

'In life, there are a lot of things to think about, a lot of reasons why your mind would roam about.' My mum once said to me when i was 4 years of age. She was sittted on the cushioned chair in the living room, with me positioned on the floor, my head between her thighs. She was weaving through my hair and offering advices on life, as she always did. The last time it was about 'bad friends' and the kind of people to avoid. The conversation had come up because she got back home from work that day and met me, playing with the neighbors kids, moulding sand into different shapes and stating we were building our houses. I had jolted immediately i heard my name being shouted and turned around to see her. From the expression on her face, I already knew i was in some sort of trouble.

'Those children are trouble, didn't you see them going to buy packets of cigarettes for their parents yesterday? Everyday, I'll tell you and you'll still go and play with them! This child, you'll not kill me' She scolded whilst dragging my ear.

This time, I had caught her looking into space while massaging some Soulmate hair cream into my hair. I tapped her and asked

'Mummy, what are you thinking about?'

She replied me and so, the conversation about wondering, thinking and a roaming mind ensued. I wondered about so many things as of that age. Why tea was named tea ? Why exactly children, not the parents were being beaten for not paying their school fees in time? Why i had 2 eyes, when i could only see one thing ? Why the moon was being called the moon? I would ask my mother, all of these questions and she would laugh and say to me 'When you grow older, you'll understand'.

And then, I grew up to be a teenager. My roaming mind had no limit. What was the female body & why was it so complicated ?, I'd wonder. Why everybody castigated the pregnant girl but gave zero blame to the irresponsible father ?, I'd wonder. Why do i have to be in pain for 1 week, just because I decide not to be in pain for 9 months, I'd wonder.

A few years later, I hit my 20s. We all know how the 20s are. The moment a person hits their 20s , society puts a lot of pressure on them. My mind wondered far and wide, I thought i was actually going crazy. I'd sit and look into space because my mind was so far away. I decided I finally understood why my mother was looking into space, when I was younger. I wanted to find out who I was exactly. What inspired me? Would I want to live with me ? Where am i ripe

with talent and where do i deflate ? What are my favorite stories ? Have I lived well? Do the people around me bring me life ? The questions had no ending. They came to me, one after the other and My roaming mind couldn't catch a break. And then I sat myself down, One by one and answered these questions until my mind felt at ease. Until my mind stopped roaming and actually settled.

But now, As an grown adult, My roaming minds have again come to play. You see, as an adult, there are a lot of things to consider. There's bills, There's rent, There's work, Why I have to wait in traffic after work? Why i'd cook for an hour & eat for 10 minutes ? Do i want children ? What are my insecurities and what are my strengths ? Can this code work? Can i leave early? When am i taking a vacation ?

But as an adult female with an aching heart for love, there's only one thing my mind wanders to, at this moment. It flashes back to about 60 years ago and it plays out in this stubborn head of mine, like a movie showing in black & white where the protagonists only see light when they find it. When they find love.

I wonder how love was in the 1960s. Having recently gotten our independence, you'd feel free. The white men had been so tiring, forcing you to kiss their dry un-moisturized lips and doing all sorts of things that you frankly didn't enjoy. They had stressed you, collapsing on the fragile body of yours, after 2 minutes of unnecessary rigorous activities that you would rather chew jeans than actively partake to. It's not like you had any choice either way. It was either that or you were disposed of, left to the streets, discarded like a piece of trash on the roadside.

You're free now. You look around at all the eligible men society has for you. Men with good arms and broad shoulders, all gotten from the series of manual labor they've been put through by people with no color in their skin. Men with broad white smiles and Men whose skin shone under the sun. The ones with beautiful melanin running in those veins and adrenaline pumping in their bulging muscles.

You gulp and smile. Maybe you could finally find love after so many years of only satisfying the white man and his wife. The cruel bunch you were slaves to. Who'd engage you in a series of crazy sexual acts and then beat you up for not responding well a few minutes later. Who'd ask you to kneel, watch, stand up, kneel again. A couple of confused people who only cared about their satisfaction and their pleasures.

You'd always been a hopeless romantic though.

You believed there was someone out there for you, a soulmate of some sort.

Someone you could rely on, tell your problems to and narrate all about how terrible your day was. Someone who was worth the hours in the kitchen to see the satisfied smile spreading on their face whilst you watched them consuming the meal you'd made.

You had been through so much, we must admit. It was only understandable for you to flinch when anyone lifts their hands around you because you were used to the white man stroking his fingers through your cornrows and hitting you when you refused to put your mouth around 'Oga Jnr' for the 50th time.

When you were told 'You're a queen, I love you' or any compliment of the sort, your skin began to crawl. It felt like there were a thousand soldier ants in a layer of your skin and they were repeatedly stinging you so hard, tears would well up in those brown eyes of yours.

You took it as a lie. A dirty useless lie. You couldn't believe it. What did they mean by 'love'? What exactly did they think love was ?

All because the oyinbos only told you these sweet meaningless nothings when you were on their bed, serving them and they were vibrating from sexual fantasies.

But you found love. As suprising and as shocking as it was, You found love.

In a man who understood the traumas you had and had traumas of his own to compete with, who knew how to talk in all of your moods. Who knew how to be understanding and patient with you. In a man who was worth the stress and worth the effort.

You did it.

You found love.

Or outside of Nigeria? I wonder. How was love in the 1960s in other countries?

In the 60s as they'd call it, you've been told all your life that your job was a homemaker. You'd wake up, wash the dishes, clean the tables because Lord Forbid there was a speck of dust on your glass table and then sit in an empty parlour. Satisfied with yourself. With the rise of feminism- caused by an article that resonated with different people, you didn't know what exactly you were and what you were supposed to be.

