

Waiting For Love.

June 20, 2012, is forever etched in my mind. I was searching through my locker in school for what to wear to class. It's not like I had many choices because at the time I went home on weekends to bring the exact number of clothes for the week. I found this black top that I liked very much. I put it on quickly, packing my books into my bag at the same time. You might wonder how can anyone do both. You will find out when you are already late for a class and the lecturer must not get to the class before you.

As I approached the Faculty of Social Sciences at Ife, I met Fisayo, a very good friend of mine who also wore black. I teased him saying the spirit is one. He merely smiled, and then he dropped heartbreaking news – Temi was dead! My first reaction was which Temi? He then told me it was Temi Akiola. God will have to forgive me because when he told me Temi was dead, my mind went straight to another Temi in my class. Not that I wish ill on anyone, but his name did not pop up because he was reticent, and people didn't really know him.

I still hadn't processed the news. I was in total shock. Ok, at this point you need to know the kind of person I am. I should have been the last person in the class to mourn or feel sober that he died because I am usually dashing in and out of class, and I am not really friendly. I am quiet, and I am more like a lone ranger. Besides, this was a guy, and I am usually careful with boys. This is not to say that I don't have boys as my friends; I do actually, but they are very few. One boy in my class actually complained that it's only girls that I talked to in the class. Oh well, that was just me back then.

Temi is quiet, and I'm quiet as well, so what could possibly have brought two quiet people together? The answer is Social Media! Facebook, that is. I received a friend request from this guy Temi Akiola. I remembered him straight off because he caught my attention as we were going to write our statistics paper someday in year one second semester; he looked extremely fresh. His shirt was well starched and ironed compared to all those UME boys who have the reputation of being razz and all (Father, Forgive me please!). We didn't start to chat immediately. Until during the holidays when he said hi and that he saw me in redemption camp and that he wanted to call me but he refrained because he thought I would snob him. From then on, we got really close; he made me laugh and told me everything or so I thought. We exchanged numbers. Our relationship deepened. We exchanged at least 10 text messages a day, and this is not to exaggerate. Etisalat was very good to us because of the free text messages and bonuses. Then I told him that when school resumes I wouldn't be talking with him like this.

All this while I was a Christian, but my walk with God wasn't solid. I got closer to God, and I deepened my commitment as the semester began. I invited Temi a few times to join the fellowship. He came, but he wasn't regular. Funny enough, Temi was a Pastor's child, but he was not really freaked the way I was about Christ. Our relationship waned gradually. I wasn't mature enough to know that my newfound zeal and my relationship with Temi could coexist. I was more consumed with my walk with God. The last time I had a chat with him, I was on my way back from fellowship; I was too tired and was very much in a hurry. I asked him why he wasn't coming any longer. He said he didn't know the venue. I saw that something was wrong with him. I asked him about a paper he had missed because there was a lack of circulation of information. He said he still had some problems with it and how he had to carry it over. I told him that I would pray for him. I didn't! Actually, I forgot.

My last conversation with him played in my memory as Fisayo told me he was dead. I wasn't myself for the next week. I couldn't believe he was dead, and I still can't. Everyone in my class seemed sober, and that lasted for about two weeks. We decided to have a candlelight in memory of him. We contributed money, and those boys in class spent a large chunk of it on booze. What the hell? Did they think it was funny? I even thought it was going to bring them sober, but no, it seemed lighter than I expected.

We visited his family. They warned us not to cry. But I couldn't control myself. He was their first child and their only son. My heart went out to his mother. In her account, she said Temi complained of a slight headache, and he was rushed to the hospital. It was then they discovered marks on his body, and his father had an intuition to ask if there was anything he wanted to confess. He said there was nothing. Soon afterward, he gave up the ghost.

Temi's mother still believes he was being forced to join a cult, which I believe also because of the notorious hall he stayed in, and also because he was tall and very quiet on the outside. As a mother, she advised us to live a godly life. She said she was looking through his things and she found out what he had written concerning his life, how he planned on going for masters abroad and all. It was just too much for me; the tears came rushing again. She pleaded with us to bring forward any information that could help them get to the root of their son's death. I couldn't go to his burial; I would have wept silly and I also could not bear to see his lifeless body with cotton buds stuck in his nostrils. This would have haunted me for years.

Temi was just 17! - Seventeen o! Chai...

Today makes it 13 years since Temi left. He would have turned 30 in April. Possibly married to me now. The only reason why I still have my Facebook account active is so I can scroll through the messages we exchanged and laugh at our funny dreams. Life is really something.

Now, I'm 30, unmarried in Nigeria and unbothered.

