



DRIPLESS?

Volume 1



taking style's scenic route

Barely Holding
Together
Ceremonial Shoes
in tatters

CROCS:
A Lifestyle



Dripless #1



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The Following is an interview with a man named Rick Laakman. He is my brother-in-law, and currently lives in Kentucky where he works. He was chosen for this interview because he has a distinct way of dressing and sticks out like a sore thumb in rural Kentucky.

PHOTOGRAPHY, WRITING
AND DESIGN BY
LILIANA MORA

KENTUCKY COWBOY

INTERVIEWER: Well, you know, for the interview where are you from?

RICK LAAKMAN: Well, It's a complicated story I'm originally from a small town, Oakland New Mexico. It's a rural community in Northern . . . Well, Mid-way in the state, up in the White Mountain ranges. A community of about one hundred and fifty people. A small Mormon community. I'm not Mormon but we grew up amongst that religious community, It was an interesting way to come up. Grew up rather poor . . . It's kind of funny, living up in the mountains, it's a rugged and beautiful place but it's also rife with poverty. People live there, often it's not out of want or [because they have] a beautiful summer home, but because it's cheap to live there or their family has been there for generations. Only recently now that I've grown up do you see people with vacation homes.

INT: Wow, so there's been a demographic change where you were living.

RL: Not necessarily . . .

INT: Recently?

RL: Not Necessarily. People are fleeing the big urban centers, Phoenix, Arizona and Albuquerque. Seeking a scenic and beautiful place in the mountains to forget about their problems. And they buy up the property there.

INT: OK, and what do you do for work?

RL: I work for the United States Forest Service. I do timber management. So, anything that has to do with harvesting trees, planting, basically managing them. Silviculture is that I do. Its a type of agriculture on a much larger scale.

INT: Okay, so, what you are wearing now, Is that what you would wear on a day to day?

RL: Yeah. It's kind of funny. When it comes to the clothes I wear, I never really feel comfortable with high end fashion. I don't wear this rustic attire out of a sense of superiority to more fashionable people, like people who wear Kakis and nice shirts and stuff like that, but those things ultimately don't feel like who I am.

INT: Hmm

RL: However, I am also not a big fan of, I don't know, the verry uncaring camo and torn clothes and that type of aesthetic. I am from the southwest and I always liked that look. So, that's button up shirts with pearl

buttons and colors, always colors, nothing
rab, a good pair of blue jeans and, it's either
evi Straus if I've got the money or Wrang-
lers if I don't. As for my shoes, these are Sol-
mon's. They are a good pair of hiking shoes
can wear either walking around town or if I
ant to go on a trail with my girlfriend.

nd as for the hat, that's a recent addition. Actually, I never really liked cowboy hats. Growing up I never really felt like a cowboy. I was from the South West and I always thought if I wore a hat like that I would look more like a poser. This hat is not quite a cowboy hat. It's actually an Australian outback hat is what it is. But I like it, it's bit of a unique flourish, something different. Its also, It's not me pretending to be something I'm not.

NT: Interesting, so, for you, cowboy hats, that's like, a recent addition to your style.

L: Yeah, it is.

NT: Interesting, what caused that change?

L: I think as I aged, I wanted more of a



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visual identity that represented where I came from, at least some aspect of it. I personally don't think I look that good when it comes to Stetsons or stuff like that, so this is a good, happy medium for me. And it's cool as well. Kangaroo leather, and I like it.



RICK'S HAT, an Australian outback hat made out of kangaroo leather.

INT: Okay. This is really good; you are doing a great job. I'm really glad I chose to interview you; you are really good at talking about this stuff. So, is what you wear typical of what a man would wear in the South West, where you are from?

RL: Yes and no. It Depends.

INT: How so?

RL: South West, Like Texas and Arizona still have a living cowboy culture, and it, it's kind of a complicated thing because a lot of it is just posing. It's hearkening back to a time when men were men and we were rugged and we rode the trails and bullshit like that, Oh, sorry, no cussing right?

INT: Oh, it's fine.

RL: But there are people who still really live the lifestyle, who dude ranch and still do horses, so it's kind of an interesting fusion of people who wanna hearken back to that time and also people who actually still live the lifestyle. And for me, I think it's a unique bit of identity that only the Southwest really has. That's through a combination of TV and Movies and Actual Historic Attire.

