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The Red and String

Standard Edition

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The Grand Design

Those of you who know me well, know that Damola *always* has a plan. It is both my greatest strength, and my greatest weakness; because until I devise a plan, I am usually paralysed.

So as you can imagine, there is, and has always been a plan for **The Red String**. It has evolved over the years, and we've been making steady progress.

Now finally, we have completed **Phase 1** and are moving into **Phase 2**. But before we do, I must tell you what this has been about, and what changes to expect moving forward.

The Grand Design

Phase 1, was about finding my footing. I wanted to write to you, but I didn't know what about; and I wanted to have a blog, but I didn't know how I wanted it to look. Solving these 2 problems constituted phase 1.

I chose to write on anything and everything that caught my fancy, and I went through many iterations of the site's design: changing it drastically at least once every year.

It was a quantitative approach, and every once in a while I'd release a collector's edition that focused on quality, or a quality article by sheer luck.

The Grand Design

Now that I've settled on a look that I'm happy with, and generated enough articles to know where my leanings lie, it is time to focus on quality.

Instead of writing about anything and everything, I will be focusing on select topics. What this means for you, is fewer but possibly longer articles. It also means that you'll know to some degree what to expect in each standard edition.

Since it's a qualitative approach, I'll need to spend more time on each piece. But I don't expect that to affect the monthly schedule.

The Grand Design

So here's the list of topics I'll be writing on henceforth.

There will always be one article each from this set, or a subset of this list of topics, starting with this edition.

I'll do my best to make them exceptional, and I hope you continue to enjoy **The Red String**.

P.S. Thanks for reading my random ramblings to date. 😊

Topic List

Anime I'm Watching

Books I'm reading

Interesting Technology

My Philosophical Thoughts

New Discoveries

Stories From My Life

Hunter X Hunter

Coming a close second to *Shingeki no Kyojin* from last month, is *Hunter X Hunter*. Some of you may remember this anime from my list of all-time favourites where it currently holds 4th place.

Well over the last 2 seasons, this anime has been remade, and resumed. But up until last month, it was still airing remastered old episodes.

Now however, we are in the new arc, and things are really heating up!

#	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

Hunter X Hunter

Hunter X Hunter follows the adventures of a young boy. Gon Freecs (the boy) is the son of a legendary hunter in a world where hunting is a prestigious and dangerous occupation with many perks. The term hunting as used here applies broadly: animal hunting, bargain hunting, people hunting... Hunters come in various shapes and sizes. Yet Gon's father is a man who stands amongst the best in several categories.

As Gon decides to follow in his father's footsteps, we watch him grow and gain near superhuman skill while making a few powerful & unlikely friends. Like **One Piece**, the **#2** on my all-time favourite list, this anime may seem deceptively childish at first, until you begin to see the characters develop.

With about 75 episodes aired before this month, Hunter X Hunter is sure to keep me (and you), entertained for a while.

The History of the Yorubas

Early last month (or perhaps the month before), in an effort to help an acquaintance on [DeviantArt](#), I picked up a book that had been sitting around my apartment. It was called [The History of the Yorubas](#), and I had bought it the last time I was in Nigeria, thinking that it was the sort of thing I *ought to know*.

But, just like my other Yoruba book: [Colloquial Yoruba](#), the pages within had neither been exposed to the light of day nor the sight of mine eyes, and I was content simply to own these books: knowing that someday, I would be ready to open them.

So when I tell you that the day I finally picked up this book, I was neither ready to learn my history *nor* my language, it should come as a surprise to you that I somehow learnt a bit of both.

The History of the Yorubas

As with all books, this one began with a little preamble. The dedication, publisher's notes, author's preface, and editor's preface. But unlike all books, the editor's preface told a compelling story - a story of trials and tribulations, as the original manuscript faced many obstacles on its journey to print. Like *Odysseus*, the book had its own adventure to tell.

Following that story, came a fascinating introduction that paraphrased a letter about the initial impressions British colonizers had of Nigeria and the Yoruba people.

Yet, more so than those others, it was the next, seemingly mundane section, that hooked me: *a brief introduction to the Yoruba language*.

The History of the Yorubas

Now when I say brief, I mean that this introduction was no longer than *20 double-sided pages* if that; and within a fortnight of reading these 20 pages, I was able to understand and form complete written sentences myself.

For someone like me who spent all 6 years of secondary school consistently failing Yoruba, and the years after relying on expressions and gesticulations, there is no understating just how extraordinary this is!

I mean, in the same night I finished studying the introduction, I was able to translate my name, my brother's name, cousin's name, and that of a few of my friends; In the days after I wrote a letter (of sorts) in Yoruba to an old friend who had always encouraged me to learn; And in the weeks after, I was able to draft a fictional Yoruba conversation in a novel I'm writing.

