

ELAUNTI

ZELLA DAY



WRITTEN BY*Madeline Saxton-Beer***PHOTOGRAPHED BY***Samantha West*

This page: VALENTINO lace and tulle cosmo gown, THE2BANDITS gold bracelet, and talent's own jewelry (worn throughout).

Opposite: VALENTINO velvet mockneck long dress.



It's hard not to resent those whose talents are seemingly imparted from the womb. Granted, Zella Day is one such specimen, hating on her is hard to do. The 20-year-old is bohemian rhapsody personified, a fitting metaphor for someone who names Freddie Mercury as one of their foremost stage idols. Speaking to Day is akin to taking a dizzying drag of fresh mountain air as she describes the naissance of her music career in a demeanor as natural as plaiting hair.

You grew up in Pinetop, Arizona. Tell me about the majesty of growing up in a small town in the American West.

[It] was very enchanting. It's funny because it is a real place but it does sound like a fairytale land. It's a small town of 7,000 people. There's no college in Pinetop so there's no visual

art scene. The Apache reservation is right next [to the town] and that's where the ski resort is, so I grew up going to Sunrise Ski Park my whole life and playing at the lodge. My parents owned the only coffee shop in town and that was my first stage at nine years old. There was live music on the weekends so I was just surrounded by the local musicians—that was my life; I was a little kid in a mountain town running around like a wild child with an acoustic guitar.

You more or less grew up on the stage—at what point did you feel like it was going to become your career, or did you always know?

I knew that music was going to be my career when I was 15, living in Arizona, and getting flown out to Nashville every month for about a

week for writing sessions. That was when I knew that music was going to carry me through my whole life. It didn't matter where I was, if I could write a song in my own home and have it be something that was relatable and reached out to other people, then I have a career for the rest of my life in writing music.

Have you done much travelling abroad?

I have done two trips to London but very short trips—like, four days—so I don't even feel like I can talk about it. I didn't even stay in a very cool place when I was there. I stayed in Kensington. I actually performed in Shoreditch and I said something about where I was staying on stage and people were like, "Biiiiilll" and I was like "Oh shit, I didn't know that was a thing! Okay, I guess I'm staying

in the posh part of town."

You live in Silver Lake in Los Angeles now, what has been instrumental in making L.A. home for you?

When I was growing up, I [visited] Long Beach every summer. I would go to Santa Cruz as well and hang out with family up there and work the fresh fish market with them, so California has been an essential part of my life for sure. All of the time when I am in L.A. and I get back from tour and I'm just driving around doing errands, I close my eyes and breath it all in because it's such a beautiful place. It has this rugged city feel but then at the same time you are in California and there is just this vibration that permeates through the whole city. It's that West Coast, man, there's nothing like it.