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Standard Edition

From The **New Editor**

The Red String on **FlipBoard**

Atlantic Hall **Get-Together**

The **Language of Logic**

Journey to **Self** (Part 3)

Andoral (Part 2)

The **Under Appreciated** Parent

Contents

From The New Editor



Hello Red String readers. Before I start with a formal introduction, I want to first say a **big thank you** to Damola for writing this blog and keeping everyone posted on his life. You never really know what he's going to do next. First, he's studying **Computer Science** at **Drexel**, and the next thing you find out, he's written and published **The Duet**. I don't know how he does it!

Now for the introduction. Drumroll please...

Hello everyone, my name is Simi and I will be the unofficial official editor for **The Red String**. **THANK YOU NEPOTISM**. Luckily for you readers, I am studying Journalism and do enjoy writing. So there is some connection to the job besides the fact that my parents have known his parents for **eons**. Hopefully this new arrangement becomes a win-win for everyone involved. Damola gets help and input, you avid readers get more bang for your subscription and time, and I awaken my muse who has been **lulled to sleep** by tertiary education in a business focused school.

I'm really excited to be here. If you have any questions or comments, you know where they go....right on the blog. But, if you're shy and you don't want the world to see, shoot me an email at editor@theredstringblog.com.

Simi Ojurongbe is a journalism major at Baruch University

The Red String on Flipboard

Here's a quick tip for all you iPad toting, Facebook using readers. There's a fantastic app on the iPad called **Flipboard** which can make your reading experience that much more pleasant. I started using it the day I discovered it in the **app store** and have loved it **ever since!**

So what is Flipboard? Flipboard is what you'd call a **personalised social magazine**. It takes any and all of your personal content on the web and presents it to you in a **beautiful and highly functional** flip-through magazine. From everything on **your Facebook**, to anything on **your Twitter**, and a wide range of additional **formal magazines**, Flipboard makes reading the web as easy as reading print and as aesthetically pleasing as the **Sistine chapel**. Alright, maybe not quite that beautiful but certainly very nice to look at indeed.

So what does this have to do with The Red String? Well like I said, Flipboard let's you read **everything** on your Facebook. Including of course, any of the Facebook pages you've liked or created. I assume that you've all already liked **our facebook page** but if you haven't, I suggest you do so **now!**

Then **download your copy of Flipboard** and **let the browsing begin!** - It's free, it's easy, and it's a much better way to browse through our articles - at least until I get round to making fully compatible **Flipboard pages**. ;)



To learn more about Flipboard visit: <http://www.flipboard.com/>

Atlantic Hall Get Together

I finally got to meet up with a few of my old classmates this past month. Namely Ishaq Bolarinwa, Ifeanyi Urakpa, and Layide Tikolo (**whom I see all the time**) and **we had a great time!**

I hadn't seen or spoken to the guys in about **8 years** and catching up was a world of fun. **Ishaq** is now a **Big Boi** doing his youth corps with **Chevron**, **Ifeanyi** is soon to graduate from the **University of Ghana** as a medical doctor, and **Layide** is about to head off to graduate school after a stint with **KPMG**.

The real shocker for me though was that I had lost my height companion in Ishaq. The boy literally towers over me now. Damn did I feel short! It's all good. People grow. I don't... :(

At least it doesn't look too bad in the pictures. Which were taken at the **Silverbird Galleria** in Lagos by the way. Where we watched a Nigerian movie called "**Tango with me.**"



From left to right: Ishaq, Me, Layide, Ifeanyi

The Language of Logic

One of the many things that bother me about the field of computer science, is the enigma that surrounds computer programmers. Few people understand **who we are**, even fewer understand **what we do**, and practically nobody understands **how we do it**. The first of these I tackled **a while ago**, and today I intend to tackle the second. Starting with this quote:

"Programming, is like writing an essay in the language of logic."

- Damola Mabogunje

Because to write an essay in any language (be it English or Chinese or Japanese), one must first learn and understand the language. And as anyone who has had to learn a foreign language knows, this is not an easy task.