INT: And you chose to bring that with you even when you left the South West.

RL: I did. For me it was just a way to dress that matched who I was.

INT: Okay, so, now I want to ask about your hair. Is that typical cowboy hair?

RL: Not at all.

INT: Not at all? Where does that come from then?

RL: Well, first I find most men's haircuts extremely boring. When it comes to short hair, I don't want to look like I

*"Growing up,
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felt like a
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But I like it,
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something different"*

run a bank. But, when it comes to longer hair, when you can actually get creative with men's stylings, I don't have the patience for it. It's hot, it's difficult and you have to take good care of it to look like you are not homeless. So, for me, this is a way to have something that's unique something that's different, but also not having to take on the work of a more work intensive hair style. And I do have a big love of heavy metal music and the punk movement and the counterculture movement. I've always enjoyed it. It think I get it from my father and it's a way to also show that.

INT: Also I am looking at these jeans, and I am seeing some wonderful distressing in them. Where did you get them?

RL: I bought them brand new. I think from . . . I think I bought them from the wester store me and Alyria go to. There is a western retailer outlet by Lexington Kentucky. They deal in all things blue jeans and button up shirts. No, the distressing is not how I bought them. I did that on my own.

INT: So, the distressing is authentic. It's yours.

RL: I Suppose

INT: So, this is your history to the garment. That's exciting! How long have you had them?

RL: Oh, about a year, year and a half

INT: this is your casual clothes, is this what you would normally wear working?

RL: Yes and no. When you do my type of work you need to wear full pants. You don't do my type of work in shorts, despite what people think. You need to be able to protect your legs: you can cut yourself, poison ivy, insects, you name it. So, when I work, I actually wear a pair of Carhartt's,

INT: [whispering and pointing to her own legs] These are Carhartt's.

RL: Yeah, heavy duty work pants, I wear the brown kaki ones just because,

well, they're old school. And if not, I wear my government uniform. They give you government issue green pants, cargo pants. And the reason I wear those is my jeans are my personal gear, I don't want to damage them while I am working.

INT: And can you tell me about the belt?

RL: It's a brass belt buckle, government issue, funny enough. I enjoy my work. I am very proud of what I do. And I always thought it would be cool to have an actual, I don't know, sign to show that off. It's just become part of my everyday garb. I need to get brass polish for it though, it's starting to look a little faded.

INT: And what about the shirt? Where did you get it?

RL: Probably a thrift store somewhere, I couldn't remember where but, no name brand, just some garment I found that was long sleeved, had colors I liked.

INT: So, you like a pop of color. That's important.

RL: Yeah. Yeah. I guess when it comes to the aesthetic I like, no drab, no blacks, no grays. No, you need some color in your life.

INT: And is that typical of the Southwestern Style or is that your taste?

RL: Well, both. It's kind of funny, a lot of people associate South Wester style with white people, even though, the aesthetic is heavily influenced by Mexican culture. Everything from western country music, which has significant Mexican influence to the aesthetic itself, the colorful shirts, the turquoise, the orange, the pinks, The stripes, that's all very Hispanic actually.

INT: Alright, I think we may have already touched on the shoes, but can we go over it again. Where did you get these and how long have you had them?

RL: I've had them for probably two and a half years. They're Solomons. They're a good brand of hiking shoe meant for outdoorsy types and stuff like that. I like them because I can wear them around town, and they are not my working boots.



RICK'S BELT, government issue with a brass buckle and leather strap.

When it comes to the aesthetic I like, It's:
no drab,
no greys,
no blacks,
you need some color in your life





THE COAT

Shearing military reconstructed bomber jacket from South Korea.



THE TEAR, which was torn and mended and then torn again in the same spot.



INT: So, you wear Hiking shoes even when you are not hiking. This is your go-to shoe.

RL: Yeah. Because they're comfortable and they suit both purposes.

INT: So, you are always ready to hike. Do you have that heart of adventure?

RL: Not particularly, I get plenty of that in my work.

INT: Okay, I think the glasses. That's the last thing we have not touched on.

