



**A PERSONAL JOURNEY TO  
UNAPOLOGETIC LOVE**  
by  
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**ABOUT THE WRITER**

Kicki fell in love with books about relationships, psychology and religion at a young age and never looked back. When she's not surrounding herself with words, you can find her engaging in DIY projects at home, creating, mending or upgrading stuff. She enjoys blogging and sharing stories about her life and its bumps / bruises.

Today she is pursuing her dream of being a successful Perception Management Consultant and , in between the multitudinous demands of adult life. She is also a Home Improvement enthusiast with a blog page for Well-Dressed Houses called Kicki Cole Homes.





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A PERSONAL JOURNEY TO  
**UNAPOLOGETIC  
LOVE**

## INTRODUCTION MY ORIGIN WOUND

**E**veryone has a story. Everything you think, perceive or have an opinion about can usually be traced to some memory or occurrence in your life that has shaped that way of thinking (especially from your early days earliest memories).

My journey with love is no different.

Let's start from where my life began, when my mum and dad decided to spend an eternity together with me and my siblings being a by-product of that love. I still blush at the thought!

I have often wondered what love and life was like for my parents before us kids. It must have been totally different to the version of love they embraced once the realities of living life together with someone else set in.

I'm not going to dive into too much detail about my parents or their marriage because I'm a firm believer in allowing people tell their own stories.

Whatever version of events I convey should be viewed as my own perceptions and perspectives of what may or may not have happened and how I viewed it through my own lens of understanding.

Their story of love is responsible for who I am today. Not because they had a perfect marriage. Infact, I often wished they had gotten divorced and perhaps given themselves a better chance at love and happiness in a way that truly worked to their advantage.

From their approach to love and understanding, I learnt some very tough lessons on how not to do love.

### **My first lesson was compatibility:**

You see, my parents came from different worlds as far as upbringing is involved. My dad from a polygamous home with all it's malices, strife, watch-your-backs and constant feeling of not knowing who you could trust or be loved by.

**INTRODUCTION**  
**MY ORIGIN WOUND**

If you are dating someone try and find out how that person was raised. A lot of people weren't raised in love. They were raised on survival. That's why you see so many men/women not being able to love properly (hurting people). You'll find a lot of good looking people damaged inside because of their past, and you won't realize how damaged they are until you try to love them. If you think a person's past doesn't affect how they see life, then you are sadly mistaken.

My mum from a Christian home with a strong matriarch of a mother who was twice married but managed to bring her children up in a tight-knit unit with love and a lot of togetherness.

So we have on one side, a man who doesn't realise how his emotions are in a constant state of flight or fight mode, constantly waiting for how you will let him down or abandon him like countless other figures in his life have.

On the other end, a woman who doesn't understand how much constant safety and reassurance such a man might need to erase all the years of emotional or mental trauma he is unconsciously shaped by and dealing with.

If we reverse the tables, then we have on one hand:

A woman who grew up in a home where her mother was essentially the head of the home. She had no real time for petty emotions and feminine whims because she was the family bread winner and had to prioritise putting food in the mouths of her kids, giving them an education and building a home: over the luxury of being an emotional female or catering to any male whims.

Then we have a man who is equally self-sufficient and finds your independence attractive until he realises it doesn't feed his need to be constantly prioritised by you and the depth of love / devotion he expects to soothe his trauma (without even knowing it) not to mention breaking man-code to ask for it.

Such a pa-lava either way the table turns!

I still believe everything I have described is something a good conversation can fix, either with a therapist, marriage counsellor or even privately by both parties if they are willing to be open and vulnerable.

What my parents never did was address all the elephants in every room. And I mean EVERY ROOM. They had love. You could see it in the way they poured themselves into other people and how fixated they both were on giving everyone else what they lacked.

It's just a marvel how two people would much rather dance around a series of problems so long, dancing around issues becomes the lifestyle.

They built a wall brick by brick with every pain they failed to address, every issue they tried to sweep under the rug, every discomfort they tried to avoid to keep the peace and every failed attempt at thinking that was how the life they were choosing to live should be.

Love is many splendid things but what it is not is EASY! It takes work. It takes intentional sacrifice. It takes feeling your uncomfortable feelings so that they don't have a significant power over how you do life.

Everything I'm about to share about how I've come to see love or know love or feel love, can be traced to everything I felt and observed by watching how painful their version of loving each other turned out to be.

# CHAPTER 1

## HOW I VIEWED LOVE AND RELATIONSHIPS

### Single Me

I didn't have a lot of needs in a relationship. I had learnt how to not expect a lot from someone so I don't get disappointed or emotionally bound to someone who could break me. I figured out ways to make myself happy, stay in peace and slay my own dragons. You could say I got this trait from both parents (or perhaps, as a result of them).

I didn't know this then but what I did was create a trauma response and developed an avoidant attachment style.

When you've seen first hand what living in strife can do to a marriage or household, you tend to develop your own coping mechanisms as a child to shut those moments out and seek your own joys outside what can be given to you by others.

That's how it was for me anyways.

When you are a child, there are a lot of things you miss because shiny objects are all you care about. But kids grow. We start to notice other things too. When we walk into a room where someone has been crying, we begin to observe the difference between the look of being in thought-mode versus a look of utter regret.

Your soul starts to tune into atmospheres which are charged with joy and those stained with deafening silences. Then you get old enough to start doing sleep overs with your friends, cousins and experience how other families are doing life. That's when you really start to know something is definitely wrong with your own environment.

Unless you are just a very clueless child, these moments start to add up in your subconscious. You watch the movie version of romance and family dynamics in Hollywood and you can't help but compare what you know to be normal to what everyone else's normal is.

If being married to someone meant smiling outside, dying inside and living a life where you truly weren't happy .... nah! You can miss me with that cupid's arrow.

For a lot of years, I was opposed to love in general. I had this strong opinion that, if this is what it was, I didn't want it.

It wasn't till I was 15, I started reading books by Serita Jakes, Gary Chapman, T.D. Jakes and a few others and I began to really understand there is a right and wrong way to do love. There was a worldly way to love, a godly way to love and an inbuilt default setting in everyone of us when it comes to love.

I started to question everything and everyone.

I remember how my mother lit up when I started asking questions about love and challenging theories / concepts of love. She was so excited to be able to teach me about it. She was a Pastor and had a Masters in Philosophy and a PhD. She founded her own Marriage Counselling Ministry. She was over excited to be sharing her passion with me.

I also remember how deflated she got when I began to question her teachings in relation to how she was or wasn't applying it to her own life.

Looking back now, I must have scratched at a deep seeded wound that needed healing but she clearly didn't know how. You could see the hurt in her eyes, the quiver in her voice and the change in her physical composure as the realization unfolded with every answer she tried to provide.

### That was the first tear I shed for love.

I saw how it had broken my mother into unidentifiable pieces. For the first time, I saw and understood how much heartbreak my mother was harbouring behind all those bright smiles she always had for everyone.

I still had no idea WHY there was heartbreak at all! No one was ready to tell a child, adult stories. No one was ready to open years of wounds for the inquisition of a child.

Yet, my tiny heart understood without understanding.

Then I went over to my dad's camp and tried to have the same conversations. EPIC FAIL! He shut me down just as quickly as I started. He kept trying to paint this picture of having a heart of stone or not needing the same emotional connections women need. He thought he was dismissing me and protecting himself in the process...

### Until I made him shed a tear for love too.

It was very unintentional.

If you follow my stories on whatsapp, you'll know how fond a relationship my dad and I had. We had activities we did weekly (daughter and daddy dates if you like), other ways we stayed connected where he taught me tangible and intangible things.

I mention this now because, I asked him a simple question one day that brought tears to his eyes.

*“Why don't you do these things with mom?”*

It was the simple musings of a child, spoken out loud with no real thought or emotions to it.

REGRET ... if regret was a person, it was him in that moment. He had no smart comeback, no harsh shutdown tactics, he just stared at me and I noticed his eyes get more and more moist as he did.

When he finally spoke, his voice quivered a bit as he said *“You haven't finished cutting my toe nails?”* In daddy land, change of topic signals end of discussion.

**I never brought it up again.**

Deep down, I felt the weight or gravity of what I had just experienced. I can explain it now in detail as an adult, but as a child, it was just a **BIG FEELING**. I hated seeing my dad broken or is it vulnerable?

**Not sure what I felt. I was too young to fully understand the depths of human sorrow I had just experienced by two people who broke at the very mention of each other.**

Getting older, Being single, I learnt to be self reliant and sufficient with my emotional needs and dependencies so I never have to be covered in regret at the thought of someone else. It was a burden I should never have known or had to bare.

**Relationship Me**

In plain terms, gave no fucks!

I had seen what I never wanted to experience in a relationship. I hadn't seen what I should want or aspire towards experiencing in a relationship. Two sides of a coin necessary to balance me out.

I had already decided at this point I never wanted to get married. Can you imagine what a human wrecking ball I must have been?

I remember my first real boyfriend. I was so emotionally traumatized, I never officially gave him the title. If he reads this book, it would be the first time he is ever hearing it. I always introduced him as my best friend (because he was at the time) but to be fair, every boyfriend I've had is a 'best friend'.

I love you, that means I'm not just here for the pretty parts and the happy days. I'm here for the rough and the bad days. I'm here no matter what.

My inability to even accept something as minor as a relationship title was trauma on wheels. These days, I would be defined as the ultimate red flag for not wanting a label or something that remotely points to any kind of commitment.

Did we have fun .... Yes we did.

He was a little older so he bought me most of the books I had grown to like about love, relationships and stuff. We used MTN free Night calls to burn the midnight oil discussing every topic under the sun.

We were physically and emotionally compatible ... or atleast so it seemed. My trauma began to show up when he started talking about the 'future'.

Every sane person goes into a relationship with someone they want to date, marry and eventually have a family with.  
Not this Cinderella.

I started to withdraw. He was so caught up in the fact that he had found his Queen, He barely noticed my lack of participation in this imagined dream world.

He had this book which he called "Our Dream Book". It was from him i learnt the concept of vision boards and manifestation until i found "The Secret" by Rhonda Byrne. Oprah was one of my first inspirations the way she gushed about it's principles.

In this book, He had an entire future mapped out for us. Baby names for every combination of kids, wedding gown and tuxedo shops, and he even had an elaborate plan to change his course at university so he could study architecture, build our dream home and a mall. He said to me "I never want anything you need to be out of reach for you. Salons, boutiques, cinemas ...". This was his main inspiration for building a mall (amongst his business prospects).

I thought it was a joke until He presented his admission slip to Covenant University to study ... Architecture!

RED FLAGS upon red flags! This is looking more like an obsession and psychotic behaviour than love at this point.

My withdrawal intensified. I became very frightened all of a sudden and unsecure too. How was i going to tell this guy, OYO was his case. I started replaying every conversation in my head from when we started talking. I wondered where i went wrong in giving this idea that this was the life i wanted.

The more i thought about it, the more imprisoned i felt in a life or relationship i didn't want and seemingly had no say in. Having to be that worried about (or feel responsible for) someone else's emotional and mental health didn't feel good to me. It wasn't love!

It took him a while to notice my lack of participation and contribution to dream land. He dropped off this book everytime he went off to Uni so i could catch up with his ideas. He was ready to love 100% on both sides. Which I now realize, is a trauma-based response too.

I never opened it.

I never made any contributions.

I refused to feed the fantasy.

When he finally did notice, it broke him.

His own emotional damage and traumas started to show up more fiercely. He felt rejected and he didn't handle it well.

You see, everyone has a story, and his origin story should have been all the clue I needed to proceed with caution but I didn't know then, what I know now.

