

May 14, 2013

*I got this young chick, she so immature  
She like, "Why you don't buy me Reeboks no more?"  
Like to show out in public, throw tantrums on the floor  
Gotta toss a couple dollars, just to shut up her holla.*

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*I got this African chick with Eddie Murphy on her skull  
She like, "Jigga Man, why you treat me like animal?"  
I'm like excuse me Ms. Fufu, but when I met your ass  
you was dead broke and naked, and now you one half*

- Jay-Z, "Girls, Girls, Girls"

### Older Men and Young Girls: Really?

I am often uneasy when discussing the topic of men having sex with girls. Don't get me wrong, my position is unequivocal and clear: I do not believe that men considered as grown adults should have sexual relations in any form with girls who are considered children. If a guy is forty and a young lady is twenty-two (or even eighteen), then I have no qualms. But to continue, I am often uneasy, because I cannot trust my own feelings and emotions regarding the subject; they are all over the place. There is a part of me that intellectually understands the detestable nature of such relationships; there is the part of me that is excited (literally excited) by such prospective relationships; and then: there is the personal history and its impact on my life. Let us begin there.

The lives of two women, who I love with every fiber of my being, were irreparably changed and routed *differently* – and by default mine as well – as a result of sexual relationships that each woman had with adult men while the women themselves were children. As children, both my maternal great-grandmother and my sister were once involved in sexual relationships with grown, adult men when they were children.

My maternal great-grandmother spent her childhood in Earle, Arkansas. It was an impoverished childhood; she and her family were poor. They were dirty. They were survivors. Ethnically speaking, I believe they referred to my great-grandmother as a "colored" person; she was a Negro, a black: an African American. At any rate, there was a Creole family in or near the town. As my mother explained it to me:

These people were beautiful. We used to go to Arkansas and I really couldn't tell you what color they was. You knew they weren't white, but they didn't look like Mama's people. They live in a big house and had land. They were...Cajun I think. No Creole.

When I asked how my great-grandmother, from such humble beginnings, found her way to such a family, I was told the following:

Well, you know, Mama's<sup>1</sup> people really didn't have no money; they was poor. And Mama...well they say Mama was a fast little girl. She met the D\_\_\_\_\_ boy when she was about fourteen. And she got pregnant. The D\_\_\_\_\_s didn't want their son to claim the baby - your grandmother, my mother - 'cause everybody was saying that all the men of the town had had Mama before. Plus, he was a grown man and they didn't want to start no scandal about the well-to-do colored people and the po' niggas. After Mama gave birth to my mama, she wrapped her up and left her in the snow on the doorstep of the D\_\_\_\_\_s. They raised my mama and sent her to school and she got her nursing license and eventually met my daddy after he came home from the war. They started a family in St. Louis. But we went to Arkansas every summer [as kids] and those people treated us nice and loved my mama. She turned out to be their only grandchild. All the other kids and grandkids - the legitimate ones - died.

I have always had this feeling of abandonment, of isolation, and it turns out that, unbeknownst to me, I was connecting, rhizomatically, to my grandmother. The point I want to make is: my great-grandmother was fourteen when the adult man, who would turn out to be my great-grandfather, had sex with her. The result: an abandoned child who struggled for years to repair wounds inflicted on the wholeness of her person since her very birth; a legacy of women in my family who have an awful fear of abandonment; a legacy of contempt, sometimes irrational contempt, of the criteria of others that may suggest that one is not good enough for something.

I have never met the D\_\_\_\_\_s. That is a part of me that is incomplete and may remain so for some time. Perhaps my great-grandmother was a fast and loose little girl of fourteen. Did that mean some grown ass man had to have sex with her? I mean, not to sound crass, but could he not have left her to the fourteen year-old boys? At least then the scenario would make some sense: like kids being kids and experimentation and so on and so forth. But, I guess I cannot and should not complaint too much because without their liaison, I don't exist. I wonder: what would my grandmother's life have been like if she would have been afforded the opportunity to embrace both sides of her family as she matured into an adult? Without seeking the lost mother that she missed as a youth, could she have used that energy in another arena of life? Another *pasanoventa*.

