

Has Justine landed yet?

 By Dylan Balkind

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Social media shared its maleficent side with - among endless other examples no doubt - one Justine Sacco, who got roasted when she implied that she is AIDS-immune - because she is white.



If you don't know the story, it goes like this:

- Because of South Africa's apartheid era, privileged daughter of South African b/millionaire is raised and educated in the US. Why? He wanted a more just environment to set the scene for how she grew up and what would ultimately inform her future logic
- Grows up *cough* and goes into PR
- Lands industry-respected PR job at IAC - a media company that owns Match.com and Vimeo
- In December 2013, just before boarding a flight home to South Africa for the holidays, [tweets: 'Going to Africa. Hope I don't get AIDS. Just Kidding. I'm White!'](#)
- While on her 12-hour flight, Social Media goes 'totes cray', said tweet is retweeted thousands of times and a new hashtag is born: [#HasJustineLandedYet](#)
- Justine lands. Becomes aware of the backlash and is red-faced times-two: Must suffer the global sass and the shames of being sacked from her job.

Eish!

And then?

Post personal ruination, Justine licked her ego's lesions in the lap of luxury before packing up and heading off to live in Ethiopia for a month. There she carried out volunteer consulting for a non-government organisation. You don't have to be a marketing maven to recognise the politically-correct PR-sawy move of her expedition to Ethiopia.

For a month.

And just the one.

Anyhoo, Justy has re-emerged and landed a new job working for a revamped version of the Hot or Not app. As said, she was born into wealth - and that's as far as it goes for me. Despite how easy the net has made research, I can't allow myself any more on her background because of the possibility of bursting a gobsmacked blood vessel. It would be easy though. The research part. For example: a Google search for "Ethiopia biggest problems" returned the following in 0.42 seconds:

- Poor water and sanitation lead to Ethiopia's biggest disease/health concerns
- Much of Ethiopia's poverty is attributed to illiteracy
- Due to extreme poverty, many children don't get the education they should do because they're off trying to make money for themselves and/or their families
- Ethiopia's economy depends on agriculture - threatened by drought and floods (these don't happen in the same place at the same time, Justine)

Good going then that Justine - after her plighting pilgrimage - is marking her comeback working for an app that allows users to rate the appearance of other people as a) 'Hot' or b) 'Not'. Hence the app's name: "Hot or Not" ... Clever, hey? Just like Justine. And nice one by the way J! Up your integrity by promoting a digitally-designed toolkit for what will - I am 100% sure - do more for expunging esteem than building backbone...

The internet's reprieve

I have two of them for you - in no particular order.

First one. Beaut or beast, the comments section on any/every platform anywhere on the web often provide perfect pearlers, like one eloquent Elaine Fitzgerald who wants our Justine to know: "You're much more likely to catch AIDS on Hot or Not than anywhere else, dear."

Second one. At the eye of the Justine-created media storm, some smarty pant bought the justinesacco.com domain name and redirected visitors to the Aid for Africa site where they could donate directly. Well played son!

Sure, we work in media, and what may be more obvious to us may not be the same to everyone else. But so does she. So with her experience (term used loosely) in PR and 24/7 access to the Google, you'd think Sacco might have earned her way back into the PR arena by partnering with any one of the kajillion digital agencies between here and her next first-class flight, and developed an app that plugs into any online-hits heavyweight, asking users to donate £1, €4, \$5, R10-whatever! - to a water and sanitation development program in Ethiopia, maybe? Or an adult-based education fund designed to combat adult-illiteracy in Ethiopia, maybe? Or the re-education of Justine Sacco, maybe?

"I'm so ashamed of her. She's a f*cking idiot," her father said at the time of her silly-sausaging. So even the man one-half responsible for bringing us Justine Sacco feels the same way I do.

So? HasJustineLandedYet?

No. Clearly not.

After all is said and done, know this: I am the biggest supporter of second chances. Sometimes however - and as some jokers show us - they're handed back unused.

ABOUT DYLAN BALKIND

Even the person who can sell ice to Eskimos needs have a way of letting the world know . Words. They're wonderful warriors with the potential for worry. Use a writer who takes his passion seriously. Here's more about me and mine: <http://goo.gl/68Rsse> | Twitter [@DylanBalkind](#)

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