He was from a Muslim home but his mum was Christian. He had always straddled both worlds as the first born and all the friction it brought with his relationship with his dad, unmet expectations and everything inbetween.

As far as I knew, we had no future from the jump. It was just fun and games until he started to talk about merging worlds, families and shit just got too real too quickly.

*My rejection... or what he perceived as my rejection, re-opened or opened his existing wounds about his relationship with his dad and how yet another person whose adoration, praise and support he needed, was not available to him.*

He was subconsciously trying to use our relationship and the prospect of a life together to build a family unit he never had growing up. A life he could control, filled with all the things he missed and felt deprived off with his own parents and their peculiar situation.

Most men would have pulled back or withdrawn to protect their emotions but he doubled down instead. He began to call more incessantly, show up more unannounced, act radically and alittle more needy than he usually was. He couldn't let go of that fantasy he had built and woven so many hopes for his future into.

I was too young to give a fuck!

My trauma response kicked in too like, ***I don't want no drama!***

Every book, every person, every material you come across, teaches you how to love, **no one teaches you how to Leave Love (especially without crashing and burning).**





**BE AWARE OF WHY YOU'RE CONNECTING**

**WITH THEM. ASK YOURSELF IF**

**YOUR MOTIVE IS SELFISH**

I eventually broke up with him, his siblings, his cousins, his mother. I was not in peace. It was a whole thing. He never accepted the breakup and kept showing up to visit my brother and eventually my mother, who decided to take it upon herself to counsel him.

He dropped out of university and his course. Without the dream home for me and all the hopes he had wrapped around my existence in his life, he didn't know how to go on.

He went a little cray-cray to be honest and eventually needed some intervention. Kept ignoring my wishes for no contact. When he finally stopped showing up, he never stopped texting or trying to call from time to time.

I was done-done. I had seen enough.

I never felt guilty. He could have studied and built his own dream home for himself. He could have held on to his dreams without making them belong to someone else. There was a lot he could and should have been doing for HIMSELF but he had formed a trauma bond and dependency which was not my load to carry or problem to solve.

Wrecking ball mehn.... an emotional wrecking ball is what I was turning out to be. After all, who in their right minds doesn't want to get married, have a family and raise some babies?

He never imagined someone (a female) would not want those things, so it must mean I just *didn't want it with him*.  
*If he had been paying any kind of attention to me, my wants, my needs, he would have known it was all ME.*

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## CHAPTER 2

# CYCLES THAT KEEP REPEATING THEMSELVES

Every young man in his mature age, is thinking of how to settle down and start a family. They have casual relationships and relationships they play for keeps. They are always weighing females against yardsticks for future compatibility, home making and motherhood.

Women are also programmed to want and be these things for men.

The worst thing you can give to a man is a woman that finally ticks all the right boxes for a forever companion WHO DOESN'T WANT TO BE A FOREVER COMPANION.

No matter how many times you clue some men into your wants, needs and preferences from the beginning of the talking stages, they always assume **"Its because you haven't found the right man that can handle you"**.

if I had a dime for every time I heard that, I would be rich.

They take it up as a challenge to hunt, subdue and win me over. Be the one guy out of all the rest who succeeded at catching an elusive emotional barracuda.

I become an obsession of some kind. Something they want to study and unravel so they can conquer. It's a challenge and men love a good challenge, don't they?

All I got was more and more irritated. It was a negative cycle. Yet another series of men who didn't factor ME into the equation of a life that was also to be my future too.

I'm a whole damn woman who has her own wants and needs. Instead of being the one trying to change my mind about marriage and forever for your own egotistical pursuits, you should be the guy trying to understand why I don't want what I don't want. It's not a problem you have to fix, it's the ME inside Me that needs a different kind of love from the type you know.

*Trauma is something that follows you like a shadow. It was woven into my nervous system at that point. It shows up at the most random of moments and in the rarest of situations. You'll think you've dealt with something because its been dormant for awhile then one day, someone comes along and ta-da, trauma looks at you like..*  
*"Did you miss me?"*

These men reminded me of my first boyfriend who planned for me instead of planning with me. They reminded me of every time my parents decided to ignore something critical about the other persons wants and needs because it didn't suit a narrative of something THEY wanted to accept.

For my parents, I saw where that led.

They continued to ignore things about eachothers' wants and needs over the years because starving people, starve people. Hurting people, hurt people. Everyday they chose to live in silence from each other and everyday they grew farther and farther apart from ever finding reconciliation or love again.

Then I look at these men and start to fashion my trauma response like, you're already telling me during your pursuit that my wants and needs don't matter to you. So uncle bruv, kindly exit stage left and let's keep this line moving.

It didn't even matter that one thing they did wrong, didn't need to be the summation of an entire character profile. Trauma is not logical in that regard. It just remembers the hurts and seeks to protect itself like muscle memory. A cycle that would keep repeating itself until it is properly addressed and broken.

*At some point, It was exhausting being on the lookout for pain with every encounter. It was also heavy anticipating hurt at every turn. It was unnerving to be on edge about everybody and weighing their intentions against very unknown yardsticks.*

*Having an emotional response to every triggering situation is mentally, emotionally and physically draining. The cycle was unproductive and counter productive.*

*I had to break the cycle ... And it wasn't until I met HIM that my personal journey to self discovery and actual love began.*

Attracting a conscious partner can actually heighten your anxiety at the beginning as the nature of love is: everything that is not in service to it will be brought to the surface. This means there is a natural shadow work that occurs when you meet a conscious partner.

Lorin Krenn



This shadow work and triggering of our core wounds often creates an internal conflict with the conditioning we have received about love. Doubts come up that say: should real love not feel different? feel perfect? Is this a sign that the relationship is not right?

Lorin Krenn



When we identify with these doubts fully then we push the person away, we blame them for our anxiety, our fears and trauma coming up, while in truth this is simply the nature of love. We run from real love because it doesn't fit the programming we have received about it and our illusory expectations.

Lorin Krenn



# CHAPTER 3

## MY SELF-DISCOVERY

... With The HIM who turned out to be my first love. Let's call him **ESS**.

It was a bright morning, parents had left for work and as usual, us kids had the house to ourselves for a few hours. University was out for the summer and we had nothing but play time on our hands.

Our house has always been the meeting point for friends, parties and hangouts of all kinds. My parents made sure they knew who our friends were and what we spent time doing.

So almost everyday, we had people always just lounging and chilling out. Sometimes they bring a friend or two. On this day, one friend decided to bring HIM.

They had scheduled their usual gym session at the back of the house and I typically left them to it. I was cleaning and tidying up places when I heard the knock on the gate and assumed I knew who it was. So I paid no mind to it. Someone would get it.

I continued cleaning with my blissful music playing through my mp3 player. It was suppose to be a day like every other day but it wasn't.

I suddenly started to feel uneasy and distracted. My mind kept wanting to go hang out with the gym rats. Something I usually had a distaste for. Smelly, sweaty men with all that testosterone agro in one space, was not how I liked to spend any kind of morning.

I eventually caved and went downstairs when I kept feeling so uneasy. I walked all the way to the back of the house and right as I got to the edge of the pathway, I suddenly spun around.

It was like one of those scenes in a movie where a gust of breeze just washes over you and forces your head to face a particular direction.

As I spun around, He spun around too... OMG!

Our eyes locked, he smiled, I smiled ..... both of us looking like something the cat dragged in with his uncombed hair and stretched out black tank vest and crop shorts. Me with my hair bonnet and one of my granny night gowns. We were a mess but it didn't even matter.

We smiled anyways. No introduction was even made. I greeted everyone else, turned around and went back to my cleaning. This time, peace restored!

Later that evening was game night, which involved food, drinks and friend stuff. Everyone would have been properly washed and presentable compared to the morning.

I hear a knock on the gate and this time, I'm the closest one to get it. It was one of our friends. I hailed him as usual and then he gestured behind the gate to announce a plus 1, his friend he had brought along for game night.

There he was again.

Our eyes met and we instantly both smiled. Second time in one day. God wasn't trying to be subtle.

We were barely through the gate when an argument had erupted amongst two players in the living room. They had made their way to the compound determined to fight it out. So three of us were joined by everyone else waiting for this battle to commence.

They just kept issuing threats, jumping up and down without throwing any punches. Very uneventful fight. One of them decided to be the bigger person and walk away. Everyone else just kind of followed suit back into the house, except for the opponent.

He started to take off his shirt and slippers, really determined that the fight must continue.

Ess and I were the only audience left outside at the time. I had already gestured to show him the way into the house, when this fighter decided to also take off his trousers for this impending fight that only he was interested in.

Fun fact...

***He forgot he neglected to wear boxers that morning.*** In his attempt to "shalaye", he had stripped bare naked in front of Ess and I.

What caught me, was what happened next.

Ess took my hand and instantly stood in front of my visual field. Not only giving the guy enough time to pull his pants back up but shielding me from visual too.

He was so close to me. We stood looking eye to eye until we instantly started laughing just to each other. He gave my hand a little squeeze before he let it go.

Ladies / gentlemen .... the rest they say, is history.

We didn't join the video game crowd, we went to the dining room instead and played cards. Just us two. Finally did a proper introduction and got talking.

This was my first experience with what people call "Love at First Sight". I'm not crazy, I know there is no such thing as that but it was definitely a CONNECTION AT FIRST SIGHT.

The more we got talking over days, weeks, months... we understood why our souls needed to meet. We were like two peas in a pod. We didn't realize how much we snuck away from general people to be by ourselves, just having conversations.

One day, someone decided to sneak up into the tree where they knew we go to hang out and converse. They wanted to have confirmation that we were getting frisky everytime we disappeared. They thought we had secretly started a relationship and we were trying to keep folks in the dark.

Proof was required either ways.

So there we were in our usual comfort zone, chatting away and laughing under the shadow of our tree. When something started to rustle in the tree.

Once again, he instantly took my hand, pulled me up and stood between me and the tree while we looked up to see what was going on.

THAT PROTECTIVE NATURE. It was just pure instinct for him. It really gave me a sense of safety and protection around him. Something I had never felt in any masculine presence outside my dad.

So this friend finally jumps out of the tree LAMENTING! We are following him bumper to bumper at this point trying to figure what he was doing up there in the first place.

We finally get to where everyone is gathered and from their faces, you could tell they were in on the gig. Everybody was waiting for feedback like *ki lo de*.

That's how the guy started his official report. It was the funniest thing I have ever heard and also the most ridiculous at the same time. He said with so much anger ***"One hour! These people were talking for A WHOLE HOUR and I no understand ONE TIN WEY DEM DEY TALK" ...***

Apparently, he observed that we had our own language. Kept finishing each others sentences and just revelling in the fact that we could understand each others souls so easily. It made the conversations hard to follow by anyone who wasn't us.

He had a story too.

His parents although married, lived countries apart. He is the 2nd of 4 kids but first male child. His mother just like my grandmother was a matriarch in her own right. Had her own business, built a home, raised the kids, paid the bills and life was very good for them. Strong woman is what she was. He was raised in love with siblings. Everyone tight and nice.

He was essentially the man of the home and ensured the heavy lifting got done and he helped his mom out alot (more than she needed to ask it of him. Although, Nigerian mothers would never stop asking even while you are doing the thing. Lol).

With 1 mom , 2 sisters and 1 brother, he definitely had developed a protective instinct for women around him (Or perhaps just the ones he had a connection to). He was also very in-tune with his environment just like I had to be because, a single parent home, still comes with its own emotional damage and baggage on one's psyche.

That was the one thing I can clearly see, that brought us together in a soul connection. It was ultimately the same thing that never allowed us truly bond.

