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The Red and String

Standard Edition

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Over the last few months, I've had the pleasure of stumbling across a couple of blogs by African authors that truly resonate with me.

The first was [Romance Meets Life](#): a blog by [Myne Whitman](#), that's primarily about love and relationships.

The second was [African Youth Journals](#): a blog by a growing collection of African youth, about things happening on the continent.

African Youth Journals

Now Myne is already a well-known author, and her blog is likewise popular. So it needs no promotion from me. But AYJ I had never heard about, and I really think they deserve more press.

AYJ is a testament to the recognition of a need for change and development in all our African countries. It shows that our youth not only recognise this need, but also have the will and desire to satisfy it. But just as importantly, it shows that like me, youth all over Africa are hopeful for the future.

So if you're a fan of my [articles on Nigeria](#) for their optimism and criticism, here's a place where you can find more of the same.

Hot Damn! I Rock

It continues to amaze me how [my piece on Jerry LaVigne Jr.](#) remains the most viewed post on the blog. A recent [Google search](#) for his moniker even had us in the top 3 results!

So my question for you today is, are you ready for more? More of that vulgar, chauvinistic, crude, amazing, hilarious, and side-splitting humour? Well I've got some for you, and it comes in the form of YouTube user [HotdamnIrock](#).

I discovered *Kain Carter* aka HotdamnIrock, last month while watching a collabo he did with Jerry.

Hot Damn! I Rock

Ironically named *My Perfect Woman*, the video has them describing every submissive quality that women have fought to equalise since... perhaps the beginning of mankind.

But that was only the basis of their madness, each throwing in their own little flavour of what "The Perfect Woman" means to them. Certainly if you take them at all seriously, the vulgarity and chauvinism may offend.

Yet truth be told, men are just that simple. If pigs could fly, women would be reduced to (mostly) what they describe. *A chef* in the kitchen, *a maid* in the house, and *a pornstar* in the bedroom. All available *on demand* 24/7. But pigs can't fly, and some dreams should only exist in fantasy.

Hot Damn! I Rock

So if you're looking to laugh and fantasise, or, to laugh at male fantasies, [HotdamnIrock](#) is just for you.

P.S. If you, as a woman, have found that you don't appreciate this kind of humour, I recommend checking out [this video](#). You probably still won't appreciate the humour, much less believe it, but at the core of every man lies a beast like Kain. [Beauty and the Beast](#), is not just a fairy tale, It's a depiction of real life.

Killing the Beast

On *that note*, here's another callback to an old article. Namely, *Becoming Jaded*. It's the piece I wrote last year explaining the oft come disappointments of dating, and urging women to keep the faith in love despite them. Well, since I wrote that article, I have come to realise two things.

One, is that men also become jaded: and that this is the natural way of things for us. Because for us, becoming jaded is what allows us to accept that logic is of no use in understanding women, and emotion (sometimes resignation), is what is needed instead.

While the other, is that women *really don't understand men* - and it cannot be overestimated the extent to which this is the case. So as a man, I thought I would help. By sharing some advice I found hidden in the fairy tale of *Beauty and the Beast*.

Killing the Beast

Now Beauty and the Beast unlike its contemporaries (*Cinderella*, *Rumpelstiltskin*, *Sleeping Beauty*), tells a fundamentally different story of romance. Different because it does not begin with a prince charming, but instead, with an *ugly beast*.

So let's review the story together, to see just how much of a difference that makes - and I will highlight the things I think important as we go.

You may also want to re-familiarise yourself with the **original story** before I begin.

Killing the Beast

The romance begins with the beast falling in love with beauty, who spurns his advances seeking friendship. Then she starts to believe that there is a Prince Charming to be found (because she sees him pleading for her love every night), but failing to find him, concludes he is held captive by the beast.

In time, she decides to leave the beast to visit home. Whereupon her sisters convince her not to return. Her absence consequently makes the beast so distraught, that he nearly dies from heartbreak (collapsing beside the first gift he ever gave her). Upon seeing his terrible condition, beauty returns to care for the beast... and it is her compassion that ultimately turns the beast into a charming prince.

Killing the Beast

To me, everything about this story is a reflection of real life. Especially the way I've paraphrased it without the magic and romance that made it so enchanting as a child. Because every relationship I've ever heard of, including my own, has sounded somewhat like it.

In fact for some of you, I bet some bells are already ringing. If it doesn't remind you of a relationship you *are* in, then it probably reminds you of one you *were* in. But even if it sounds familiar, you may not get what I got out of it. So I will go through each of the highlighted points to better explain what I gleaned.

Killing the Beast

1. The Ugly Beast

- The combination of cold-hard decision making, testosterone, and sexual drive, make all men animals that are difficult to tame.

