

## HUMAN NATURE: THE BECOMING

### **Collection Narrative**

*The Becoming* is a collection inspired by my personal journey of self-discovery, resilience, and entrepreneurship.

I would be lying if I said I had always dreamed of working in fashion. Until January 2025, my knowledge of fabrics was limited to knowing what kitenge looked like and that cotton wool was used to clean wounds. Fashion was never part of my plan.

My journey to fashion began as a way to remind people to own their uniqueness and be proud of their individuality. Growing up as a dark-skinned girl, I experienced colorism from an early age. Some of the comments I received stayed with me for years. One of the most memorable was when a high school teacher compared me to an Aberdeen Angus cow because of my dark complexion. Experiences like these affected my confidence and self-esteem during my teenage years.

At the age of 21, I began exploring my Kikuyu culture. Through learning about my culture, I developed a deeper appreciation for my roots and, in turn, for myself. I became more confident in my identity and my voice.

As my confidence grew, so did my career and fashion sense. I began embracing bold jewelry and stronger silhouettes without realizing that I was already using fashion as a form of self-expression. Through the way I dressed, I was communicating a simple message: this is who I am, and I am unapologetic about it.

Towards the end of 2023, I wanted to share that message with others. I wanted to encourage people to embrace their individuality and reconnect with their roots, because I had discovered that many of the answers about who we are can be found there. That desire led to the founding of Alkebu Way in January 2024.

As I navigated the challenges of building a business, I found myself reflecting on my life journey. I realized that every challenge I had faced had contributed to the person I had become. The difficulties had strengthened my endurance. The endurance had driven growth. The growth had created confidence. And that confidence gave me the courage to pursue my ambitions despite uncertainty.

I realized that this cycle is universal.

We face challenges.

We endure.

We grow.

We succeed.

Then life presents a new challenge, and the cycle begins again.

This continuous process of transformation became the foundation of “**Human Nature: *The Becoming.***”

The collection expresses this philosophy through construction rather than decoration. The front of each garment is intentionally clean and refined. It represents the version of ourselves that the world encounters every day: composed, controlled, and confident. Leather serves as the primary material and symbolizes strength, resilience, and endurance. Running through the back of each garment is a structural spine, representing the inner strength that carries us through life's challenges. The back panel system tells the deeper story. The individual panels represent the different experiences, struggles, and turning points that shape our lives. The seams connecting them represent the lessons learned through each challenge and the growth that emerges from those experiences.

Kikoy appears only through subtle reveals and interior linings. It represents vulnerability—the private parts of ourselves that are seen only by those closest to us during difficult moments. Hidden beneath the leather exterior, it reflects the emotional depth that often exists beneath outward confidence.

Together, these elements create a visual language of resilience, growth, identity, and transformation.

The Becoming is not simply a collection about overcoming challenges. It is a celebration of the process of becoming. The continuous journey of falling, rising, learning, growing, and evolving into who we are meant to be.