We were both bad at communicating anything emotional.

We had developed terrible coping mechanisms in response to trauma from seeing how our parents made love work. We could talk about all the topics in the world. We could finish each others sentences. We understood in the other person, things we didn't even understand about ourselves.

But...

We could never say the things that truly mattered. The truly vulnerable things that exposed us wholly and fully to each other. We ASSUMED them instead, afterall we finish each others sentences abi?!

This experience would essentially be, my first lesson in the importance of communication.

His house was a hub for friend hangouts too. We knew a lot of the same people, It's a marvel we never met sooner. Our houses were also just down the street from each other so it was convenient.

He loved music. He wrote songs, rapped, danced, he was very talented. His songs were very catchy tunes. You would walk into his house with his mom singing them while she washed dishes. His siblings walked around singing the same songs. I heard one that I particularly liked and it's lyrics were:

*Let me be your hero, because you are my purple rose.*

*So hard to find because you are my purple rose. Let me be your hero tonight, Let me be the man in the fight.*

*Let me be your hero tonight, Let me be the man who wins the fight.*

*Let me be your hero, because you are my purple rose.*

I really absolutely loved the song. I heard his mom sing it one day as she walked by me and then his sister and brother. Until one of them looked at me like “I hope you know you are the purple rose”. I think my cluelessness was starting to be annoying.

A bell went off very loudly in my head. He had literally just bought me a purple wrist watch for my birthday. It had a rare purple pearl in the middle of the hand dials. It had a matching purple leather strap.

**CHAI ! If there was ever a declaration of love so sweet, that should have been IT.**

BUT...

I was hearing about it from everyone else EXCEPT from the one lip it would have meant the world from. It was bitter-sweet at best. The joy was not complete. Infact, it was saddening to be honest.

Don't give me your heart but pass it through other hands in hope it gets to me. If you want to give me your heart, GIVE ME YOUR HEART! Don't do dancing chairs and tombo-tombo. Open yourself to me and see if I don't open myself back to you in return. Protecting himself was essentially hurtful and confusing to me.

We would have so many more instances like that in the course of our situationship. Look, I was out there dating other people and living my best life. I wasn't holding space or hope alive for anyone. And he in turn, was writing songs about them guys too.

He was actively communicating the best way he knew how, through music and lyrics but never in a way that truly mattered or meant something. The more the cycle repeated itself, the less the songs, the lyrics, the poems had any emotional value.

Then when i think i have him all figured out, in the rarest of moments, he would open himself to me like a lotus flower.

One night after my mum died, we had been getting back into the swing of life and things. We had game night at his house with friends. At some point in the evening, we were all stood outside, vibing, talking, drinking under the moonlight.

At some point, I must have gone silent, deep in thought.

All I remember, was him catching my eye as he walked through this line up of people, walking straight towards me. He put his arms around me and just hugged me without saying a word. I remember just melting into his embrace in complete silence. We just stood like that for minutes.

As usual, it just took one over vigilant friend to ruin the moment by turning everyone's attention to what was going on in our corner. I tried to pull away, **he didn't let me.**

For the first time ever, he really didn't care who said what, who saw what, he was just pleasantly present in that moment. He eventually let me go but held on to my hand in a soft but firm grip. I saw the stare he gave the guys, no one made any smart remarks after that.

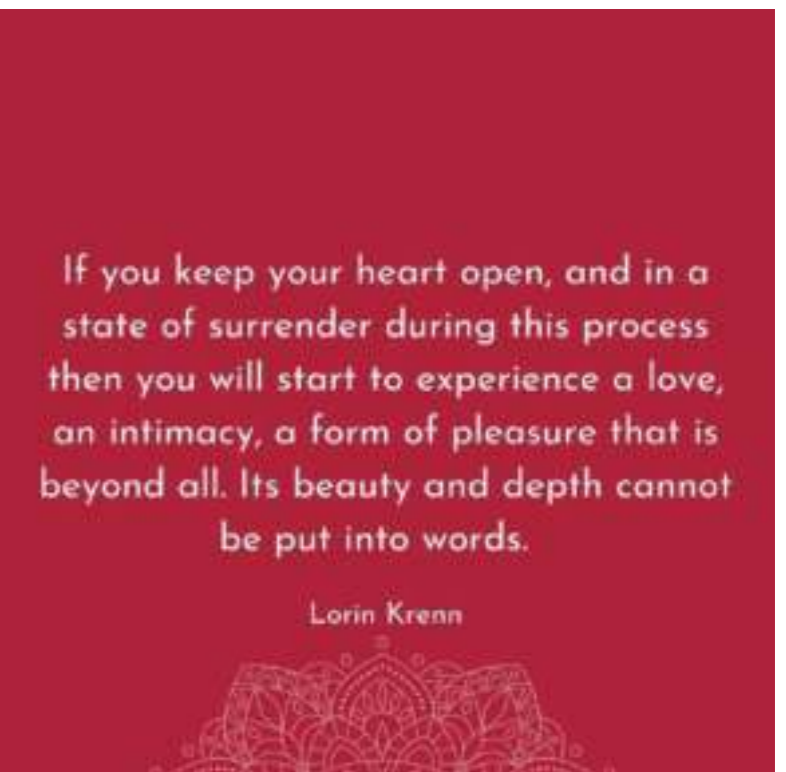
That's when it all changed for us.

They suddenly got accustomed to his specific niceness towards me. I was usually the only female in the midst of all these men. For all intents and purposes, I was one of the guys, technically off limits and when this dynamic started brewing, it was weird but not unwelcome.

We physically leaned into other when we were in the same spaces. We were just drawn to each other like magnets. It was the stuff movies tell you about, I swear to God. It's a thing that can happen.

One time, we both had a cold and there I was on the sofa, lying on his chest with him trying not cough so he didn't wake me. Hushing all his friends so they don't make too much noise either. Commentary of every kind about just how ridiculous we looked or were being. I wasn't asleep, I was just resting but he didn't know that.

We didn't care. It just felt nice to be held, to feel safe, to feel loved and to be taken care of. Felt nice to just feel that way towards someone after being so closed off to the notion or prospect of love.



## CHAPTER 4

# WORDS I LEFT UNSPOKEN

**We still had unresolved issues which hadn't been dealt with.** We kept repeating this cycle of miscommunication (or lack of it) that left us confused, frustrated and distant.

One time, they were prepping for a party. I wasn't going to show up. I hadn't been expressly invited. As usual, I had heard about the party from our network of friends and I just wasn't fussed. Can't keep doing the same thing and expecting different results, so I changed something. I didn't acknowledge the party or make any plans to attend.

It was about 8pm in the evening. I had just finished serving my dad his diner, hanging out with him and clearing up the kitchen for bed time. I hear this knock on the gate. I'm thinking its my brother who had left earlier for the party but It was 2 mutual friends instead.

They boldly announced, **"We've come to get you"**. I'm like, get me for what? I wasn't invited anywhere, I declared.

They began to give me this whole spill about how I should know how important I am to Ess. How he is walking around angry and miserable at his own event because the one person he wanted there, wasn't there. He had sent them to come get me.

I almost didn't go but at this point, I was FURIOUS! I was mad as hell about why I needed to hear this from everybody else but Ess himself. So I get dressed, tell my dad I'm going out and we get into the car heading towards the party.

As soon as I walk in, everyone kinda goes **"Finally, party fit start"**! I TOTALLY IGNORE THEM, I'm still angry as hell and heading towards whatever direction I'm suppose to find him at. First, i find his mom to pay my respect and when she sees me , she says **"Finally, you're here"**.

This was such a huge issue for me.

What in the bejewels is going on here. I'm just getting more and more angry at this point.

Someone must have told him where to find me because he came up to his moms room to get me. We said no words, I just dragged him all the way outside the gate of the house and then even farther. We needed to truly be alone for what had to happen next.

.... and for the first time ever, **WE WENT AT IT!**

Hurt people hurt others, but luckily,  
healed people heal others. Safe people,  
shelter others. Free spirits, free others.  
Enlightened people, illuminate others.  
And love always wins. So shine your light  
of love on all who may cross your path in  
life, because what you do matters.

He was angry, I was angry. We were both angry but we were not even reading the same book or in the same library.

He was angry because I didn't want to show up to his party for some lame excuse like **"i was not invited"**. He was composed but still yelling at me out of frustration. **"You don't have to be told how much you mean to me and how important you are. I shouldn't have to tell you. My house is your house, you are welcome here anytime, You need no invitation"**.

And I was upset right back like **"Did I tell you I am a mind reader? Is it not English you are speaking now? What stopped you from speaking this English the entire time?". Did you give me keys to your doors? What exactly did you do that was symbolic enough for you to assume you had sufficiently replaced English that should have been spoken?.**

We just went at it for minutes.

As ridiculous as we were being, he was yelling at me and wiping sweat from my forehead with his shirt sleeves. I had a bit of a cough so every time I let one out, he would give me a slight pat on the back too. And every time his voice cracked, I shoved my bottle of water in his face like **"drink this"** while still yelling at him.

***And when we were done, he pulled me in to a hug and just didn't let go. We stood for minutes hugging each other until our tempers were more regulated and we felt tenderness was restored. Only then did we re-join the party.***

At some point in the evening, he found me, pulled me into the kitchen and just kissed me. It wasn't our first kiss but it was OUR FIRST KISS if you know what I mean. It was a kiss that actually had something to say for the very first time.

We heard a cough in the background with a voice that said **"Don't mind me o, I am just here drinking water"**. It was his mother! As we turned around to look at her, she started to make her way to the door with her parting words directed at me, **"I'm glad you finally came"**.

He cupped my face in his hands and kissed me yet again.

I learnt quite a few valuable lessons that evening.

When I asked my parents all those years ago why they either fought all the time or never really shared the same space and time together, I answered my own questions and understood a lot more that evening with ESS.

**ON & OFF RELATIONSHIPS ARE DANGEROUS  
CYCLES THAT NORMALIZE INCONSISTENCY**

**@FORRESTLAURENT**



People are always trying to teach you about love and loving properly. **No one is really teaching us about how to fight and RECONCILE PROPERLY.**

If I had followed my parents example, I would have stormed off to my room and let the dodging begin for days and weeks after. If he hadn't literally held me in one spot and showed me love inspite of tension, I would have given in to my fight and flight trauma response.

I don't know why he ever did those things. I don't know why he chose those specific acts but **they were everything I never knew I needed.** He made me feel safe, secure in his love and always protected. From day one, his instinct was always to protect or shield.

But inspite of that default setting and behaviour in him and in me, the lessons were still profound and would follow me on the rest of my journey to love:

- i. Feelings alone are not enough
- ii. Communication is important but so is vulnerability, transparency and openness
- iii. Even the strongest of feelings can expire or be deflated if it doesn't have its assurances and security
- iv. You can't replace conversation with activity
- v. Where a Man leads is where a woman will follow

*At every turn, he pulled me into his embrace. He never let go until I was back to breathing in sync with him. He found a way to come get me even when I was being stubborn. He never stopped protecting or loving me through his anger. Even though it wasn't obvious to me, everyone knew how he felt about me. I was the one who never questioned what I was never told.*

His mother was interested in seeing her boy happy but she never once interfered. She gave us room to figure it out or mess it up. It was part of our journey.

Even with all that kindness and tenderness being displayed, We still never managed to find our way around emotional vulnerability.