2. Beast Falling in love

- For a relationship to blossom, the man must first of all love the woman independently of her feelings, or any intimacy arising out of them.

Killing the Beast

3. Spurns His Advances Seeking Friendship

- Women shouldn't be afraid to reject men and be clear on relationship boundaries.
- If a man is serious about a woman, he'll keep coming back anyway.
- A woman must at least like her wooer enough to befriend and abide by him while he's the beast.
- Only in doing so, will a man's charming side begin to appear to her.

Killing the Beast

4. Pleading for her love every night

- Men are at their most charming, when desperately trying to woo.
- We are also very persistent.

5. Failing to find Him

- Success is not guaranteed to a woman, even if she tries her best.

Killing the Beast

6. He is Held Captive

- But even if she fails, she may remain convinced of her man's better qualities.

7. Leave the Beast / Her sisters convince Her

- If a woman cannot find the charm in a man after trying her best, she shouldn't be afraid to leave
- A woman's "sisters" (female friends) will usually convince her to stay away from a man she left herself.
- Her "sisters" aren't always acting in her best interest.

Killing the Beast

8. Collapsing Beside the First Gift...

- If a man loves a woman, her leaving him will break his heart.
- It will break mostly from loneliness. A loneliness exacerbated by his memories of her: things he gave her, places they went, e.t.c.
- He probably will not reach out to her, but rather suffer his lonely sentence in silence.

9. Upon Seeing His Terrible Condition / Returns to Care

- If a woman still cares about a man, his heartbreak will concern her enough to bring her back.

Killing the Beast

10. Her Compassion that Ultimately Turns the Beast...

- Heartbreak can motivate the beast to change.
- But his attempt to change must be nurtured by a woman's compassion else they will fail.
- The window of opportunity to nurture change is often brief. If Beauty had arrived any later, Beast would never have become Prince Charming.
- Prince Charmings are made, not born.

Killing the Beast

These 10 points are the key to the process I call *killing the beast*. A process which most women only come to understand after several failed relationships, or a long history with their partner.

The last 5 steps are especially important, because they tend to reoccur in the early stages of a relationship; with each near death experience bringing the beast closer to being jaded.

This is why bachelors call married men whipped, and why married men accept it. Because we all know what it means to be faithfully married.

Killing the Beast

Still, as with all things in real life, nothing is ever certain, and whether you will be the one to whip the beast into shape in your relationship, is as much a matter of the right beast, as it is an informed beauty.

Not to mention other factors like reversed roles, beasts who become better liars instead, or the dynamics of more unconventional relationships.

But with these 10 points, I hope to inform both sides of their eventual encounter, and the trials that will test the foundations of their relationship.

To Quote Without A Sermon

Almost every time I get inspired to write a Christian piece, I struggle with it for days on end before finally putting pen to paper. I struggle with it because I am afraid: Afraid to blaspheme, to use the word of God in vain, or to lead others astray with my words.

I struggle with it oft times because at the time of my inspiration, it was in response to something else, and I want to be sure that what I eventually put down on paper is not beset with my feelings from that event - especially if they were of anger. But mostly, I struggle with it because I am aware of my inadequacies as concerns Bible reading, and the profundity of knowledge contained therein.

This is why, whenever you find biblical quotes in my writing, there is always a backstory attached to it. Something that tells you how and why I feel what I feel, and thus explains the foundation of my conviction as concerns that quote. So that should you wish to argue, we can safely argue my convictions of the Word on an intellectual level, and I may be corrected if needs be.

To Quote **Without** A Sermon

But I have never been able to articulate just why it is, that I get so frustrated when other people do not do me the same courtesy. I have never been able to tell them, what I feel is so wrong about using biblical quotes in arbitrary arguments. Nor have I been able to convince them, to do otherwise. For all say:

“**The Word of God is just and true, how can it not be fit justification for all arguments?**”

...and they are right, and therein lies the problem. Because no God-fearing man, dare argue with the word of God. **None!** and by using a biblical quote mid-argument, that argument goes from being arbitrary, to being immediately about who is more righteous. The finer points of what we individually understand of that quote (if indeed we are both familiar with it), having been skipped along the way.

To Quote **Without** A Sermon

Certainly, if both the sayer and the hearer of the quote, have a mutual understanding and conviction, this is a fair way to settle an argument. Or if it is known to them both, that the one possesses a greater understanding of the Bible, than the other, again, I agree that it is a fair use. But when neither is known to be true, using a biblical quote amidst an argument that is not itself about the bible, is like pouring fuel on a burning flame.

For in the same breath, the quote sayer condemns the hearer as a man, and as God; all the while asserting their own “righteousness” in keeping to (what are their own convictions of) the Word. This is what has vexed me so, in my arguments with fellow Christians. Because having been unable to use a counter-quote myself, the argument can neither move to a place of biblical discussion, nor can it be settled outside the realm of biblical discussion.