The History of the Yorubas

Of course, my Yoruba still isn't anywhere near perfect, but to go from zero to pierrot within 20 pages is nonetheless a worthy feat; even if my Yoruba is naive and laughable. 😅

So today I recommend this book to you, not for its historical value per se (at least not until I finish it), but for its linguistic benefits. If you're interested in the etymology of Yoruba, then this book will give you that and more... and if all you want to do is learn the language, then give *Colloquial Yoruba* by *Antonia Yetunde Folarin Schleicher*, a shot.

The History of the Yorubas by *The Rev. Samuel Johnson*. I truly can't wait to find out what other gems are hidden in its pages.

Peeje T

I discovered *Peeje T.* via [this Gizmodo article](#), and while the article disappointed in that it had very little to do with technology, the discovery itself was quite entertaining.

Peeje T. or [peejet](#) as he is known across the interwebs, is famous for his hilarious photoshop images where he perfectly splices himself into popular celebrity shots. From casually chatting with Jay-Z to sympathising with a benched Kobe, if his photos are to be believed, Peeje T. is best friends with every celeb out there!

But of course, his photos are not to be believed, and are merely for show. Yet, considering how well they are done, and the amount of popularity he is gaining as a result... the day might come when he posts a real photo with a celebrity. So my question is, will he be believed then? 😅

Check out his gallery, [here](#)

Life Lessons

As a child growing up, I used to eavesdrop on my parents conversations. I would walk into the living room, discover that they were in the middle of a discussion, and would quietly and surreptitiously take my seat among them: somewhere where I wouldn't be noticed.

It was on one such occasion, while my grandfather was visiting, that I had a paradigm shift. I can't remember what they were talking about, all I remember is that it caused my grandfather to call our TV, "The Idiot Box."

Life Lessons

Oh the audacity! What did he mean by that! Our TV!? Purveyor of the finest information and entertainment worldwide!? The TV on which I'd watched hours of Discovery Channel, Cartoon Network, and NTA for kids!? I couldn't believe my ears.

“Oh the audacity! What did he mean by that!”

Yet nobody got up in arms over the statement. In fact, neither of my parents bat an eyelid at the phrase. So I began to think...

Life Lessons

My grandfather had said it matter-of-factly, my parents had accepted it matter-of-factly, therefore, it must be, *a matter of fact!*

Of course, that logic was quite naive. But it made me reflect on the unimportance of TV in my life - and in later years, it has caused me to always be on the lookout for the things that *are* important.

Of these, I believe that there are none more important than *practice* and *experience*.

Life Lessons

You see, life is about education - and that education comes in 2 forms: Practice, and Experience. Practice is the type of education that the world values. It is through practice that we learn how to walk, talk, and even think. We pay schools to teach us how, and what to practice. With it, we acquire new skills, and it is with those skills we earn money.

There can be no doubt, that it is practice (and not money), that makes the world go round.

Life Lessons

On the other hand experience, is the type of education we get for free. It comes through our interactions with others, but unlike practice, we have no control over how we learn, only what we learn.

Experience in this sense, is not valued by the world. But it is valued on a human level.

Yet what is most significant about them both, is not what they are, but how they affect us.

Life Lessons

Now with plenty of practice, practices become habits - and those habits over time, can effect change in our bodies and minds. As is the case with smoking, drinking, studying, and working. Practices, affect the body.

Whereas experiences, whether repeated or singular, brief or prolonged, can fundamentally change us right down to the very core of our being. Like my experience with my grandfather, one simple event, can change ones entire perspective on life. Experiences, affect the soul.

Life Lessons

This is why I believe that experiences are God-given. Be they complex or simple, traumatic or mundane, every experience is a life lesson intended to change you for the better; a life lesson meant for your soul.

But I think life often confuses us because practices can result in experiences, and experiences can result in practices. So sometimes lessons meant for the mind are taken to heart, and lessons meant for the heart, are taken to mind.

Life Lessons

So instead of us changing our outlook, we change our behaviour... or vice-versa.

Ah... but here I go pontificating as usual. People have always told me that I walk and talk like an old man; and I must admit, I do literally **walk as slow**, and pontificate as endlessly as one.

Still, if there is one thing I want you to take away from this article, it's that everything in life is a learning exercise. Take care to learn the right lessons at the right times, and may God's grace see you through. 😊

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The Red String is a monthly newsletter owned, managed, run, and mostly written by **Damola Mabogunje**. He has been at it since September 2010 and while it is free for all to read and share, he would be very, in fact not just very, **extremely** pissed off if anyone should copy or plagiarize his work.

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