***Then life happened, took us to different parts of the world where we tried to stay connected. Time differences and varied schedules asides, we couldn't live in a house we never took time to build. Communication is still the backbone for long distance or short distance anything.***

A few years later, during one of our random conversations, he tells me about this girl he has been seeing and how she gets under his skin so much. Apparently they fought a lot. He kept using our 'coupling' as the benchmark for how we never fought and how he thought there was something wrong with their relationship.

For the very first time, we had a deep conversation. Emotions were no longer on the line so it was easier. I told him, **WE WERE DOING IT WRONG.**

We never fought because we never addressed anything. We never dated because we could never open up to each other in ways that truly mattered. You guys are fighting because you're learning how to love each other but perhaps just like you and I, none of you are successfully communicating properly about it.

It's funny how we were both in the same situation but had totally different perspectives about what the situation was. To him, we didn't date because I gave other people chances (dating other people) without giving him one (despite all his song lyrics with coded messages).

To me, I didn't think he wanted a chance because HE NEVER ASKED FOR ONE. He never out-rightly declared his feelings or wishes to be together and I never assumed.

Imagine if we had sat down years earlier and just had a conversation. If we had just communicated with each other. Been free, safe, open and responsive to our inner desires. If we never prioritised protecting ourselves and our emotions instead, giving into love and allowing it guide / lead us.

We had all the markings for a good relationship, we just couldn't get out of our own way because, we didn't even know we had trauma, trauma responses and terrible terrible terrible communication skills at the time. Unfortunately, these things only get more and more difficult the more emotions are being unlocked.





wokespiritual



My partner and I recently had a brutally honest conversation about what we lacked from each other, and I didn't know it until now.

Sometimes you don't realize what you're not doing in a relationship, which can cause it to fail. Be verbal about it, talk about it, and change it.

Real love requires compassionate communication.

Marry a guy who can speak good words to you, even though he is mad at you.

The best of a partner is when he is angry, he won't try to insult you. Because he has that much respect for you and doesn't want to lose you in a simple argument.

my dearest, sweetest, adorable, sugar coated, tender, loving lovely and lovingly honest, true, calm and collected, sugar honey bunch etc.

First of all, I want to say a big thank you  
For always being who you are  
Because it is you that keeps me afloat

For like a magnet, we metal men  
are extra ordinary attracted to the opposite  
and sit on a circus of emotions

Like an indefinite roller coaster with no end in sight

Sight is what I saw when I first saw you  
Like a baby new to the world  
Lenses focused as the pupil embraces the light  
Like a miner who took a day off after two months  
Working all morning and all day in the dark

As the sun shined on his face  
realizing all he missed was the light, air, sun, people  
Just being free like a man in love  
seeing his wife and kids after 30 years doing time

No time waits for no one, I will not wait to say these words  
I love you, hear me loud and clear as I say it again, I LOVE YOU  
I say it at the top of my voice, no stutter, no hesitation  
no limitation, All dedication, Declaration = Designation.

Like I said before, no stutter!  
Even though I voted for change, I will never CHANGE  
There is no greater love than Love itself at its maximum range  
at any stage that still remains the same.  
That alone I put behind my name  
Thank you for always being there

A

Every single day on the highway of thoughts  
I drive through gardens and gardens of sort  
Flowers are tall, or short

I drive and I drive, never destined to stop  
I reach down my bag a handful of crops  
my hand out the window I can see them drop  
I swear I am hopeful enough

I'm hopeful a lot  
When it's cold or it's hot  
When it storms, when it rains, when it pours  
When it stops I drive and I drive  
And I pass this same spot

I see flowers are blooming! Are they mine?  
maybe not! Maybe part of my effort  
its breaking apart or breaking a heart  
or melting in colors a gallery of art  
Maybe I hoped for a fish and expected a shark  
Maybe my thoughts are too deep  
And get lost in the dark

Maybe its dark when its lost  
And deep in my thoughts  
Maybe because I haven't stopped  
on this highway of thought

I swear I am hopeful not to swear again and be  
If you paid any attention to this writing, there's a key  
Regardless of how busy, that bag was still with me....

B

I left words left to leave  
and did what is right and wrote  
I wrote it for her mother  
when I picked a purple rose  
She tattooed her skin with flowers  
Live words on paper shivers

I stare at rose petals  
I can swear that flower lives  
Read this tell me read this  
Are words not yet alive?  
Be strong and be successful  
Heaven has watching eyes

Sometimes I cry under the rain  
to hide my tears out loud  
And wave to passers by  
while my soul is calling out  
Read this tell me read this  
Are words not yet alive?

For everytime you miss it,  
my words will surely die

C

She said i made sense  
 with soothing words from my head  
 As i spit through my lips  
 with emotions so tense  
 that even in a tense  
 I can simply say a ten  
 and yet i mean some tens  
 or simply a verbal term  
 strong enough to stand affirm  
 I compress and condense  
 mere letters words from the least  
 roller coaster innovations  
 to complete sentences  
 For she is the judge who gave me time  
 I in turn had pleasures in the crime  
 An inter in time as words interline  
 Like antennas you receive  
 Letters that settle in your mind  
 They say love is blind  
 but i think they meant blind  
 as in two become one  
 until one becomes two  
 some say im deep so  
 but how deep can you think  
 if you cant dive in thoughts  
 then you cant swim with sharks  
 if you cant grab this pill  
 then i dont think you are sharp  
 enough to pierce a heart  
 maybe to aim a dart or some creative art  
 Like colas to the eyes,  
 each tone must play a part or stand and be apart  
 she said that i make sense  
 comprehension isnt hard from a vantage point of view  
 its realization with the heart - LOVE YOU WOOL "YOU MAKE SENSE"

D

She wrote, as i read through words she wrote  
 Her pen began to bleed with ink  
 with every single stroke  
 Every line, and every O,  
 Every road that leads to home  
 As home is where the heart is  
 I guess we are going home

She spoke those words regardless  
 that smiles became a must  
 that even he that is heartless  
 would see in her distrust  
 composed but yet so confident  
 so humble and so meek  
 and when she utters words i swear...

I Love the way she thinks  
 I Love the way she talks  
 I Love it when its us  
 I Love the conversation  
 I Love her way with words

Not perfect but she is perfect  
 not a little, but alot  
 I cannot find the words  
 but ill leave it as "she is hot"

Thank you for the journey  
 Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!  
 I cannot thank you enough  
 I prayed for you today  
 I sent a message up above  
 that when you read this message,  
 You would somehow... feel my Love!

E

Hubbaicious!  
 She's sensitive, sweet and delicious  
 No propositions nor prepositions in her visions  
 Perfect in my demolition  
 A breakdown of intuition  
 100 dollars to tickets or be sent to prison  
 hard labor including dishes  
 she would be 1 of 3 wishes  
 For in her i believe in  
 She's gone and im leaving  
 she's back and im breathing

she brings forth the seasons  
 Like gourmet, she is every seasoning  
 In every season you can come up with  
 As a human being, she's every man's dream  
 she's an idealization of thought  
 And a perfect example of personification  
 In this language called English.

She's not just addictive  
 but better yet, the perfect narcotic  
 by definition, she fills the empty feelings  
 void of their content even while hungered within  
 the depth of its utmost crave  
 Trembling in her absence  
 as knees clutch to chest, rocking side to side  
 sunk in all white sheets, aching for something hubbaicious  
 to be injected into your mind body & soul

She's a magician with no magic, yet its magical the p  
 From now full time defines destiny, im sticking with it!  
 Was that ive expected for should, can you ready as ur and give me

F

## CHAPTER 5

### I AM HUMAN BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE

I'm not a relationship expert, advisor, counsellor or any kind of helper for that matter. So I won't presume to use this opportunity to tell you that relationships of any kind can be challenging but not all relationships are toxic to our health or well-being.

Friction exists in every human encounter, more so in relationships where our emotions are heightened and frightened.

We play a very active role in deciding who we value and why we value them. The Challenge is suppose to be good. It's about finding ways to be together with someone, that allow us to be seen, heard and valued regardless of what's going on with us. It requires a lot of learning about self (self reflection, self discovery), while also learning about other people in order to co-exist with them properly.

A healthy relationship requires that we work together as a team to find a solution to our problems. An unhealthy relationship feels like the opposite, where we either play the blame game or dismiss each others feelings and avoid the conflict in general.

Think twice about fighting  
for someone who gave up  
on you so easily.

One of the greatest myths is that once you attract a conscious partner everything is going to be perfect.

This shadow work and triggering of our core wounds often creates an internal conflict with the conditioning we have received about love. Doubts come up that say: should real love not feel different? feel perfect? Is this a sign that the relationship is not right?

Lorin Krenn

I always revert back to the story of my parents as a recurrent theme in this write-up because, I learnt by observing what they did or didn't do in love. Your children (if you have them) are observing you right now too. And the gift of observation is one that never stops giving once you've unlocked that CHI inside you.

You notice EVERYTHING. You hear both words said and unsaid. You even learn how to connect invisible dots that may or not exist, until they do.

I met a guy a couple years ago, who on paper ticked all the right boxes. Good looking, salt and pepper bearded gang, good job, good prospects. Everything he told me about himself was on-point. He was like a well polished CV in human form.

During the talking stage of our getting to know each other, he told me a lot about himself. His family, his past hurts, his failed relationships, his friendship dynamics, he said a lot.

He told me 3 things that stood out in my subconscious and worried my spirit a little bit.

- I. He had friendships that always led to him being abandoned or being treated poorly.
- II. His relationships also involved women who cheated on him, treated him poorly, with disregard and abandon
- III. He never saw his parents fight and he wanted that for kids but his ex-wife supposedly brought out the worst in him and did it in front of the kids.

I'm sure you are wondering, Why did I single out these 3 things from everything else I was hearing and believing (and not believing).?

This is what he may have been saying, but this is what I was hearing:

**He had friendships that always led to him being abandoned or being treated poorly.**

I had to ask myself, what kind of person do you have to be for friends (who are usually the most non-judgemental people in your network) to always turn their back on you.

Forget that juicy cv he was promoting, this was the part of him, I was interested in getting to know more about.

Some friends are naturally just trifling. Human nature is something that one has to be very selective about because, show me your friends and I'll tell you who you are. So, who does it say you are, when you say you have no friends? When you tell tales about friends cheating you, turning their backs on you, tricking you or always egging you on to do bad things. Who are you telling me you are, with this picture you've taken time to paint for me? Why do you find yourself constantly orbiting towards such people?

The only common denominator is you. Why does everyone take it upon themselves to be this way towards you eventually. What kind of friend are you that makes other people want to unfriend you?

**His relationships also involved women who treated him poorly, with disregard and abandon**

At this point, a pattern is forming for me mentally. What is it about you, that makes people that way towards you. The stories always sound legit when you hear them. I did so and so for this person and they repaid me by doing xyz. I gave this person everything but it was not enough.

There was an element of a victim mentality also starting to show or take up space in the conversations. All I was hearing from all the stories and narrative was, "I'm some type of a problem".

As usual, I love a good challenge and didn't hold anything against him. I proceeded with caution even as we attempted to take our stab at love. It really was going semi-well. You're just getting to know someone so there's a lot of patience required in trying to get to understand somebody, their habits, their do's and do nots etc.

I always still had it at the back of my mind that something was very off with all the stories being told. Most importantly, I was beginning to notice behaviours and patterns for myself, about how he reacted to either not getting his way, being called on his short comings or presenting a need that wasn't being met by him.

I was not his ex-wife and yet his volatility, anger issues and instinct to raise his voice was feeling more like a *default setting*.

At the beginning, He was so eager to ask questions about me. He wanted to know everything about where other people went wrong. He was very intentional about always steering conversations towards the shortcomings of the people i was describing. You could tell it really egged him that i wasn't speaking negatively of people i once considered my love interests.

