Editor’s note: The following article is an op-ed, and the views expressed are the author’s own.

Lauryn Hill, currently on tour in honor of her hit album, “The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill,” told fans at the Kia Arena in Inglewood, California, that they’re lucky she shows up to perform, even if she is always late. (Photo by Leon Neal/Getty Images)

“Hey, my life is harder than you know,” she said. “I hate doing that. It’s not what I’m about. It’s not who I am. But we don’t get extra points for showing up when you were going to be here. You said you were going to be here, so keep your word.”

That night at Brooklyn Bowl in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, Lauryn was two hours late to the stage, and while I knew that she was going to be late because she is so often, it was still frustrating.

In 2011, after Lauryn took the stage, I remember seeing four of her six children standing together near the stage. That reminded me that Lauryn has a lot going on in her life, and it could have been that she was late because of some family responsibility. Perhaps she refused to say no to one of her children even though people were waiting. Maybe. I wrote a long piece in 2005 called “The Mystery of Lauryn Hill” about how turbulent Lauryn Hill’s life had been and how it had gotten her in the way of making her art. I know Lauryn is an extremely principled and very unselfish person. I can see her demanding the right to put her family first even if there are thousands of fans/strangers waiting for her. I don’t know if that is true, but that’s a vibe I get after interview-ing several times and seeing her interact with her kids.

In 2016, Lauryn said on Facebook: “I don’t show up late to shows because I don’t care. And I have nothing but love and respect for my fans. The challenge is aligning my energy with the time. I don’t really get what that means, but I think it’s like she wants to get onstage when the vibes are right and that usually comes together many hours after the start time set by some promoter who just wants things to run on a schedule.”

This past weekend at a show in Los Angeles, Lauryn said, “They say, ‘She’s late a lot.’ Ya, y’all lucky I make it on this stage every night. I don’t do it because they let me do it; I do it because I stand here in the name of God.” OK, but God is always on time, so I’m confused. But seriously, that’s not an explanation, and it’s not even an attempt at a defense. That’s offensive. That’s utterly middle-finger. That’s offense. That’s a veiled attempt at a defense. “Let them eat cake.” That’s “My presence is a present.” “Let’s eat cake that’s at all or they won’t stay. That’s offense. That’s a veiled attempt at a defense. "My presence is a present." It’s also backwards.

Yes, Lauryn is a legend, and Talib Kweli once said to me, “You don’t re-tire from the fans, the fans retire you.” He meant usually people stop paying attention to you before you’re ready to quit. So even for someone of Lauryn’s stature, she’s the one who’s lucky. She’s fortunate that we still want to see her perform. I don’t mean that disrespectfully, but the fact is she’s a legacy artist to be, and it’s potentially very lucrative.

But when you’re beyond the stage of releasing new music or trying to get to the top of the charts or doing big sta-dium tours like say Beyoncé or Drake. She’s an artist to be, and it’s potentially very lucrative. But when you’re beyond the stage of releasing new music or trying to get to the top of the charts or doing big sta-dium tours like say Beyoncé or Drake. She’s an artist to be, and it’s potentially very lucrative. But when you’re beyond the stage of releasing new music or trying to get to the top of the charts or doing big sta-dium tours like say Beyoncé or Drake. She’s an artist to be, and it’s potentially very lucrative.

GAME OF THE WEEK

(7-2) @ (5) Connecticut

Bryans Barnes

Dillon Johnson

Saturday

November 11

2:30 PM CDT

TV: FOX

Texas Longhorns 2023
Football Schedule

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