesn't sneer. But she looks, for half a second longer than is comfortable, and keeps walking.

Aisha doesn't know if she's won anything. She knows she's started something.

CONTINUE

The closet is full. Overflowing. Clothes spill onto the floor, tangled piles of fabric, sequins, denim, polyester, polyester blends, skirts over jeans, t-shirts over hoodies, endless repeats of last week's must-have. She wears the trends. She scrolled the feeds. She posted the photos. Likes blink like little signals: She belongs, she is visible, she is safe.

One night, her phone buzzes. A notification from a sustainability account she barely remembers following flashes across the screen. A story about the young influencer — the one facing the fast-fashion brand, struggling with honesty, with courage. She read how she deleted critical comments. The story stings, uncomfortably close, as if looking into a mirror.

And then she heard it. A whisper at the edge of her consciousness.

“Why didn't you choose differently?”



THE END



After school, she finds a corner of the art room where nobody seems to notice her. She pulls out the patchwork pieces and a needle, thread dangling between her fingers. It feels peaceful, almost meditative, but strangely small. The weeks pass quietly. She sews. Just a little. Sometimes she tries to repair it. Sometimes she reshuffles scraps into something new.

But she keeps buying, too. Clicking links she doesn't even need. Grabbing cheap T-shirts, oversized hoodies, skirts over jeans. The thrill is smaller than it used to be, and the satisfaction even smaller.

She doesn't wear her creations much. They stay folded on her bed or in her bag. Sometimes she looks at them and feels a flicker of pride. Other times, they remind her of a choice she didn't make, a voice she didn't raise. Leo asks if she wants to come to a small sewing meet-up one afternoon.

CONTINUE

She shakes her head.

"I've got homework," she says. It's partly true. Mostly, she just doesn't want to explain. She doesn't want to commit. She doesn't want to be visible.

Mira doesn't ask, doesn't invite, doesn't include. She isn't surprised. She doesn't even feel angry anymore. She just... notices the quiet distance, a gap growing between her and everyone else. And somewhere in the back of her mind, the whisper begins:

"Why didn't you choose differently?"

THE END

By the end of the term, what started as one chosen action has grown beyond it.

A teacher uses the project as a case study in her media literacy class. The local newspaper runs a short piece. Aisha receives messages from teenagers in two other schools asking how to start something of their own. She answers every one.

Mira does not join the club. She does not apologise for the comment about the patchwork skirt. As for Aisha, she still scrolls sometimes. She still feels the pull of the countdown timer, the small panic of only 3 left. But she pauses now. She asks herself the question Leo's great-grandmother asked the whole class that day:

Who am I choosing for?

Sometimes the answer is still herself, today, in that exact mood. Sometimes the answer is the people who made the clothes. Sometimes the answer is the seventh generation, somewhere far ahead, asking her quietly: did you keep the thread?

She is not perfect. She is awake.

THE END

You've reached the end of the story.

In these pages, you experimented.

You repaired something, or you resisted something or you spoke up when it felt uncomfortable.

Maybe you hesitated.

Maybe you failed once.

Maybe you surprised yourself.

That was the point. Fashion can feel enormous, global, fast, untouchable. It can feel like something that happens to you. Trends appear, prices drop, notifications buzz. And somehow you are expected to keep up. But what you discovered here is that the system relies on silence and speed. It thrives when you don't pause, when you don't ask questions, when you believe you are alone in feeling the pressure. When you question a trend, you interrupt the urgency. You noticed the countdown clocks and the carefully chosen words: "limited," "exclusive," "last chance."

Next

Awareness doesn't make you perfect but it helps regain power.

You start choosing instead of reacting and when you do any of this with other people, something even more important happens: you start building your own community.

Belonging built on shared values feels different from belonging built on matching outfits.

Collective action does not begin with grand gestures, it begins with conversations.

The deepest transformation in this story did not come from buying anything.

It came from learning.

From creating.

From speaking.

From connecting.

Next

1

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

3

2

Next



When was the last time you
bought something mainly
because you felt pressure to fit
in?

What was driving that decision -
excitement, insecurity, boredom,
belonging?



In the story, different characters respond differently to social pressure.

Which reaction felt closest to how you usually act - speaking up, staying quiet, going along with it, or resisting privately? Why?



What does “style” mean to you:
keeping up with trends,
expressing identity, belonging to
a group, creativity, something
else?

Has that definition changed
while reading this book?

FURTHER RESOURCES

Next



FashionUnited. “Why Ultra-Fast Fashion’s ‘Cheap’ Argument Is a Consumer ‘Scam’.” FashionUnited, 29 Dec. 2025, <https://fashionunited.com/news/retail/why-ultra-fast-fashions-cheap-argument-is-a-consumer-scam/2025122969785>. Accessed [23/02/2026].

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