When he felt he had gathered enough data, he started pushing for emotional connectivity. He wanted me to feel an instant spark and connection to him based on his ability to see through these other men and their shortcomings in the way they failed to love me.

He said 'I Love you' after 3 weeks. Then it turned to "I've always loved you" with a few jokes about stalking my socials for a number of years. It was funny until he started telling me how i felt. *"i know you love me too"*. **AHHHH !! Has this one built dream mansion too? God abeg o!**

That was when i felt an invisible rope around my neck once again. Everything started feeling too much like an agenda if you get what i mean. *What does he want?*

He was really trying hard to paint this picture of a perfect match that I just wasn't seeing. Stories weren't adding up about several matters. It is always fascinating to me, to hear what people CHOOSE to tell you about themselves. **It says a lot.**

There is a lot to unpack in this story but I won't do that here. Let 's just focus on these 3 points raised earlier and how they fed into each other as time elapsed. Vision is always 20:20 in hindsight.

**After the period of toasting had elapsed and he felt he had hooked his bait, he got comfortable.**

At this point, his stories started to unravel. He had financial issues. He was in debt. Business was good, not great. He didnt outrightly ask for money but you could tell he was soliciting for me to volunteer the assist.

**I was raised to understand that a man who can't take care of himself, can't take care of you.** What was i suppose to do with all this information about your life being in so many pieces? Was that the agenda? **Love that opens wallet?**

The more i used phrases like **"The Lord is your muscle"** the more patience he lacked with our conversations. Even when i try to make conversation on my own challenges, he would trivialize them. His issues are supposed to take precedence. I kept the connection going, i wanted to see how committed he was to this agenda.

Whenever he noticed a tactic didn't yield result, he would suddenly have some windfall that acts as his reset button on that situation he had painted. He would try to get back to wooing and love bombing.

Then fresh wahala.

To me, all i was seeing was a truly selfish and self centred human adult. He had already wasted my time and attention.

I've always wondered about people who enter into relationships for the sole purpose of manipulation. The level of selfishness and self-absorbed thinking it involves must be its own kind of mental disorder.

Is life happening to only you? Is a relationship in existence for just your sake?

Since money was the prize, i decided to use it as a weapon too. I began to lean into him on things he should be doing "financially" for his "babe" that he pursued, stalked and love bombed with reckless abandon. Where are all the things i'm suppose to be enjoying from a man in full control of his life? Man in my life is not a free title na. It's a deposit from which you can make eventual withdrawals based on how actively you've kept the account lush. You want to make withdrawal, no problem, let's see your desposit slips.

I kept being emotional like *"I'm actively trying to communicate with you about things I need from you to feel secure in this relationship and your first response is to run away to steer the conversation back to you"*.

**He was so confused whose game or con this was.** He started to leave conversations half way and would go silent for days then emerge with those "Good Morning Beautiful" irrelevant messages.

I would reply with direct messages like :

***"Are you running from the accountability / responsibility of being in a relationship, are you running away from giving back to a table you've been taking from or are you running away from facing the parts of yourself that the relationship is showing you are ugly?"***

Either ways, **HUGE RED FLAG!** Underneath all that packaging, was an inner child who didn't seem to understand what it means to be there for somebody other than themselves.

He really had no emotional depth and by that, I mean ***it's easy to recite pages you've read in a book for self healing, it's difficult to fake living the talk.*** He was always so focused on himself and his things/issues the entire time, Until I had to attack the matter with neon signs, bells and whistles plus a pinch of resentment (okay more like a small cup of resentment).

He would just shut-down and then re-appear the next morning like nothing was wrong. He used silence and distance as his way to avoid uncomfortable topics and situations.

He really totally neglected everything about me as a person and just always kept drawing the conversations back to his reasons for not being whatever it was that I was saying he was not being for me.

In a relationship scam, someone who cannot recognize that sacrifices are important in any kind of ship, is still learning work. Thoughtfulness geared towards someone else is necessary to be a fully functional adult.

Why would i want someone who is all about themselves? Date yourself ! Why are you roaming the earth looking for who to lean on when you can't even be leaned on yourself?

**He never saw parents fight. Not that they didn't fight, they just never did it in front of the kids.**

I remembered when he said this to me at the beginning of the talking stages. He made it sound like such a great thing that his parents had a good relationship and never fought openly. They kept their ish private.

For the parents, sure, it was a great thing.

Guess what, THEY DID THIS CHILD NO FAVOURS! Like I said earlier, everyone is interested in teaching you about love or how to love, nobody is taking real time to teach you how to **FIGHT IN LOVE AND RECONCILE IN LOVE.**

This is a grown man whose inner child doesn't seem to know how to process conflict. How to manage opposing views. How to speak up and be spoken to properly. He never saw his parents do it I guess, so it feels like he never learnt how. He just gets explosive then disappears.

I saw my parents do the fighting, but I never saw how to reconcile after fighting. It's a double sided coin with heads and tails. You have to let your kids see these things. They have to understand how normal it is for two individuals to not be on the same page about something but still manage to find a common ground. Reach a compromise and do it with love, care and a lot of intentionality.

I have done too much healing in my own journey to be actively joined to someone who wasn't a fully functional adult.

I know it sounds harsh but at our age, we aren't children, youth or young, we are Adults approaching ELDERLY.

You have to come to every table adding value, purpose and a whole lot of peace. Looking for how to give not take. To receive 100%, you have to give 100%. ***There is literally no scenario where it is okay to show up in peoples lives looking for what you can take from them.***

That's how I see it.

***It turns out, the more healing you do, the more you recognize certain things in others that are either negotiable or non-negotiable to you. For me, what is non-negotiable is having a relationship that was a fire station.***

***I have peace when i'm on my own, why in the world would i want to involve myself in your messy life/situation thereby donating said peace? Why would you invite anyone to be a part of that?***

At some point, peace is more important than being anywhere that brings only turmoil.

This wasn't love. He had my time and attention, that was it. But even in a situation i felt with someone else months down the line, i realized I can love you and still leave you alone. Love is a choice.

In that situation, he was equally going through a rough patch but how he chose to ride those waves, revealed alot about his character which was disappointing to say the least. He also had an immature way of dealing with conflict or any emotion other than joy.

You can choose to learn to love me properly or you can also decide to not want to learn to love me properly. By constantly disappearing and not asking me what it would actually take to fill my cup, both men were choosing to not love me properly.

I talk alot about **Emotional Equity.** It stems from the belief that no relationship should start problematic. No relationship should open it's doors with an inflow of issues, problems or unnecessary weight/baggage. It's a terrible foundation for anything.

Emotional equity for me is built on the foundations of all things good, graceful and fulfilling in the relationship. This is the investment you give your partner and receive in return to build security, togetherness and staying power.

In times of crisis, it is from this emotional joint account that each party is expected to receive grace to push through and be that shoulder you can lean on. Sometimes you will struggle and your partner picks up the emotional slack, other times you do your part.

You can't make a withdrawal from an account you have not adequately filled. What is the banks incentive for giving you liquidity? Same with my emotions. If you have never filled my emotional cup or any kind of cup in my life, why would you expect to be given hospitality when you show up with your barrell of needs and wants?

I run a business where i feed from. What have you contributed to that income profile to expect blessings from its proceeds? I wake up every morning and run my hustle, what's your contribution tangibly or intangibly to that movement that makes you feel entitled to being a beneficiary of it's proceeds?

I have bills everyday, i'm not asking you to help but shouldn't you want to? Which part of caring for me is negotiable? Which part of being my rock and support system is optional?

Why would i be attracted to a mind or heart that feels so entitled to reaping from where they have not sown?



Sometimes, some people are truly clueless about what they should be doing (or not) and to what intensity.

I always have to constantly remind myself that we haven't all had the same training. We haven't grown up with the same parent figures, inspiration or mentorship. Some people legit are just learning as they go and ego doesn't allow them ask questions to be guided.

I am fully aware that as a woman expressing her need for love, attention and affection, **A mature/real love would recognise that there is a need to ask, *What do you need me to do? What am i not doing or giving? What is it you want that I can do more of? How can I make you more satisfied and secure in this relationship? That would have been a lover that cared about my emotional wellbeing.***

You want to know what immature/fake love does? **IT RUNS AWAY. It has no intention of giving, just taking. People tend to abandon people they were using.** It makes the conversation about them once again. The more i disengage, stop feeding that ego trip, drawing the conversation back to my point and stop engaging the ship with my usual time or effort focused on them, the more we have nothing to talk about.

3 months later, my 3 questions were answered. I could see why people would abandon someone who was seemingly so self-centred. I could see why women would be turned off and dismissive to a person who had low emotional fortitude and an emotionally manipulative modus operandi.

I could understand a lot of reasons WHY his stories always panned out the way they did, especially if part of the issue was using people as a means to an end to sort yourself out while leaving them high and dry. Not giving as much as you take and exiting the building, when it is asked of you.

I understand not all people are manipulative and they just have a hard time facing their emotions and it causes them to act in ways that could be viewed as immature.

I'm not condemning or judging anyone. I simply see how our actions can rub off wrongly on people and create unrewarding situations for us when not done with the right decorum, sensitivity and maturity required.

A trauma response for some people is to run away from conflict. Cut people off. Disappear from peoples lives (ghosting as we call it these days). They tell themselves "*I don't like drama*" but in reality, what you lack is maturity and self awareness. Friction is something you can never run away from as long as you're not living in a bubble.

People are bound to rub you the wrong way and you are also bound to rub people the wrong way too. A relationship can't be any different. Infact, it tends to be worse because proximity, connection, heart, mind, soul and everything else entangled into love just makes everything more complicated and hurtful. What matters is finding your way to clear and honest communication while setting adequate boundaries.

If it's a real relationship based on love and purpose for a real life together (not an agenda), Maturity requires that we openly share our feelings and negotiate a compromise that works best for both of us.

It also is observant enough to know when to reduce our expectations of the other person once we notice they may not be capable of giving us what we need based on where they are on their own healing journey.

**Therapy Helps! *The objective being, you both are willing to sit and address your issues so they don't fester, lead to resentment or loss of the relationship.***

If it's help you need, come to the table with your actual need. Don't play games with real people, don't be the reason people hide themselves from the world and shield their hearts to the point of missing out on good things.

Don't be that man or woman.

My parents did have real love. They had a real shot at being something fantastic. I really wish they had either known some of these things or atleast embraced their options more openly and willingly for a path towards reconciliation and finding love again.

I was lucky enough to figure some of that out on my own, but at what cost?



My partner and I recently had a brutally honest conversation about what we lacked from each other, and I didn't know it until now.

Sometimes you don't realize what you're not doing in a relationship, which can cause it to fail. Be verbal about it, talk about it, and change it.

Real love requires compassionate communication.

They disappear or ghost you for periods of time.

A reliable partner won't ignore your texts, go without taking to you for days or leave you wondering if they'll show up, let alone have your back.

@secrets\_\_relationship

Why do some men pull away when a woman opens herself fully to them?

Lorin Krenn



There are several reasons for this:

Number 1: When the chase ends, the responsibility begins. He pulls away because he sees the woman's trust in him as restricting, like a cage.

Lorin Krenn



Number 2: When a man chases after a woman whose love is conditional or hard to get, it resembles the relationship the man could have had with his mother; He had to do something in order to earn/deserve to be loved. But the moment the woman opens herself fully to him he pulls away because he doesn't know how to relate to safe and genuine love.

Lorin Krenn



Number 3: Running from one woman to another is a way of drowning his own trauma and wounding. The constant dopamine rush, the constant newness acts as a form of escapism.