Temi's death has made me realize that life is really fickle and transient. I do not want to live a life of regrets. So I'd wait. I would wait for the right man amidst the many wedding talks here and there with my friends rushing to the altar like they were chasing them and Moms's 'Ti wo na ma de' statements creating subtle pressure.

Don't get me wrong I think occasionally about the man I want to do life with, like where exactly he is in the world and why haven't our paths crossed. In fact, my friends have set me up with many people but they just seem not to cut it. I've met Femi, 2 Paul's, 2 Ola's, the list is really endless. The one with Paul almost worked out. My friends think my expectations are too high but they are not. The reasons why these don't work out for one is either a genotype issue, lack of commitment issue, or even a simple lack of communication. To be honest I also share in the blame, in my early 20's I gave off an uninterested vibe but I corrected that afterward.

Recently I even joined a singles community group with the hope of meeting someone but I didn't. At least one good thing came out of it. We were asked to journal and write a letter to our future spouses it was so therapeutic for me. See what I wrote below.

Dear Future Husband,

Hi! How are you? Where are you gan gan? And why are you taking your precious time? I'm tired of coming up with creative answers for nosey people.

This year has been a year of self-discovery for me. I have been finding out so many things about myself that I never knew and now a lot of things now make sense. I took this 16 personality test (by the way you should definitely take it so I can understand and love you better) it revealed a lot. I am fiercely independent, creatively artistic, introverted (am such a home buddy), highly observant, I prefer to listen rather than talk, a high achiever, driven, and deeply passionate. A sidebar to all these good qualities is that it can be very hard to know me as I have built such a defensive wall around myself so I don't get hurt. It scares me sometimes but you can't also blame me. I am learning to be more vulnerable with my God-ordained friendships, you will soon meet them. I recently found out another thing about myself (Shade Zahrai helped me identify this, she is my teacher for this season) It is neurotic perfectionism. Neurotic perfectionists are prone to strive for unrealistic goals and feel dissatisfied when they cannot reach them, have concern over making mistakes, have high personal standards (striving for excellence), self-doubt, and high self-criticism. Shade and I are working on this together,

My prayer is that I don't project these high standards on you and that God opens my eyes to see and identify you as his perfect gift for me. Shaped uniquely and tailor-made specifically for me. I would like to think that the ideal qualities I want to see in you are the bare minimum. Like being ambitious, I want to look at you and literally be inspired, and kind - This quality is rare, be kind both to me and people around, completely secure, Patient, and thoughtful - it requires that you pay attention to even the smallest details, for example, buying me chilled Pepsi on your way back from work cos you know I love it but giving me half because you know I'm not supposed to have it... lol. Have a great sense of humor hun. Please make me laugh - the world is already hard enough. I love men that smell nice. It's a huge turn-on. Please bear that in mind. Ah...I almost forgot this last one...Please be fine...please. I need my twin girls to be so cute. I am thinking of having 3 kids- A set of twin girls and a boy. What do you think?

I am deeply worried about the marriages of today. Twitter went agog this week when a relationship expert and a Christian released a video saying he was unfaithful in his marriage. The video totally put me off. What's the whole point of marriage? What standards should we have as Christians? This Unfaithfulness is fast becoming a trend. I have experienced this first hand not in marriage but in relations, I have had personally and some of my friends have. To be honest, I don't want to endure my marriage, I want to enjoy it. I want to choose you every day even in my lowest moments. Please choose me. I want to honor you by my actions and honor God too. Please honor me too. Don't give in to selfish desires. Don't.

Notice I didn't list God-fearing and Christian as qualities I want in you. That is because it's a given. I will not pursue a marital relationship if you don't have both. Notice also I said both, nowadays they aren't one and the same. My faith is a huge part of me, that I can't compromise on. I met Jesus during my undergraduate days at Ife. Please note that I was born into a Christian home. But that in itself was not enough. I got baptized and deepened my walk with God. It truly changed my whole Christian experience. I prayed taya. The change was evident. People noticed. That is the kind of experience I want for our kids. An experiential relationship with Jesus. That way the world won't tell them otherwise. From our children's names to their schools would be carefully inquired of the Lord by us.

I have an idea - Let's do little things like making it a tradition for us to visit the same restaurant we went to on our first date every year at the same time no matter where we are (Hopefully Canada) Or even leaving a mark in every restaurant to remind us of our journey and conversations. Spice is necessary in this life. We would also do monthly relationship audits on ourselves and our marriage. Date nights are a must o. Friday's? What say you?

One of the best ways to love me is to shower me with plenty of gifts and then do nice things for me as well. I would deeply appreciate this. I honestly like to be comfortable and live a simple life. That being said, how would you prefer to be loved?

***All my Love,
Your Future Wife.***

2024 is my year! I can feel it. I'm willing to give this thing called love one more go.