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Bridge 2: Walkabout

I blink, slowly shut my eyes and open them back up to the sounds of a fun, bright ringtone tickling my ears. Fumbling with my phone in hand, I unfurl myself from the warm, comfy burrito I had buried myself in. I slide out of bed and the cold hits my legs. Instead of waking my roommates with noise, I grab the clothes and shower caddy I laid out the night before. I step out of the steamy bathroom, dress to start the work day and walk from my dorm building to the subway station.

As I pass my regular landmarks like the fishy smelling Bait & Hook restaurant and Vivi's, the pearl milk tea shop, there are children and parents walking New-York-fast-paced with a focus and direction. I look down at my phone with the directions for my first day to the studio in Brooklyn. As I catch the L and G trains, I am compressed by the masses of adults dressed in suits. I climb the steps out of the subway, fresh snow hits my face. Early in the morning few cars and people walk the streets.

The Bridget Parris Couturier fashion studio is in an obscure location near the water and loading docks. In the lobby of the building, artists from all floors congregate to buy their morning coffee. I head up three floors with no idea what's coming. I know am going to do a variety of different tasks each week. The job description is everything from the business end to the design end of the spectrum — studio finances, organizing information files, taking photos of

the dresses and the process for Fashion Market Week, managing the designer's social media, going to vendors, choosing fabric and organizing it into a fabric book, cutting patterns, cutting and sewing drafts of the dresses in practice fabric, making presentations, and sitting-in on buyer meetings.

Although my experience consisted of two different roles, both are part of one system; one extremely personal and the other communal. They seem different even though they are not because I bring my experience that I've had with the city to her business. In my role, each task is paired with a way it connects to the city and to its people. I watch and learn from Bridget as she interacts with factories, vendors, buyers, designers, sewers, shipping and delivery workers, and the receptionists at the front desk through a large network. While businesses are located across the globe, her small atelier will thrive in this fast-paced, connected environment she has created for herself. I've learned that nothing is in isolation.