RL: This is a relatively recent thing. I've needed glasses since I was a kid. Wasn't till I graduated from college I bought them for myself. I had a rather harrowing experience on a date one night trying to drive at night, so, but no, it's a relatively recent thing. [Taking off his glasses to inspect them] Had them for two or three years. I have a minor astigmatism, so it helps me correct them. You're rather blurry right now.

INT: And facial hair? Where does that style come from?

RL: Probably my father, he had a mustache and goatee for a long time, and an inability to grow hair anywhere on my upper face. My throat gets phenomenal growth. It looks horrible though.

INT: Is that also a cultural aspect of the Southwest or is that just you?

RL: That's just me.

INT: Then last question is the jacket. Tell me about it.

RL: This is a gift from a family member, one I treasure quite a bit. It's very retro, its unique. Obviously, it's a reconstruction of a historic bomber jacket. It's really cool. As for the tear in the thing. It devastates me a little bit. I had it for two days after receiving it I punched a hole right through it with the end of a chair.

INT: After two days? Daaang. With the end of a chair? Was that in Cambodia still?

RL: After we got back. Took it to a tailor. He did the best job he had. Clearly he was not used to that kind of tailoring because, the hole just reappeared. I need to get a new patch for it.

INT: Okay, I think that's everything.

*"As for the
tear in the
thing it
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me a
little bit."*

[As we were wrapping up, Alysia Mora, Rick's partner mentioned something we had forgotten to discuss, so we turned the recorder back on to get the following section]

INT: Okay, Yeah, then introduce yourself. Who are you?

ALYSIA MORA: Uhh . . .

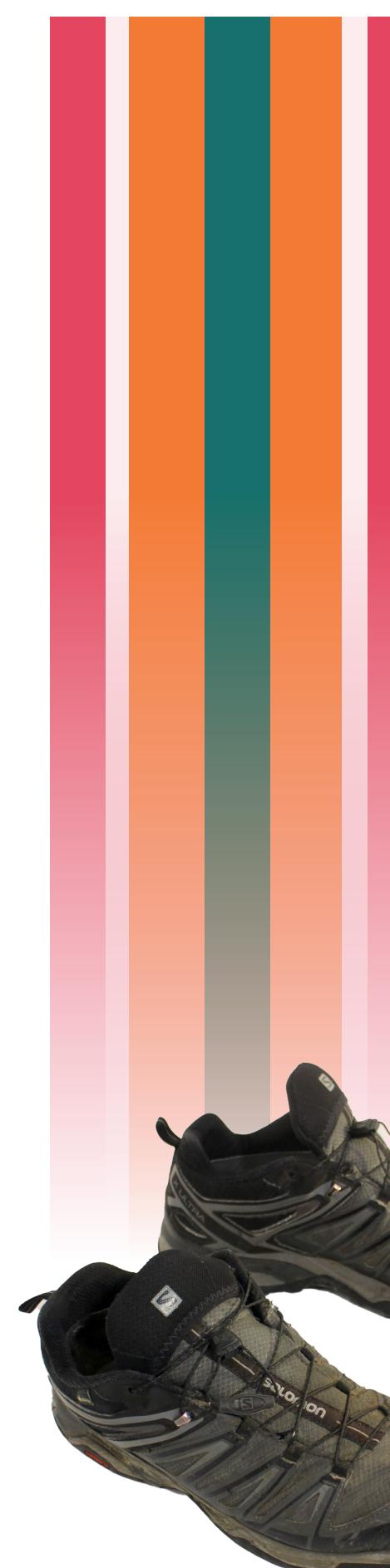
INT: Say your first and last name.

AM: This is so uncomfortable, my name is Alysia Lurdes Mora, and I . . .

INT: Okay

AM: And I am girlfriend to the subject, pain in the ass older sister to the artist,

INT: [chuckles] Okay

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AM: I am bringing this up because it is part of why he wears shoes that are really sturdy. Because his feet are fucked up. [chuckles] and so if you look at the soles of his shoes, the wearing is quite significantly different, because of how his feet sit, because he had clubbed feet as a child and it was pretty extreme. So I just thought maybe that, if you are talking about why he wears certain things, his shoes are really important. Like, what he wears on his feet matters a lot, because he needs the support. I don't know how bad these [shoes] are, but some of the others, it will weather entirely flat on one side because he puts all his weight on the outside.