Lorin Krenn

## CHAPTER 6

# RELATIONSHIPS UNLOCKED A DIFFERENT VERSION OF ME

Women, a mature masculine man will not want you to **perform** for him. He will naturally be repelled by it if you do, because what he wants to connect to is your **true essence**, not your performance. There is no space left for him to experience your vulnerability, and the truth of your heart when you are too busy performing for his acceptance, and love.

When we choose to perform, our relationships simply become a reminder that the *reward* for self-abandonment, betraying our values, and crossing our own boundaries is connection, acceptance, validation, and love.

@BYERMEAS

I discovered something new about myself.

It's very random but I love handwritten letters. Proper old school style with the outpour of emotions forever immortalised on the pages of paper. Words that come more and more alive everytime i read them. The deeper I fall in love with the heart that was full enough to spill over unto pages of consciousness.

No, this is not about Ess and poems or lyrics in songs. Truth was that, words never meant anything to me because they lacked the perquisite actions to back it up. And as with every creative, they need a muse. I was perhaps a muse for a second or a season, I don't count myself lucky in that regard.

But men, men do find it hard to be emotional or vulnerable even with people they love. They understand it's license to be loved and hurt in equal measure. It can be daunting and nerve wrecking for most, especially trauma survivors who tried love once upon a time and got more hurt than love. I think women are groomed to take more chances and blows for love.

For me, I have never truly quested for or sought out love. Truth be told, my issue lies more with giving it than receiving it. And my integrity meter won't also allow me sitback and be the recipient of someone's love efforts without loving them properly in return. It feels like a catch22 situation of my own making and devices.

Years ago, I made a promise to myself. I said **"Don't ever be the reason someone gives up on love"**. Those words run deep in my subconscious with every passing moment. I still feel the strong conviction in the words even now. I know what it feels like to be on the opposite side of that fence.

With that promise, comes the burden of emotional intelligence, emotional audit, courage and deep strength of integrity to always try to do right by other people who are trying to invest emotions in me.

It requires me to constantly question my motivations for doing a thing, keeping a conversation going longer than it should or having patience in situations not deserving of any more of my attention.

It requires me to critically look at my thoughts, words, deeds and the ugly sides of me which I need to face and subdue in order to give up self to do a kindness towards another.

I know there's a lot of literature out there that speaks the opposite and says do what's best for you. Truth is, if I always did what was best for me, I would have burnt more bridges than I can ever build. I would have lost good friendships to my selfishness. I would never be able to go farther than my eyes can see using the lens of self-centeredness because PEOPLE are important whether emotionally, platonically, familiarly or otherwise. People play too much of a role in our lives; helping us see our potential, achieve our potential and go further than potential alone could ever carry us.

Imagine being the reason someone stops believing in love and the possibilities it holds for our happiness and togetherness? I can't go to bed at night being that person. I can't imagine being with someone who is comfortable roaming this earth being such a person.

So when I see someone who still believes in love (in me), enough to forever immortalise in writing, that fleeting moment of emotion they have for me, I cherish the thought. The possibilities and the depth of strength it took to tap into that pool of vulnerability, just to let me know how much I mean to them.

It's silly I know. We all have our little quirks and this happens to be mine.

Ignore all these jokers that keep leaving sour tastes in my mouth, I met my first real gentleman in high school. Let's call him *Dip*.

Just like every other guy we've described, he had a slight issue reaching me emotionally. It never stopped his little heart from opening doors for me, getting angry when I got teased in class, handing me class notes directly for that glimmer of a smile I may or may not flash his way to say thank you.

He really was raised right in all the right ways. Alas, he had a cousin with us in the same class, AY. Bad boy for all intents and purposes. Final semester in freshman year, AY walks up to me and says

***"I'm going to allow you date other guys, just know, when you're done collecting all your data and catching your trips, you're ending up with me"***.

Forget trauma o, that was HOT! Was it narcissistic? Yes. Was it controlling behaviour? Absolutely yes but was it also 50 shades of grey? .... yes yes yes Mr Grey!

So we have good guy on one side; Bad guy on the other.

One day, good guy decides to be bold and pay me a compliment in front of the entire class. However misguided, He called me a "Bunny Rabbit".

Do I need to tell you what happened next or can you guess?

I FLIPPED.

I heard rabbit, I imagined long ears, buck teeth and hopping in no pleasant or flattering order. To make matters worse, thanks to AY, the entire class erupted in laughter. I was gutted. Which kin wahala be this. Who send this one this kin mission! I half imagined it was his cousin (AY).

We did have our understanding after all and his cousin, Dip, was not going to be one of the guys I was 'allowed' to date. And he made sure other guys felt the depth of his displeasure at their approach.

So, there we were, me embarrassed, AY having the time of his life and Dip, upset. For days, I refused to speak to him or even look at him. He tried to talk to me in hallways, my girls would usually intercept or I would scurry away really fast.

I don't know which male influences Dip had in his life but ... he went full adult on me. He brought me a rose, a single red rose and a tiny pocket book which he had scribbled into. All he asked was that I read it.

It took me a few weeks but I eventually did. It was a diary. *It was his diary.* It had every word he had ever tried to say but couldn't. It had every emotion he felt that was not understood or misunderstood. It had his anger, it had his flames, it had him ... all over the pages.

And right at the end, was the last entry which was about the day he called me a "Bunny Rabbit". He said all he was trying to tell me was that he thought I was "CUTE".

I mean, saying that sounded a lot easier wouldn't you say? Ki lon se 'Bunny Rabbit' ba yi? But that was his last attempt at winning my affection. It was clear he wasn't winning and I was not ready. I was like 10, sigh!

Like I said, he was a premium old soul. Fully preloaded with everything you can crave a boy or man to be. He was protective but soft. He fought his battles even with his cousin who thought he was a simp. He was intelligent, very good at math, very neat dresser. He was also American-Nigerian, so he definitely got the best of both worlds in his upbringing profile.

Sometimes the world just isn't ready for us.

BE HAPPY  
WITH WHAT  
YOU HAVE,  
WHILE YOU  
PURSUE WHAT  
YOU WANT.

I kept that notebook for years. I forgot I had it and when I found it again years later, we already had upgraded to poems and songs by Ess. I realized then that I had turned into a collector of words.

Words are powerful, words have meaning both to the sayer and the receiver. How we perceive both sides depends a lot on who we are and how we see life.

Poetic words are English to me. They lose their way in my subconscious because it allows me to think too much about the different scenarios that the writer's mind is trying to convey.

I like sharp and direct. I LOVE YOU! You mean everything to me.

If you start with "oceans are but mere water when I glimpse at your eyes and capture the depth of your soul". You lost my concentration at 'oceans', asswearrugawd!

I don't like to assume. I've had too many men that have wanted me to psychic-read their emotions, who wanted permission to love me without just taking charge and going ahead to do so. I respond to directness but with respect and consideration.

Years later, this still rings true for me. The last guy I dated, was direct.

We had met a few times but I never had any inclination towards him. He felt like a decent human but I generally don't tend to walk around sizing men up for dating potential.

As this book reveals, I literally need to be dragged to that realization. He did just that. He dropped hints about doing coffee, then lunch, then dinner. I kept declining or rather, waiting for certain business to close before lack of focus sets in.

I never intended to actually honor it, it just felt like playful banter people use to diffuse tense business discussions. I thought nothing of it.

When the deal closed, **he came for me.**  
***It felt romantic, it felt purposed, it felt different ... for me.***

I usually wouldn't even have considered mixing business and pleasure but he was so direct about everything, it was intoxicating. It was my mumu switch activated. ***I want to get to know you. This is me. This is where I've been. This is what I've done. This is who I've been. This is my baggage.***

You know I don't shy away from an emotional challenge, especially when I know what I'm getting myself into. Yes, caution was still active. **History has now taught us too, that when people come too direct, it could also be a sign that they want your attention in certain areas and not others.**

It was fun while it lasted but there was just too much to unpack in all the undisclosed spaces. Oh it was intoxicating to be around someone who knew who they were and what they wanted without waxing poetic or lyrical.

**Who knew I'd be into that!**  
**... But that's a story for the next book I reckon**



## CHAPTER 7

### MY STORIES ABOUT LOVE ARE STILL BEING WRITTEN

I love my solitude (even if I love being around you too). I can do long distance relationships because I don't need physical presence to validate feelings.

There are numerous ways to stay emotionally and mentally connected to someone .... and as long as that happens, I am good either ways (close or far). I've learnt how to balance being by myself and being with someone else. I've done the work and I am still doing the work.

#### LETTING YOU IN

When I let someone into my life, it's not because I'm lonely... it's because I feel like you can give me a different version of peace and joy than what already exists in my life.

Loving someone is giving them the power to truly hurt you or truly make you happy. It's not a choice I make lightly and it's a choice I am quick to revoke if your advertising doesn't match the contents.



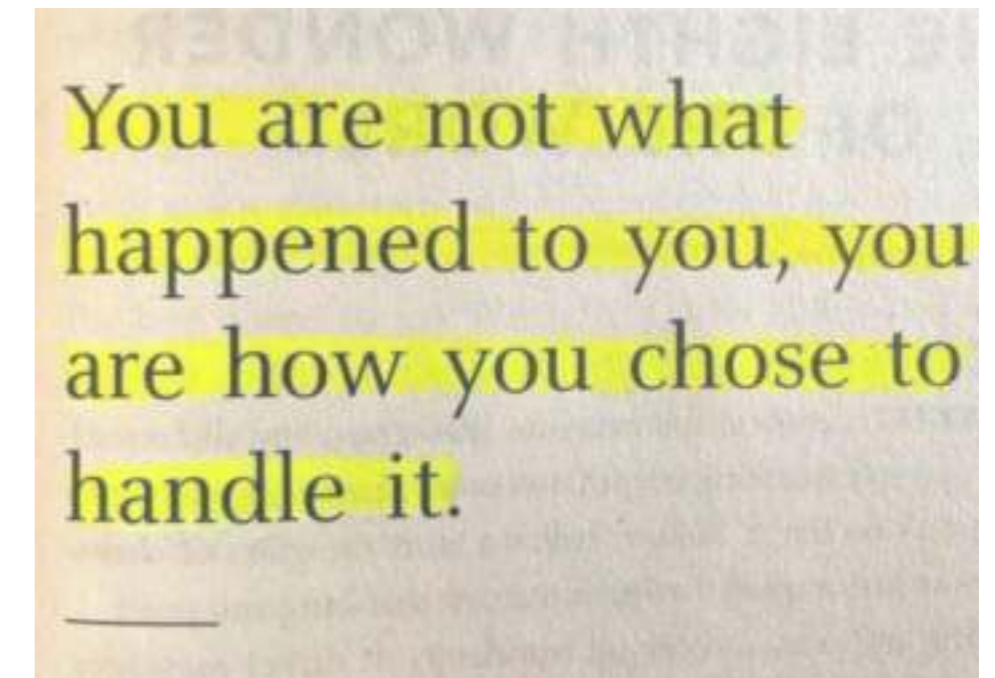
#### **BAGGAGE**

*We all have something we are dragging along from our past, childhood or previous heartbreaks.*

*It's okay to proceed with new love with some measure of caution, **what is not okay is to PROJECT someone's past failures at loving you unto me.***

*Learning how to love you is a fresh assignment for me. **It requires you teaching me how and exercising patience as I learn to do so. Same goes for me to you.***

*Quitting on me after one mistake or withdrawing your love is a gigantic red flag about your personality not my lovability.*



**I CAN LOVE A DAMAGED OR FLAWED MAN**

I can't love someone who always tries to appear perfect or in control.