The Language of Logic

It is not easy because to learn a language we must not only learn its vocabulary, but also its grammar. And to understand it, we must understand the culture from which it came. But to master it, we must be able to think in terms of the language, and contextually apply it. All the while accounting for nuances in situation, tone, and pronunciation.

Therein lies the greatest hurdle there is to becoming a programmer. But to further complicate matters is the fact that the audience for our essay is a machine. An object with which we share no similarities, and therefore no common expressions of meaning. For amongst spoken languages, though we say different words, the world we live in provides a common basis for understanding.

To human beings, a difference in language is merely a difference of potato versus potato. The Englishman says "person", the Chinese "ren", and the Japanese "hito." Yet the concept they are all referring to is the same! It just **sounds different**.

The Language of Logic

With a computer however, the common background that allows us all to relate to the concept of "person" does not exist. It must be explained because it cannot be implicitly understood - and it must be explained in the most basic of terms because references like "human-being", "mammal", and "living thing", are equally alien to it - due to the fact that every machine is only capable of understanding two terms: **True**, and **False** - and this is what I call **the language of logic**.

Now like every other language, over the years this language of logic has evolved to include other logical terms and concepts. Like conditionals (if & else), loops (for & while), conjunctions (and & or) and variables - and at their root of course, still lie the fundamental values of true and false. But for the most part, programmers of today speak in terms of these advanced logical values.

It is these advanced logical values that provide the common basis for understanding between man and machine, and just like there are many spoken languages to describe the material world, there are also many logical languages to describe it as well. It is these logical languages that we refer to as programming languages.

The Language of Logic

Which brings me to my next point. Programming languages are called thus because they are used to write programs - and as you will find in any dictionary, a program is a set of instructions for a computer. So moving back to our language analogy, if a programming language is our method of communication, then a program must be our communique. That is to say, the program is our essay.

Yet writing this essay is a skill in itself. Because while any logic-literate person can write an essay, writing a **good** essay takes skill. Everything from how to structure your argument, to what references to include, down to which words to use when and where, require more than just putting pen to paper or dactyl to keyboard. To write well, we must plan. We must do research. We must consider our audience, and we must design our program with them in mind.

But the ultimate audience for a program is not the computer for whom it is written, but the people who will be using that computer. A third party, makes up our primary audience. So in essence, we must author a good essay for the computer, so that it may have a great discussion with the consumer...

The Language of Logic

...and **this**, is what computer scientists learn in school. We first learn to **speak the language** of logic, and then we learn to **apply it effectively**.

Journey to Self

Though I keep searching for an answer

After awhile, my boyfriend would come home later and later. He would always have some sort of excuse. Little did he know I just didn't care. I really did prefer it when he wasn't home. My son and I could be a pretend happy family for a few hours a night when he wasn't around.

When his late nights became more frequent, I grew bolder. I worked with friends and family for additional childcare and took a second job. With the money from the second job I would pick up one class per term and just little by little work to get something. However, I knew that I had to be careful and make sure that I was always home before he was. I also had to hope that no one would let slip what I was doing.

Journey to Self

I never seem to find what I'm looking for

It is entirely possible that everyone knew what the story was, as in all those years not one person even accidentally let it slip. I finally got my Associates degree, but I had to celebrate in silence. It seemed a sad day when I could not celebrate what I felt was a great accomplishment with the man that used to be my high-school sweet-heart.

So I celebrated my accomplishment by envisioning my icon, the Phoenix, taking flight. This symbolized to me the possibility of freedom. Possibilities of a new life; a future. My heart was smiling for the first time in years, but my face was blank. It had to be.

Journey to Self

Oh Lord, I pray you give me strength to carry on

By the time my son had started school, my boyfriend and I had finally had that one last fight. I ended up in the hospital and he just disappeared. Even in pain and wondering how long it was going to take for me to get back to life, I still found myself somewhat happy that he was finally gone.

I was scared too. Seriously, the main reason I had not left him myself was that I just didn't know how I was going to take care of myself. Now I had to figure out how to get better, how to take care of myself day-to-day and how to take care of my son. I again invoked the image of the Phoenix to give me strength to get through it all.