When I was at "university" (as my English friends like to say), I was startled out of my intoxicant induced slumber one twilight by the ring of my telephone. On the other end was the voice of a woman who said she was a District Attorney for the city of St. Louis and its

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<sup>1</sup> My great-grandmother, although she was my mother's grandmother, was referred to as Mama by my family.

prosecuting attorney's office. I was like: ok...and? "I'm way the hell out in California; why are you calling me," was my attitude. The voice then proceeded to tell me that she was calling to find out if I had anything to add to my sister's case. I was like: what case? Who are you? How did you get my number? She then told me that my youngest sister's father had been charged with raping my oldest sister. What! So in essence, my mother's boyfriend raped his daughter's sister? I almost lost my religion. What parts of strength and domination combine with masculinity and lead one to believe that the above scenario is acceptable? While, at best, we can say that perhaps my fourteen year-old great grandmother's sexual experience with an adult man occurred with her consent, the same cannot be said for my nine year-old sister. Now, can any connection be made between the fact that my sister was raped at nine years-old and the fact that she had a baby before graduating high school? The lives of young girls are irreparably change by sexual relationships with adult men.

And so, personally, I have little to no patience with men older than eighteen years of age having sex in any kind of way, shape, form or fashion with girls younger than eighteen. The thing that irks me: I have America's masculinist fascination with the sexual domination of women so deeply etched in my makeup that I could see the benefit (a screwed, twisted benefit) of having complete and total sexual control of a young, underage, voluptuous, inexperienced girl. I hate the fact that any part of my intellectual or rational constitution would allow me to entertain such thinking. Consider the scene in Hype Williams's *Belly* when the sexual relationship between the character played by rapper DMX and the character played by *Murder Inc*'s Vita engage in fellatio on screen; Vita's character is like sixteen-years old; DMX's, a grown ass man. But I have been drooling over *Wonder Woman* and *I Dream of Jeannie* and the women of *Melrose Place* and *21 Jump Street* and all of the women on *BET* since Hannah was a pup. And so have my comrades. So, I shouldn't be surprised that someone like the fictional character played by DMX or a real-life Jigga(boo), I mean Jay-Z, could also come to such a conclusion regarding the sexual desirability of young, underage, voluptuous, inexperienced girls. I am totally surprised and disgusted by the fact that Jay-Z acted on such a conclusion, in the real, actual world of consequences and repercussions.

If you don't know by now, the rapper Foxy Brown (real name Inga Marchand) is reportedly due to pen and publish a tell-all book highlighting her relationship with Jay-Z. She will supposedly detail how she lost her virginity to Jay-Z at age fifteen – the rapper was twenty-seven - and the nature of Jay-Z's sexual prowess. Now, Foxy has some issues and I am not really interested in discussion centered on her motivations for getting with Jay-Z; that's another topic for another day. What I cannot get my head around is how America's African American establishment – people whose works and productions center on the preservation and protection and promotion of the African American female and feminine – has eagerly accepted a recognized pedophile into their inner circle. I used the picture of Oprah Winfrey and Jay-Z to denote this article on the *Labancamy Jankings* homepage because I am just astonished by the exchange of political capital taking place between the two.

No one has discussed, debated, critiqued and rallied around the sexual abuse of women and girls, and its prevention, like Oprah Winfrey. With particular regard to the African American community, her representations of Alice Walker's Sofia in *The Color Purple* and of Toni Morrison's Sethe in *Beloved* underscore a concern for women's sexuality and the sexual abuses suffered by women that is only further highlighted by Winfrey's own personal narrative of abuse. How does Oprah so willingly and happily embrace Jay-Z as indicated by the photo? I remember when Oprah was rather dismissive and mean and condescending to Ice Cube and Ludacris for the nature of their hip-hop lyrics; she damned-near didn't want Cube on her show. But she takes a tour of the Marcy Projects with Jay-Z. I wonder if she interviewed any of the little ghetto girls that Jay-Z used as sexual fodder?

So, when is it acceptable to socially and publicly embrace a pedophile? When that pedophile is worth hundreds of millions of dollars and is married to a woman singled out by the first lady of the United States as a role model for the first children of the United States. I wonder if I can make enough money to overcome my less-than-savory past and one day find myself embraced by America's African American establishment? Until then...*I'll be behind the project buildings with the ghetto children...children.*