If you always have to wear a mask around me... then I don't want you and you shouldn't want me either.

Love is meant to be a safe space where you can take off your armor and truly exist (even if it's just for one person to see).

Same way, if I don't bring you peace, please block and delete my number. You owe it to yourself to preserve your peace and mental health as much as I preserve mine.

If I fail at creating a safe space for you (or you me)... then we have failed the assignment of love. Let's not actively punish each other.

If you keep your heart open, and in a state of surrender during this process then you will start to experience a love, an intimacy, a form of pleasure that is beyond all. Its beauty and depth cannot be put into words.

Lorin Krenn

**What about A BROKE MAN ?**

I can date a broke man.. I can't date a *broken man*

Money is an object, it comes and goes. True power to create wealth lies in the intangible things in a man's character.

His disciplines, his priorities, his integrity, how he behaves when he doesn't have money. How he reacts to things he either doesn't understand or accept. How he treats the people in his life and who he really is when nobody is watching.

**CHARACTER** is more important to my peace than your money.

Don't get me wrong, money is a useful tool in truly being able to take care of your woman or relationship necessities.

But don't forget, as a single woman, I'm already taking care of myself. All you have to do, is not enter my life to deplete.

Either sustain or surpass what you meet on ground. I shouldn't have to ask you for that. It should be a standard for someone who truly cares about me.

I love you, that means I'm not just here for the pretty parts and the happy days. I'm here for the rough and the bad days. I'm here no matter what.

**FEELINGS I NEED TO FEEL**

That feeling like my heart is beating in another person's chest and I still feel full/alive.

Being my true self, able to laugh with someone from the bottom of my heart, not caring what I look like or how it sounds. Just being truly happy existing with you in the same space and time.

**I look forward to fights and disagreements with you because now I know, it doesn't have to break us.** We both understand that it helps us get to know how to love each other better and we welcome the opportunity with open arms.

**I WANT GROWTH**

I know the things I have in me by default, by training, by education, by upbringing.... I know the power I carry as a human and as a woman in full control of her life.

I want to be able to TEAM'UP with someone who carries their own sense of purpose. You don't have to have anything figured out. Neither of us do...

But I need to be able to depend on you, run ideas by you and have you help me navigate different perspectives and variables. I want to converse with you and come out more directed and focused than when I was in my own head about things.

I want support for whatever direction I face. I want a genuine **"I'm proud of you" in my highest and lowest moments.**

I want someone who helps me achieve getting to my higher self and someone whom I can support to do same.

**TOUGH TIMES****LIFE IS BRUISES ON WHEELS**

Something would always be going on internally, or externally or peripherally.... stuff is constantly happening to all of us.

I don't need someone who thinks and behaves selfishly through those moments. Because you're going through something, you neglect to be there for others, despite the fact that people are still being there for you regardless of their own struggles.

I don't want a taker. Someone who feeds off the table more than they contribute to it.

I don't need a houdini who disappears when things are tough. I want someone who stays regardless and who says **"I'm not going anywhere, let's fix this, I can't lose you/us"**





**You can't miss all the important moments of my own life or journey because you are constantly in your feelings about something or feeling some type of way.**

**If I'm having to solo those moments without you... then what's the value of you to me?**

It still all boils down to CHARACTER.

Ensuring someone can depend on you as much as you depend on them.

**+ Whether he expresses it openly or not, every husband has a desire for his wife to step in and believe in him.**

**ABOUT MY CURRENT VERSION OF LOVE**

**You see, everybody is incompatible.**

As long as we are different people (which we are), we can always find millions of reasons to not mix or vibe well with anyone.

In a relationship, the best i can look forward to is **someone who feels super complimentary to me, despite all our differences. Someone who covers my weakness with their strength and whose weakness i can cover with my strength. Someone who actively takes control of us as a unit of love and togetherness.**

I never get jealous either.  
Some folks say it's because I don't truly like the person. NOT true.

I strongly believe what is for me is MINE! I should trust Him completely without reservation and he in turn shouldn't give me any reason to look stupid or doubt it. I understand that people have experienced trauma with cheating and infidelity etc. It's not a damage I have or a damage I have inflicted on anyone. I don't come to the table with that mindset.

The minute I start to question that, I'm out!  
GO where you feel happiest. Its that simple! Don't string me along.

**WHY I GET ALONG WITH A RANGE OF PERSONALITIES**

I'm someone who is unfortunately gifted with the ability to know people's damage long before they show me or tell me. It seems like i spent a good chunk of my childhood looking out for it in myself and in people, trying to understand this dynamic of the human heart and nature vs. nurture.

It never stops me from getting to know someone better; it just tells me how to proceed with caution. (Especially because I'm not looking for a baby daddy or future executor of my will).

I'm not perfect or near it, i never expect anyone else to be and i give them room to be perfectly imperfect.

**I'm just looking for love, joy and peace.**

**WHAT IS TRULY DESIRABLE**

*Finding someone i can do life with.*

A true friend, my safe place, confidant, hype-man, advisor, backbone and my all-purpose, all-inclusive lover man.

It makes every load feel lighter, gives every day more purpose, gives us something to look forward to about our future and allows us breathe a little better, knowing we don't have to do or go through things alone.

I want someone that chooses me EVERYDAY IN EVERYWAY. Same way I choose them over and over again.

To be on the same page with someone like that.... mehn, that's someone I can come out of emotional retirement for.



Lion | Dating Coach  
@DatingbyLion

Attracting the right partner  
isn't about shouting  
affirmations at a mirror.

It's about aligning our  
thoughts, words and  
behaviour with becoming  
what we want to attract.

### I WANT NON-STOP KISSES

Forget roses and expensive restaurants. I'm a NETFLIX and plenty chill kinda woman.

**What I truly love ... is your presence, if i'm really into you.** Sharing a meal, movie and drinks with you. The conversations we get to have while doing those things.

The cuddles, the love-play, the slight nudity and the abundance of comfort that comes with being in your orbit. **That's what is sufficient for me.**

Spend money on expensive things, all you'll get is a heart felt "Thank You" ...but focus on my actual desires and you would get something far more precious from me. The depth of my soul with all the love that comes with it.

### LOVE IS NOT COMPLICATED

I know now that Love itself is not difficult.

**LOVE IS ..... Having someone who knows you intimately (faults and all) and still CHOOSES YOU over everyone else. True Acceptance!**

It's a choice we make when we find someone we feel has the qualities of a partner that we value. What is difficult for me is loving someone **who doesn't love themselves or doesn't know how to love properly.**

**I just don't want to be a casualty from trying to love you!**

### YOU CAN LEARN TO LOVE PEOPLE PROPERLY BUT YOU CANT EXPECT THEM TO TEACH YOU LOVE

Majority of your learning should happen outside your relationship if you want to be respected, not constantly criticised or judged for not showing up correctly.

You have to learn how to love everyone the way they want to be loved in every relationship. Everyone is not your ex or like them, they won't like or want the same things your ex did.

It starts with how you love your children and treat them like the individuals they are. If children are shown this from childhood, they carry that wisdom into adulthood and are able to make room for love in its individual capacities and requirements.

What you can't do is make it your partners job to **TEACH YOU ABOUT LOVE IN GENERAL.** The load is too heavy and leads to resentment.

### AT OUR AGE.....

You shouldn't have to tell a man how to treat a woman. You shouldn't have to tell a woman how to be good to her man. There are things we should **ALREADY KNOW.** There is nothing sexy, appealing or attractive about a partner that needs to be clued in on evvvveerrryyything.

You become a mother or father figure, not a lover. And I don't know about you, but that doesn't sound appealing **AT ALL.**

**EVERY NEW RELATIONSHIP WILL REQUIRE A DIFFERENT OF VERSION YOU**

This is why it's important to stay informed and do alot of reading and information gathering on the ways of love.

The best way to handle your love life is to be truly committed to your personal growth / knowledge on the subject of yourself, women and men.

With every new partner, there would be a new challenge, a new emotional response, a new mental adjustment .... a new everything.

If you don't know what your fellow men have done to break women, you won't know what role you can play to heal yours (or atleast make her feel secure in you).

Same goes for us women. Men go through a lot too, it's important we know how to love the specific man we have chosen in all the ways he recognizes and acknowledges love.

**LOVE IS A BEAUTIFUL THING**

I can't believe all the years I spent running away from it. I know it was my trauma talking but still, I'm glad all roads still led me back to where I am right now, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.

The sooner we realize the grass is only greener where you water it....

The more you understand the effort you put into love is what you get out of it (as long as you are pouring into the right soul and the right soul is pouring back into you).

**Energy is reciprocated.**  
**Love that is starved, starves you in return.**  
**Love that is fed, feeds you in return**

**My parents definitely are proof of that.**

Your soul knows when something is real, authentic, and true. No matter what anyone else tries to say or persuade you of, the truth will always feel different. You can't fake it. Your heart knows when something resonates. Trust those feelings.

## FORGIVENESS

I am a very easy friend to offend but very easy to appease too. It takes longer to offend me in a relationship.

Since I discovered my own traumas, trauma responses and triggers, I have learnt patience. Everyone does have an origin story, everyone has something they are logging around as trauma, truth, lie or whatever it is. I can't love someone properly, if I don't take time to understand who they are and where they grew up / came from. What influences have shaped their life and thinking.

Lets not forget that in every relationship, we would never stop getting to know each other. With every new piece of information we receive as people, we change perspectives, we adapt, we stay flexible. No one can ever truly know us because we are still discovering ourselves daily. What we are essentially hoping for, is someone who can love the version of us we become 5 or 10 years down the line.

I don't assume what is natural or not for you.

I give enough room to observe your behaviour and patterns to know what is your repetitive pattern and what is circumstantial. I learnt about that from **the 90 Day rule** from Steve Harvey. It is Worth a look up.

When i do say something, i take the time to systematically express my issue (and I do it in subtle then very direct ways), **how you react to me tells me if you are truly sorry or if you're being intentional with your disregard.**

How I behave with you next is in direct response to that...

**Love or not, Energy is reciprocated !!!**

I can be understanding to a fault sometimes, because i too, need or want people to be patient with me in return. It is not an endless revolving door of understanding.

### RELATIONSHIP CHECK-INS ARE A MUST FOR ME

I am not in the business of assuming we are doing okay without asking the recipient of the things I'm doing if it's okay for them.

People don't like check-ins because they misunderstand it's purpose. They think it's about finger pointing or blame games. That is so far from the truth.

Avoiding the check-in is directly proportionate to avoiding loving me properly and being loved properly in return.

**IN OUR SAFE SPACE** (if we truly have one), it's supposed to be an opportunity to be adored for what you do right so you can keep doing more of it. And also to be told what is not working so we can FIX IT.

It's never about You or I against each other. It's US versus the issue or problem we need to overcome. We remain a team always.

It's not a blame bubble. Anyone doing that has definitely adopted their own agenda.

I personally feel that, Not asking me questions about if I'm being loved properly by you, is you taking a stand AGAINST loving me EFFICIENTLY. I tend to take particular offense to that!.

**Love is give and take.**

**Love is pour into me while I pour into you.**

**Love is water me while I water you.**

**Love is cover me, while I cover you.**

**Love is teach me, while I teach you.**

**Love is open up to me as I open up to you.**

**Love is to truly exist outside oneself in the body of another.**

**A TRAUMA SURVIVOR'S  
NERVOUS SYSTEM HAS  
A SMALLER WINDOW OF  
TOLERANCE.**

@iamyhellcoach



**95% of relationship issues  
are actually communication  
issues. Learning to directly  
express your needs, and  
to understand the needs  
of another is a massively  
underrated life skill.**

@the.holistic.psychologist

**A love language for anyone trying to heal from trauma is: transparency.**

**@the.holistic.psychologist**

## SECOND CHANCES

I get asked this question a lot and my response is always the same.