To Quote **Without** A Sermon

And so it is, that such arguments, be they with me, by me, with others, or by others, must end with the hearer being impugned, and the sayer being affirmed by the sayer's conscience. Both parties, never once addressing the core issue that may be a difference in convictions.

For the Bible is both obscure and profound in its meaning at times. I have read something the one day and found it to be trivial, then read it the next day and discovered its significance. Then read it again a third day, and found even more significance... and I haven't even read it from cover to cover. How much more must there be, in the pages left unread!?

So to quote so haphazardly to me, is like playing with fire. Am I sure I understand all that verse meant? Am I sure that this is the right way to apply it? And even if I am, do I know where the other party is in their faith? Do they know where I am? Will it help them?

To Quote **Without** A Sermon

All these questions and more (especially the question of roles and understanding), should be considered before using the Word as a weapon in an argument. Because by failing to do so, one risks making assumptions that should not be made.

This is what sermons are for. This is why it is helpful that the Bible is not just a list of dos' and don'ts', but rather a collection of stories and examples, and songs and notes, written by very different people accounting extraordinary events, and showing the faithfulness of God through varying situations.

Indeed, it could have been a list of do's and don'ts', just as the commandments of old were on stone tablets, and it would make no difference to what we should and should not do. Yet by God's grace, it is so much more.

To Quote **Without** A Sermon

So much more that when the elders of the church preach on what is right and what is wrong, they have a myriad examples to choose from to illustrate God's meaning, and their conviction. Such that in the same sermon, there will be quotes from the books of Ruth, of Matthew, the Old Testament, the New Testament... all of which support the lesson.

Thus forming a background that each member of the congregation, can explore to their own benefit, or failing that, rely on for the time being. Thus when they quote to one another, it is based on that understanding (or a derivative thereof).

But in the middle of an argument, where tempers are flaring, and emotions are stirring, there is no time, nor is there truly any concern for such backstory. A fight is being fought within a realm of mutual understanding.

To Quote **Without** A Sermon

Yet the Bible can only be mutually understood up to a point without that shared sermon or fellowship. Because after that, the rest is a personal walk with God guided by one's conscience and individual level of faith.

So for any Christian, to use an "unsermoned" biblical quote in an argument, is to take that argument from a realm of mutual understanding, to one of personal conviction; in which, they can only be affirmed. It also says to me personally (I cannot speak for others), that the sayer does not consider me an equal spiritually. As one must be the teacher, and the other the student, in the absence of a shared sermon.

Thus (as my friends can attest), I have often found myself saying the phrase "Do not quote the Bible at me," when such arguments arise. Never fully understanding myself, why it is I felt quoted "at," and not quoted "to."

To Quote **Without** A Sermon

For as I see it, if one is unable to intellectually articulate and debate based on the meaning behind their quote of choice, they are in no position to lecture any one else on its meaning. Much less so in the middle of a heated argument on a different topic; where there is little time to adequately address such profundity, even should they have the necessary depth of insight.

Now this is not to say that there are no “fools” or “babes in Christ,” who needs be corrected by the Word of God. But rather that, in the middle of a heated argument about something else, is the wrong place to do it without forethought. For as long as it remains unclear who is the fool, and who is the wise, such an argument cannot bear fruit amongst fellow Christians. Because at the end of it, both parties walk away thinking the other is the fool.

So if it must be done, please do it outside of an argument: where you can explain the reasoning behind your conviction, and allow for that reasoning to be challenged.

My Anime List

As of this edition, I've decided that instead of struggling to pick one anime to write about, comparing it to all the other interesting things I want to write about, and then ending up writing nothing at all about anime, I will be publishing a list of 10 anime I'm watching every month.

Since I've really decided this on a whim, and I'm not sure what format to present my list in, or whether I want to mention older anime as well, it's likely that this section will be up in the air until I finalise on something.

But for this month, I'm just going to stick to what I'm currently watching, and one recommended pick.

My Anime List

Shingeki no Kyojin (Attack of the Titans) is the most interesting thing I'm watching this month. But the other silver highlights are also damn good.

The anime depicts a world in which giants rule, and humans have been pushed to the brink of extinction by them. A world where the last living humans, have managed to save themselves by building great stone walls around their community.

That is, until the day those walls are broken...

#	Anime of the Month
	Arata the Legend
	Hataraku Maou-sama
	Henneko
	Hunter X Hunter
	Mushibugyo
	My Teen Romantic Comedy
	Shingeki no Kyojin
	Space Brothers
	Suisei no Gargantia
	To Aru Kagaku no Railgun S

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So please don't. I don't want to sue anybody.

