

*by Kate Gilbert*

Daniel was feeling nostalgic about the plaid shirts and big wooly Hudson Bay Company jackets he used to have as a kid. We started out talking about coats and double breasted jackets, and about how boring men's sweaters often are. He said that he really admired the deconstructed sensibilities of Japanese designers like Yohji Yamamoto, but that he didn't want anything so wild that he wouldn't ever wear it.

I thought it would be fun for Daniel to try color because he never wears much: only gray and black. I suggested blue since he has lovely blue eyes, but he said he avoids it since his mom too often dressed him in blue. We finally settled on "Bark," a beautiful brown with army green undertones. It's still neutral, but interesting enough to represent a departure for Daniel from his usual color scheme.

It took me a few attempts before I came up with the final sweater. I really loved my first design; I thought it was interesting enough, and yet not too crazy for most guys. Even my husband (who only likes black, gray and stockinette) liked it and said he'd wear it.



But I couldn't make it work. A lack of time and my fear of running short on yarn forced me to go in another direction.



I kept the same shape, but used a stitch pattern to provide the visual interest I was after. I sketched out a wild cable, but it just didn't work in the yarn. I finally decided on a diagonal rib and a few construction-conscious elements to appeal to Daniel's love of the Japanese avant garde, like a collar that can be worn in a number of ways, the saddle shoulders, and the asymmetrical closure.



Since Daniel insists that the dress he made for me must be worn with heels (“no whining,” he says) I feel free to ask something of him: no smoking in that sweater.

*Do you like Daniel’s sweater enough to make it for someone? Think the knitting might be worth something in trade?*

**Pattern for Daniel’s sweater available [in the shop](#)**