*It depends on what went wrong with the first one.*

My Love is not something I give easily. History has shown, I can give you attention, time, effort but not always love.

While it's easy to entertain conversations and some friendships with people that once had my attention, someone who had my love/heart and used it to play dodge ball.... That would be alot harder to recover from.

**... but it's not impossible.** If i loved you once, i can choose to love you again, this time with small experience and stronger expectations.

Unfortunately, most people want it to be easy and give up if you don't roll out the red carpet for their return.

**It's easier to have never left than to stage a comeback.** You only have one chance to make a first impression. You never get the same version of me twice. Of anyone. It's not worth taking the chance to rewrite history.

*The best apology is always changed behaviour. If you're ready to prove you've learnt from your mistakes and are able to give me the space, time and consistency it takes to learn to re-trust and open up to you again...*

Sometimes second chances lead us to something beautiful and expansive, and sometimes they don't. If there isn't growth then a second chance is just a pattern.

VIENNA  
DEHARON

**Please don't waste your words on someone who could never comprehend the meaning of the pain you feel.**

**You will never get the things you want and need out of someone who doesn't deserve you.**

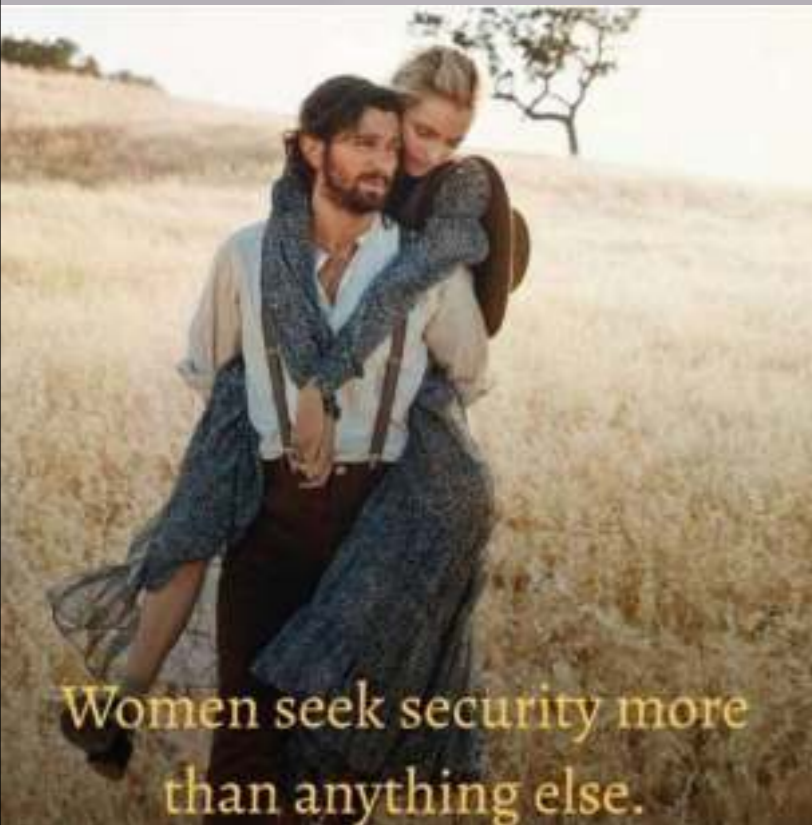
**or closure from someone who chooses to neglect and ignore you when you need them the most...**

**I know it hurts, but he doesn't deserve your emotional energy.**

**WORDS BY R.H. SIN**

I learned that you should never be with a person who causes your mind to be at war with your heart.

R.H. SIN



Women seek security more than anything else.

### INTIMACY

Different stories may exist of me on this one.

Who I am behind closed doors totally depends on the person I'm with, what he unlocks within me or the level of emotional safety I feel with him.

Having my attention and time is not the same as having access to me emotionally, mentally or physically.

Even if we are in a committed relationship, I won't rush into physical intimacy. It tends to cloud a lot of judgement. There is a lot I need to see about you and about us before I feel that safety to give that much of myself to you.

**THAT SAFETY IS IMPORTANT TO ME**





## CHAPTER 8

### MY LOVE CAN NOW SEE: IT KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT IT NEEDS TO SURVIVE

In the end, I just want to be **FREE IN LOVE**  
I want that unapologetic love that exists with no regrets or shade

I Want my true and real **SIGNIFICANT OTHER**  
I don't want to choose between having a **LOVER AND A FRIEND, I want BOTH**

I don't want to live in strife with my emotions, I want to feel at **ONE** with how I feel about you and how you feel about me.

I don't want to feel triggered in all the wrong ways by your love. I want your love to assist me in my walk towards healing my trauma wounds for good.

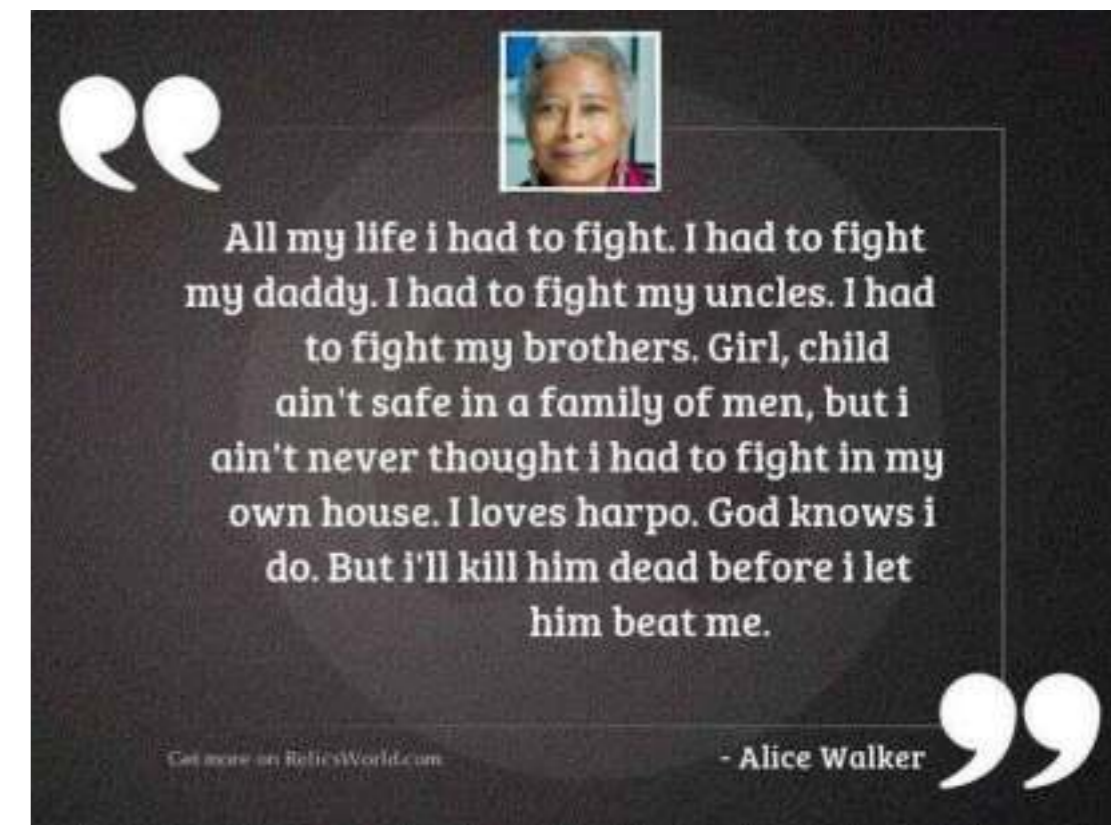
I want you to take me to emotional depths I have never dared to go with anyone else because **I TRUST YOU** and truly feel **SAFE IN YOUR LOVE.**

I want to feel cared for, protected and taken care of in every way I'm suppose to be taken care of (ways I didn't even know I need to be).

I want to take care of you too with every fibre of my being: **WITH RECKLESS ABANDON, GLADLY AND JOYFULLY.**

I want the **ups and downs, the highs and lows.**  
I don't want a love I need to avoid.  
I want a **Life and memories with YOU.**  
**I want YOU to want those things too !**

It's not worth disturbing my peace for anything less!



“We’ll figure it out together” is  
a love language.



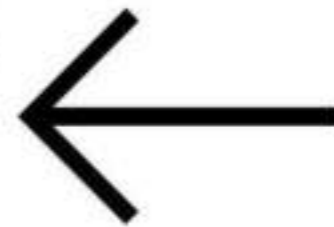
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“Don’t be my peace; I have that. Be at peace with yourself so we can love each other correctly.”



# 6 SABOTAGING BEHAVIORS I NEEDED TO CHANGE AFTER ENTERING A SAFE RELATIONSHIP

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**1. Rejecting myself in the relationship and assuming I wasn't "good enough", when my partner pointed out a blind spot that wasn't mature or supportive.**

Due to trauma and abuse, I got really used to being told I wasn't good enough. It became my inner narrative. I had to create a healthier self-perception and recognize that my safe partner isn't rejecting me when he encourages me to be a better me!

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**2. Assuming it's fair to unload all my dysregulated thoughts and emotions onto my partner just because he's shown me he cares.**

When you've never had a partner be a safe space for you to feel supported, validated and understood, you might find you take advantage (not maliciously) of them caring about you. I had to learn to utilize my own tools and other support systems too!

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**3. To stop identifying with my trauma.**

I had to learn there's a big difference in validating my past and acknowledging my current struggles due to it but realizing I'm no longer in that situation. As compared to continually reliving the past as if it's present, sulking in it, while simultaneously staying committed to the same unhealthy mindset that the past contributed to.

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**4. Continuously retelling my traumatizing and abusive stories to my safe partner.**

I didn't account for how retelling past stories about what caused me harm would negatively emotionally impact my partner. The intention was to help with understanding my thought process, coping mechanisms, reactions, and beliefs. I learned that once was enough for the above and from there articulating what I needed was more supportive of their emotional state.

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**5. Appeasing my partner and neglecting my needs during a conflict to avoid abandonment.**

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**6. Avoiding thinking and planning for a future because I was so used to living in survival mode.**

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For so long there was no space to consider beyond the next day or week in a relationship, let alone plan for a real future. I had to adopt tools to regulate my nervous system and take the scary steps of believing the future I always wanted was possible now.

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**The ironic part about life after trauma is for as much damage as was once done to you. You can inadvertently do the same to others out of fear and pain.**

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We sabotage for many reasons often rooted in fear, feelings of unworthiness, and overall pain. I spent many years working to improve, heal, soothe and grow after my unsafe, unsupportive, toxic, abusive past relationships.

That equipped me with a lot and quite frankly enough to attract and function alongside healthy, safe, supportive individuals. But it didn't prepare me for EVERY internal trigger, challenge or emotional layer that would need to be peeled back and looked at when that safe partner arrived.

Once here, it became very clear to me that the moments of growth will always continue! That I wasn't perfect and that believing I was simply because my past partners actions were overtly immature and abusive (making mine look seemingly benign) didn't mean I didn't have my own that would show up in big ways within a safe space with a safe, loving human.

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TAKE THE QUIZ

# WHAT IS YOUR ORIGIN WOUND?

If you're willing to look at where you try to control things in your life, you'll be directed towards something that needs your healing.

→ 5 PROMPTS TO GET STARTED

VIENNA PHARAON

