

part 3: The final unserious chapter

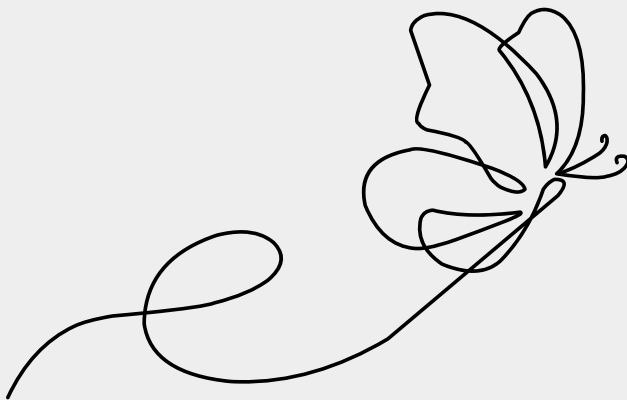
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bitch?!

Now, Dee was all on me. Idk, fuck. I met her while painstakingly scouring the net for Irish beauty influencers of colour. I should've whiffed the borderline fat-phobic, classist, black woman superiority complex just by going through her Instagram but I was more than happy to work with her.

I had been freshly demoted from my "real job" and I was desperate for a side hustle, fast! I sorta liked her brand. Yes, it was vague AF, and yes it was sorta sus with its girl boss vibes and cheesy with its self-love, keep moving forward mantra, poorly edited reels and graphics that just hurt, hurt my eyes! Honest audit.



She was Irish-Congolese, a successful businesswoman, mother of four gorgeous black kids and someone who had REALLY been through the thick of it. I looked up to her. It was very easy to convince her to hire me, she needed help and she sucked at this. I got that job all by my damn self.



All was well at first, she seemed to value my work and genuinely wanted me to be a part of the organisation in a meaningful way, I wasn't just gonna be some behind-the-scenes content strategist and background copywriter. I was going to have a chance to tell my stories.

I respected the need to postpone the stories tied to her African roots and accepted the target audience as not just being 'black women' but 'all women'. No way she could censor me. I ignored her false allyship with fat women and diet pills side hustle and even turned a blind eye to those extremely centred-around-her cringe AF photos of 'returning to the motherland after 30 years' with her carrying a basket on her head and posing like being a farmer was a costume.

As usual, my partner at the time belittled my work, reminded me that I would never 'make partner' and wondered why I would work for so little pay, 'is this because you like her?' she would tease. In my head, something was better than nothing and I truly saw the potential of her brand.

HARD

I think it all went south in April, it was my supposed mother-in-law's birthday and my ex was for reals freaking out over not being able to get her everything she planned to. Like many times before, she applied pressure on me to 'get the money any way I can' and cursed me for having rich parents who didn't give a shit about her or me, for having access to everything I want, all I need to do is ask, while she withered away in poverty. I was the devil, and my family were the evil richs.

I called Dee and faked tears, 'please send me my salary ahead of time' I said. 'I know this is unorthodox, but I'm hungry, I need money for food' I lied. My ex was partially pleased. Partially. The money came two days after B-day so I might as well not have debased myself like that.



Fast forward to me, in a hostel, in a strange city, having spasms every hour and pulling myself together for work meetings and Portuguese classes. She looked me right in the face and expressed (once again) how my salary wasn't fixed. "It all depends on whether work is available or not" I was pissed, but who cares, I already worked my ass off this month, scouring her whole Instagram for hundreds of shitty self-help-quotes for her soon-to-be self-published book.

"I know you need the money or whatever," she said.

That tore me to pieces.

"But it is what is".

After the meeting, she asked for the invoice and I sent it to her. "This is for a whole month's work" she barked via WhatsApp. "What did you do this month? I demand to see". I sent it all to her, every misspelt quote from her IG and all the time I spent figuring out her weird blog. She fell silent and sent the money. A day later, she formulated a white lie:

"I'm sorry, but I think I'll be taking a break from brand work for now, I cannot have you on right now, but will let you know as soon as I am back". I never heard from her. Turns out I needed the money and she didn't need me. Turns out I was nothing more than a scammer with a computer, looking for who to make her next meal off of.

It's happening again, I wonder what the common denominator is?



The absolute worst part of the Belinda/Tanya subplot in the first season of *The White Lotus* was that getting into business was TANYA'S IDEA!

My ex was the femme-phobic type, I just wanted to get my nails done, I didn't ask for a fucking job! Bendita Seja Beleza or whatever the fuck was a white women's salon and nail spa somewhere in Belem, on the ground floor of the mall behind the shelter I lived in.

What's-her-face was so white and so fucking weird. She kept screaming as she tried to talk to me, waving her arms as though I was blind and speaking sloooooowwwwwlllllyyyy as though I was her age. She talked and talked and talked about how beautiful the country of Africa must be, how she would love to learn English, introducing me to her staff and clients as her new Angolan customer, and asking me to help her with her socials.



Fuck! I just wanted pretty nails, but fine. Fine! I'll do it. What the heck, salons are fun. Maybe I can convince them to put a Lgbt+ friendly sticker on their window or give free gender-affirming haircuts to trans folks. It's just one more white lady, I'm moving to another city soon anyway, so I wouldn't have to see her face. When a door shuts, a chimney opens right?

I told her my rate and created a whole social media strategy presentation for her white ass. We tried to log in to her Instagram with my phone but we needed a confirmation code from the email that set the account. Her son's email. Who was not available? Why why why should privileged people who somehow don't know how to copy and paste a file be allowed to have a social media presence? She got locked out of her account and started to panic. I took screenshots of all her posts, downloaded all her videos and archived it for her. Hours of work. I calmed her down, "you are not going to lose your followers," I said. "Just wait till your son gets back and all will be resolved". I returned that night for my pay and she said she would pay me after, at the end of the month, conveniently when I had moved out.



I got the sense after the presentation that I scared her a little by taking her seriously. Yeah, I mean business. This was your idea puta, the fuck?! The only black girl who worked there looked at me, like "You poor thing, bitch is just excited to meet an African person, she's not paying you shit". I ignored it all and I arrived in my new city. One day after a panic attack and three days after sleeping at another shelter (Amar e Cuidar: very kind women) to have this bitch leave me on read.

Fuckkkk!!!! How is this happening again?!?! This was her idea!!!!

Ugh! At least Belinda got paid.

Bendita Seja Beleza

ESTRATÉGIA DE MARKETING DIGITAL



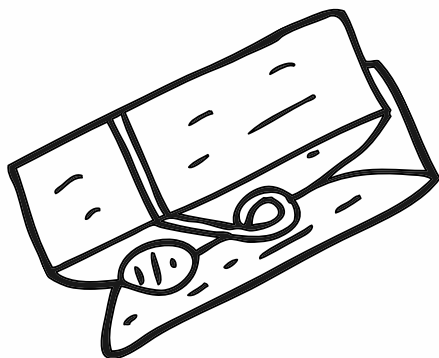


No Shame

Femi Kuti



unidentified



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