INT: Okay, Rick, can you verify what she said as being true of your feet?

RL: Yes, we'll do a cross examination.

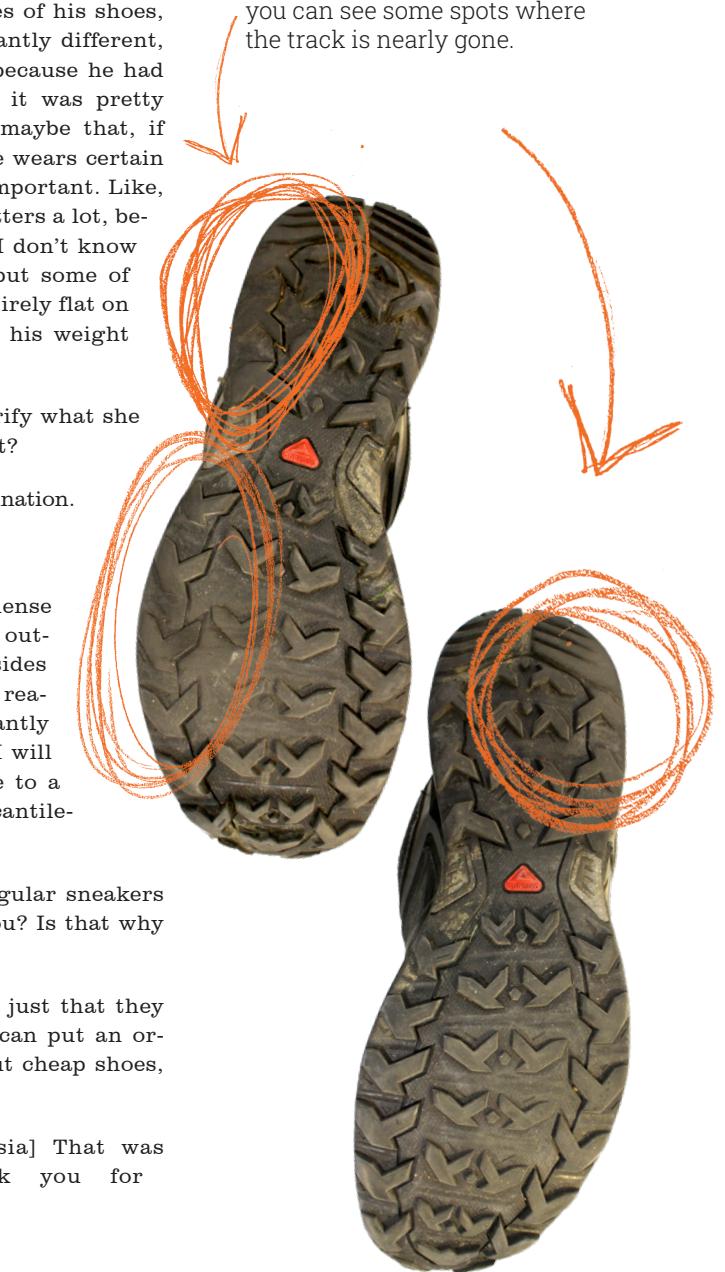
AM: [laughs]

RL: Yeah, I do. I put an immense amount of weight on the The outer step. On of the left and right sides of my feet. That's one of the reasons I can't wear a significantly heeled logger boot, because I will wear the heel on the outside to a degree where my foot with cantilever towards the inside.

INT: Ooooh, okay, so are regular sneakers not structured enough for you? Is that why you wear the hiking boots.

RL: I wouldn't say that. It's just that they are sturdy and something I can put an orthopedic insole in with it. But cheap shoes, cheap shoes would be bad.

INT: [to Alysia] That was good. Thank you for interrupting.



RICK'S SHOES, Solomon brand hiking shoes, which Rick uses for everyday wear.



Vol. 2



DRIPLESS!

Taking fashion's scenic route



sole-less: shoes worn to death

Gamer GRWM: Classic Cave Dweller Look
Get That

Mennonite Realness:
My Mom Made Me Do It