An homemaker or a woman of Mystique?

You'd sit around wondering what exactly to do and play your new favorite song 'You don't own me!' wondering if exactly you were doing the right thing.

But you were, at least that's what the statistics told people. Well, until people started dropping different narratives.

A youth movement saying 'Sex is the only way to rebel!' and all of a sudden, all your suitors had vanished, in fear that you were one of them having free sex when in real life, you were someone waiting for prince charming to sweep you off your feet, or maybe lose your glass sandal. Hell! You could even kiss a frog at that point!

You revert back to 'Computer dating'.

You fill in all your details and upload, hoping atleast some people would match you on here. Hoping that they wouldn't be serial killers too.

Overtime, the number of married people reduced and the age of married couples increased, almost an inverse proportion. People were choosing to ditch the entire 'marriage scene'. You sat yourself down.

Were you searching for love ? Or were you searching for marriage ?

You sit there, wondering at what age you'd find a prince charming of your own and shake your head.

How love is now?

'Just like how we allowed Oyinbos to colonize us, don't you think they colonized heartbreak too and invited it into Nigeria?' You say to your friend, you're both giggling over cold cocktails.

You deserve it after all the stress you put yourself through during the week. Work had been unbelievably stressful and you just needed to wind down after a frustrating week. You laugh and gossip about your previous boyfriends. How you met them and how they in-explicitly broke your heart.

'What of Tunde the liar?' your friend says looking at you with knowing eyes and beginning to chuckle.

You remember Tunde the liar. The one who claimed to have a billion 'plans' for you and for his future but would get angry when you asked him if he was going to apply for a job or what exactly his plans were. And dare you advice him on what to do? You were undermining his ability to be 'a man', which resulted into 3 days silent treatments.

But you'd be there, apologizing, like the sweet girlfriend you were. You let out a short laugh remembering how he always had fantasies on your own money. Thinking of how you'd pay for his flight to see you or the dates you went on.

All through this, you were the sweet girlfriend.

Well, until you found out he had 4 other sweet girlfriends.

Relationship that you thought was your safe place and your home was apparently a family house.

'Omo I don't want to talk about Tunde the liar abeg. I don see shege.' Your friend laughs and you decide it's time to go home.

You pack your things and leave.

When you get home, you walk into the silence of your apartment, dump your things on the couch and waltz into your bedroom.

You flop on the bed and start to reminisce all the people you've met in the soulmate struggle.

'Kennedy the cheat.'

Whose phone you checked whilst he laid beside you sleeping to find out he had 2 other girlfriends he was actively sending monthly allowances to when he couldn't get you a birthday present. You'd settled for the message, telling your friends 'It's the thought that counts guys. He told me I'm his other half guys.' while smiling like a mumu.

Which you were, a big mumu.

You sat there, right next to him.

Holding your lips like a 2-year-old, so your loud sobs wouldn't wake him up while replaying Bobrisky's 'Good girl no dey pay o' in your head.

Your head hurts and your eyes are bloodshot red when you confront him, expecting an apology or atleast a feasible explanation when he looks at you with anger in his eyes.

'Why the hell were you checking my phone?'

Can whoever is in charge of your lifestory play 'Mumu mumu, make them call me mumu.' ?

That song was needed.

'Rakeem the mummy's boy.'

He'd make you cry every 2 market days, switch the narrative and apologize just to be in your good books. He'd openly gaslight and manipulate you but you couldn't have enough of him.

So you'd go back.

Every single time.

To the pleas of 'I'm better now.'

Well, until you met his mother and he was basically kissing her feet and edging you to the kitchen to make banga soup, on the first meeting.

You shake your head and wonder what the hell was wrong.

Well at least, wrong with your love life.

Dare the Married man.

You remember D.

D, the sweet Yoruba man who swept you off your feet and left your heart beating after just the first date. D, who was charming, sweet, and all the other adjectives you couldn't think of.

He made you smile, he was the right amount of flirty, a complete gentleman. D was perfect, a man that left you thinking 'Who's this man's mother abeg? She did a fantastic job ahaan'

You thought D was your forever.

Not knowing forever already had his own forever.

You remember waking up that day expecting a sweet 'good morning beautiful' text.

You unlocked your phone, still feeling sleepy, and began to scroll through your messages.

Viam! Any sign of sleep evaded your senses when you saw the text.

3 pictures followed by 2 long messages.

'You, these whores of Lagos, leave my husband alone. Don't you have shame? Stupid home wrecker, Trying to spoil a family?.....'

You? A home wrecker? This woman definitely has the wrong person, you remember thinking

You scrolled down and stared at the picture and then your heart began to shatter.

There he was, smiling so brightly with those dimples coming out to play. With his wife and 3 children.

Just as your mind began to make excuses for him, 'It's not possible? D? Maybe it's fake.'

A video came in.

You clicked on play.

You heard the children chanting 'daddy daddy come and carry me'

You saw him walk up to his wife and kiss her.

There and then, the remaining pieces of your heart you've been holding on to break.

Into dirty pieces.

You snap out of your thoughts and wonder if you'll eventually find your person. You pick your phone up, scroll through Twitter as it totally skips your mind that it's Owanbe Saturday.

You end up seeing thousands of marriage tweets.

You end up dropping the phone that's meant to take you out of your head.

You hiss.

You scoff.

You're pained. You want that.

You want love, easy love with no terrible intentions. You lay back, with only one thought in your head.

I wonder how love was in the 1960s.