

# Don't sleep on the fashion in *I May Destroy You*

Not a single patterned cardigan is an accident.

By ASHLEY RAY-HARRIS



THAT ENDING THO!  
(We cannot speak until you've watched)

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ello and welcome to the “I can’t stop thinking about this show” club. I’m Ashley and I’ll be your guide because my mind simply will not move on from actor-writer-producer-director-genius Michaela Coel’s groundbreaking HBO masterpiece. It follows her character, Arabella, as she tries to find out what really happened the night of her sexual assault—and, in the process, totally dismantles traditional victim narratives. One way? With clever wardrobe choices you don’t even notice that you notice (like Arabella’s rotating selection of cardigans-as-armor) until you notice (a striking, rare shot of her shoulders during a breakdown). Costume designer Lynsey Moore explains the power of the show’s key looks.



1

## A MEN'S SHIRT

A few eps in, Arabella is assaulted by another man and leaves his apartment with his button-down. “We picked a shirt that was sort of similar to the first guy’s who assaults her,” says Moore. “It was a visual cue.”

2

## A SUPER-DEFINED STYLE

It was so important to Moore for Arabella to “have her own style and own it” for the entire series, holding on to her edgy, confident vibes. “Through everything that happened, she manages to keep herself.”

3

## THE FUZZIEST JACKET

“Something fluffy like this, it’s snugly, it’s keeping her safe, but it’s also quite an intense color. There are two sides to her in this moment. She’s struggling, but she’s also charging at people and wanting to take them down.”

4

## VERY CASUAL PJS

The night of her first attack, Arabella is wearing a T-shirt and pajama bottoms, “not the tight dress and heels usually depicted in media,” says Moore. “It can happen to anyone, and that’s the point.”

5

## A BOLD, PROTECTIVE CARDIGAN

“People who wear cardigans in a cool way are quite confident,” she says. At the same time, it’s comforting—“a bit like children with their blankets.”

6

## COLOR STORIES

For main characters, “I ramp their signature colors—Arabella’s is pink—up in moments when they’re loving who they are and down in moments of vulnerability.”

BEACH, GROUP PHOTO, WAITING ROOM, WALKING IN OCEAN: NATALIE SEERY/HBO.