- End Part 3 -

Andoral

But our young ork, despite the hardness of his heart towards the elven maiden, despite the endless conflicts rising daily in the heart of middle earth, despite not feeling loved by the one he cherished the most, our young ork would never deny the profoundness of the bond he shared with this maiden. Surely the world had gone mad! Though his anger lashed out with such ferocity that he might as well be the barbarian described in the hottest of insults... our young ork had his memories, and would never deny the sincerity of his maiden in those moments.

Unknown to him, across the middle earth on the other side of the dark veil set down by the faceless one, the maiden fought a similar battle within herself. The basis for things she loved about our young ork had suddenly become grounds for crimes that she found herself agreeing to.

Andoral

On one hand she loved that the ork cared much for his family and herself, but ever since the tensions began, attempts by our young ork to monitor her steps felt more like a betrayal of trust and possessiveness, rather than the need for a love to protect his love. Indeed these were dark times, but she would never let herself forget the memories... The trueness that they had once felt.

And that was when it roared! The faceless enemy lurched forward! For the first time the truth behind this evil creature was revealed - it's cunning! It's manipulation! The ability to mislead by misinterpretation! Truly this was a creature unlike any ever seen!!!

Andoral

All of middle earth were oblivious to its presence... All except 2 young warriors... One young ork, and his elven maiden. The ancient texts had spoken of Andoral as a sword that is summoned by its wielder... And now the ork understood. Indeed the legendary sword Andoral did exist! There it was in his hand! A flaming light, burning brighter than anything he had ever imagined! The flames of the sword began to melt the ice around his heart, and also, began to melt a portion of the beasts face that faced the ork.

In that same moment, right next to him but separated by a dark veil of deception, the maiden had discovered her Andoral as well! And as her sword burned brighter, the ice around her heart began to melt, and the portion of the beasts face that faced her directly.

It was in this moment that the unthinkable happened!

- End Part 2 -

The Under Appreciated Parent

Anyone who knows me, knows that I'm terrible at remembering dates. Birthdays, anniversaries, holidays... you name it. **I can not remember a one.** That is except my birthday, my brother's birthday (which is almost a perfect inverse of mine), and that of a certain close friend of mine (which is a few months shifted left of my brother's). As such, it is often the case that I am either last minute shopping or just not getting a gift at all. More the latter, than the former.

But Father's day is the one holiday of the year where my seeming lack of appreciation for the special days of others doesn't seem too bad. Because it is a well known fact that **fathers get the crappiest gifts.** If it isn't another tie, it's another sweater or a set of cufflinks, a watch, a shirt, pants, shoes, cologne... and so on. A gift from the same set of dry and boring gifts that are available at stores everywhere, **every year.**

When I was younger I used to joke that if I become a father, my gift **must not** be from that boring collection. Perhaps a night on the town, some bar-hopping, the company of beautiful women other than my wife... You know? The things a man can really appreciate. But as I grew older I came to realise why it is that father's seem so under appreciated on Father's day - and it is not as it may appear, because we love them any less than their significant other's.

The Under Appreciated Parent

For if you take a closer look at **my personal list of Father's day delights**, you will notice that not a single gift there can be given by a child **who is still a child**. Certainly by the time boys are old enough or prosperous enough to afford a night on the town with their fathers - they are no longer boys. And by the time girls alongside a love interest can afford to indulge their father's company... They are definitely no longer girls.

Thus it is that fathers are condemned to half a lifetime of token gifts and displays of affection. Being the good sports they are though, most fathers accept their gifts with gratitude - and up to a certain age, even with some joy. But cologne gets old after a while, and while women can never have too many clothes, **men certainly can**.

So I want to challenge those of you who can, to give your fathers something they will really enjoy this year. **Think outside of the box**. Fuel his hobby, fulfill his desire, and grant him the one thing he hasn't had all his parental life: a good Father's day gift. To those of you who can't, let your father know that this crap is only for the moment - In a few years, he'll be getting much better. As for me... **When is Father's day again?**